COURSE SYLLABUS

“It is false to assert that, in the state of independence, reason leads us to contribute to the common good through a consideration of our own interests. Far from being allied, private interest and the common good are mutually exclusive in the natural order of things. Social laws are a yoke which every one is very willing to impose on others, but which he does not want to bear himself.” – Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Discourses* (1750)

Class meets: 6:55 - 9:35 p.m. Mondays 206 SSB

Instructor: Elizabeth Grimm-Howell, J.D.

Email address: grimmhowelle@umsl.edu

Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Other hours by appointment (To schedule an appointment, see me before or after class or contact me via email.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of the legal environment in which businesses operate today. We will discuss general principles of contracts, torts, property law and criminal law against the background of the American legal and judicial system. We will review administrative law and the laws regarding the formation and function of various types of business organizations. We will also cover current issues affecting business, including globalization and international trade, employment relationships and equal opportunity in employment, environmental law, and antitrust regulation.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required text:

GRADING:

EXAMS (300 points out of 400 total points = 75% of course grade)

There are three exams during the semester, including the final exam. All material presented or discussed in class, including material assigned as supplemental reading, may be covered on exams. I will post slide presentations on the MyGateWay site for this course after the class in which they are presented – you may wish to refer to them when studying for the exams.

HOMEWORK (100 points out of 400 total points = 25% of course grade)
ATTENDANCE
There are no points awarded for attending class; therefore I do not deduct points when you miss a class. If you are unable to attend a class, it is your responsibility to find out whether any written homework was assigned and to make sure it is turned in on time (that is, by the start time of the next regularly-scheduled class session). Please check MyGateway for homework assignments and/or supplemental reading assignments, which will be posted online. Late homework is eligible for partial credit only (70%), if it is turned in before the final exam on the last scheduled day of class.

CLASS PARTICIPATION
This is a graduate-level course focusing on complex issues of law and ethics, and we will spend significant class time on discussion. Your attendance and participation in class are expected. It is very important for students to read the assigned material associated with each class session ahead of time and be prepared to take part in discussions. I encourage voluntary participation in class discussions, but I also reserve the right to call on students during class, whether or not they have volunteered to participate. My goal is not to humiliate or embarrass anyone, and there are no “points” earned or subtracted for right or wrong answers. Rather, I want to encourage active participation in discussing the important social, legal and ethical issues raised in this course.

COURTESY
Please turn off all cell phones and pagers during class. Also, for those using laptop computers in class, please use laptops ONLY for taking notes and refrain from doing non-class-related things on it, e.g. checking email, Facebook, other websites, etc. Such activities disrupt the class, show disrespect to the Instructor, and distract your fellow students. You have expended time, effort and money to be here, and so has everyone else. We owe each other the courtesy of preventing disruptions of class time.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM
Any time a student uses another’s work without properly attributing it to the real author, that action constitutes academic dishonesty. Such actions violate the policies of the University of Missouri – St. Louis. I expect my students to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, in the class, and dismissal from the University.

In cases of academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism or cheating, it is the duty of faculty to report all cases to the Primary Administrative Officer on campus. View this campus policy here: http://www.umsl.edu/services/academic/policy/academic-dishonesty.html

MANDATORY REPORTING
Under Title IX, all UMSL faculty, as well as staff and administrators (with limited exception), are obligated to report any incidents of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, sexual assault, or gender discrimination to the Student Affairs office and/or other University officials. This ensures that all parties are protected from further abuses and that victim(s) are supported by trained counselors and professionals.

Note: There are several offices at UMSL (e.g., Counseling Services, Health Services, Community Psychological Service, Center for Trauma Recovery, and Student Social Services) whose staff are exempt from Title IX mandated reporting, when the information is learned in the course of a confidential communication.

GOALS OF THIS COURSE
My goals in teaching this course are to provide an outline of general legal principles affecting the business world and to help you to recognize legal and ethical issues inherent in a variety of business situations. However, no material in this course is intended to constitute legal advice, and the course is not designed to prepare you to handle legal situations yourself in lieu of obtaining legal representation or to substitute for the
advice of an attorney. As a faculty member, I am prohibited by professional ethics and university policy from representing any of my students as clients and therefore cannot give anyone specific legal advice. Please do not rely on the information presented in this course in lieu of obtaining a professional legal opinion from an attorney familiar with the facts of your specific situation.

ASSISTANCE
If you need accommodation due to a disability, please notify me as soon as possible so that I can refer you to the appropriate university office to address your specific needs. If you do not have a disability but are struggling in this course, it is in your best interests to discuss it with me as soon as possible. I want each student to get the most that he/she can from the course and will do my best to help you find a solution to any problems you are having. This may mean referring you to other resources on campus, such as an academic counselor or advisor.

Law, Ethics and Business - Fall 2015

Reading Assignments and Exam Dates

For the classes on:

Aug. 24
  Introduction
  Chapter 1    Law, Value Creation, and Risk Management

Aug. 31
  Chapter 2    Ethics and the Law

Sept. 7
  LABOR DAY HOLIDAY – no classes

Sept. 14
  Chapter 3    Courts, Sources of Law, and Dispute Resolution

Sept. 21
  Chapter 4    Constitutional Bases for Business Regulation

Sept. 28
  Chapter 5    Agency
  Chapter 6    Administrative Law

Oct. 5
  First exam (covering Chapters 1-6) – first 60 minutes of class
  Chapter 7    Contracts

Oct. 12
  Chapter 8    Sales, Licensing, and E-Commerce

Oct. 19
  Chapter 9    Torts and Privacy Protection
  Chapter 10   Product Liability

Oct. 26
  Chapter 11   Intellectual Property

Nov. 2
  Second exam (covering Chapters 7-11) – first 60 minutes of class
  Chapter 12   The Employment Agreement

Nov. 9
  Ch. 12, continued...
  Chapter 13   Civil Rights and Employment Discrimination

Nov. 16
  Chapter 14   Criminal Law

WEEK of Nov. 23
  THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – no classes
For the classes on:

Nov. 30  Chapter 15  Environmental Law

Dec. 7  Chapter 17  Consumer Protection

Monday, December 14  Final exam (comprehensive)

Please note: This schedule is preliminary and may be revised by the Instructor as necessary without the prior notification or consent of students. Any changes will be announced in class.