COURSE SYLLABUS
Spring 2011
BA2900
LEGAL ENVIRONMENT OF BUSINESS

Class meets: 11:00 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. M/W
216 SSB

Instructor: Elizabeth Grimm-Howell, J.D.

Email address: grimmhowelle@umsl.edu

Office Hours: In 1106 - Tower by appointment 9:30 – 10:45 a.m. M/W or by appointment (to schedule an appointment, see me before/after class or contact me via email).

“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)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course provides an overview of the legal environment in which businesses operate today. We will discuss general principles of contracts, torts, 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 antitrust regulation.

COURSE MATERIALS
Required:

Other resources:
Interactive quizzes, chapter outlines and reviews, and other student resources at www.thomsonedu.com/westbuslaw/beatty.

GRADATES
Students will be evaluated based on the following four criteria:

Exams (75% of grade)
Homework (25% of grade)
GRADES continued…
I use a standard grading scale of 90-100% = A/A-, 80-89% = B+/B/B-, etc. If circumstances warrant, I occasionally curve grades on a particular exam. I only curve an exam grade if the class average for that exam is substantially below 75%, a circumstance which rarely happens.

EXAMS
There will be 4 exams in this course. All material presented or discussed in class, including material which is not in your textbook, may be covered on the exams. Therefore, your attendance and participation in class are important.

EXAM POLICIES

Make-up examinations - If you know that you must miss class on a day on which an exam is scheduled, please let me know as soon as possible AHEAD OF TIME so that we may arrange a time for you to take the exam in the Campus Testing Center (412 SSB) prior to the regularly-scheduled time. In the interest of fairness, you are expected to make arrangements with me in advance if you cannot attend class on a scheduled exam date.

If you do miss an exam due to illness or dire emergency and could not contact me in advance, I will ask you to provide documentation regarding your inability to take the exam. If your absence was unavoidable and could not have been foreseen, you may be allowed, in the sole discretion of the Instructor, to take a make-up exam. All such determinations are within the sole discretion of the Instructor.

ATTENDANCE
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, at the next regularly-scheduled class session). You can usually obtain homework assignments from the MyGateway site for this course. Homework assignments due on a date you will miss class (or be late) should be turned in via email as an attachment or left for me with the department office prior to the scheduled class time. Late homework is eligible for partial credit only (60%) if turned in before the last day of class.

CLASS PARTICIPATION
I expect you to read the assigned material associated with each class session. I encourage voluntary participation in class discussions, but I also reserve the right to call on you during class, whether or not you 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 you to come prepared to take an active part in discussions and to express your thoughts on the subjects covered in this course.

COURTESY
All pagers and cell phones must be TURNED OFF 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, whether on an exam or in a paper or homework assignment, that action constitutes academic dishonesty. Such actions violate the policies of University of Missouri – St. Louis and the College of Business Administration. Any instances of cheating/plagiarism in this course will be dealt with by the instructor on a case-by-case basis and may include a grade of “F” on a given assignment for the student(s) involved, an “F” for the entire course, or other disciplinary measures, at the discretion of the instructor.
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 teach you to identify certain legal issues arising in business situations and in the news. 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 assistance 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.

Legal Environment of Business – Spring 2011
Reading Assignments and Exam Dates

For the classes on:
Jan. 19
   Introduction
   Chapter 1   Introduction to Law
Jan. 24-26
   Chapter 1, continued….
   Chapter 2   Business Ethics and Social Responsibility
   Also read Supplemental Reading posted on MyGateway
Jan. 31-Feb. 2
   Chapter 2, continued….
   Chapter 3   Dispute Resolution
Feb. 7-9
   Chapter 3, continued…
   Chapter 4   Common Law, Statutory Law, and Administrative Law
Feb. 14
   Chapter 4, continued…

Wednesday, Feb. 16
First exam (covering Chapters 1-4)
Feb. 21-23
   Chapter 5   Constitutional Law
   Also read Appendix A – The US Constitution
Feb. 28-Mar. 2
   Chapter 6   Torts
   Also read Supplemental Reading posted on MyGateway
Mar. 7-9
   Chapter 7   Crime
For the classes on:

Mar. 14    Chapter 8    International Law

Wednesday, Mar. 16    Second exam (covering Chapters 5-8)

Mar. 21-23    Chapter 9    Introduction to Contracts

Mar. 28-30    SPRING BREAK - No classes

Apr. 4-6    Chapter 10    Legality, Consent, and Writing
        Chapter 11    Conclusion to Contracts

Apr. 11-13    Chapter 12    Sales & Product Liability

Apr. 18    Chapter 15    Agency

Wednesday, Apr. 20    Third exam (covering Chapters 9-12 and 15)

Apr. 25-27    Chapter 16    Employment Law

May 2-4    Chapter 18    Starting a Business

Monday, May 9    Final exam 10:00 a.m. - noon (cumulative)

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 to the above schedule will be announced in class.