



Texas A & M University - Commerce
College of Business and Entrepreneurship
Department of Accounting
Accounting 568 - *Business Law for Accountants*
Fall 2017

Professor: Jim Chester, JD/LL.M

Office/Hours: by appointment (prefer call/email)

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Course Location: Downtown Dallas

Graduate Comprehensive Exam: The content of this course is included on the comprehensive exam for the MS in Accounting program. The exam is administered during your final semester of the program. You must pass the exam to earn an MS degree in Accounting from Texas A&M University - Commerce.

Course Description

- Business Law for Accountants is the study of professional and legal responsibilities and legal implications of business transactions. The course requires application of this knowledge to common business situations and transactions.
- This course provides knowledge of the general business environment and general business concepts needed to understand the underlying legal reasons applicable to particular situations and transactions.
- The focus of the course is on domestic United States law, as the primary source for the CPA exam.
- Professional responsibility and ethics issues are considered throughout the course.

Course Embedded Assessment Objectives

Your achievement level for each objective will be measured by your ability to demonstrate understanding of the following:

- Rights and liabilities of parties to common business transactions;
- Improving skills in recognizing and managing legal and ethical risks in business decision-making;
- The different forms of businesses and the process;
- Rights and liabilities of stockholders and managers of corporations;
- Government regulations protecting public interests in corporations and markets;
- Other topics as deemed appropriate.

Textbooks and Materials

Required Textbook: West Academic's Legal Environment of Business (Higher Education Coursebook) 1st Edition (2017). ISBN-13: 978-1683286431. (You do not need to purchase online access to this course.)

Student Responsibilities

Learning is every student's responsibility. My role as your professor is to facilitate your learning process. Each student is required to:

- Read assigned material on schedule.
- Participate in the discussions.
- Prepare diligently for exams.
- Respect the learning environment by being prepared and observing classroom etiquette.

Graduate level expectations

- Writing – Graduate students should be able to demonstrate critical thinking skills. Graduate-level writing must demonstrate an ability to evaluate arguments from various perspectives, be able to formulate well-articulated conclusions based on facts and deductive reasoning, and be able to provide a well-reasoned discussion that reflects comprehension beyond an undergraduate level.
- Responsibility – Graduate students should demonstrate self-motivation, organization, time management skills, and discipline. It is your responsibility to know when assignments, exams, quizzes, etc. are due. Due dates are communicated on the syllabus. If changes are made, the changes are provided via email and/or announcement board. I will NOT provide daily or weekly reminders for you. You are responsible for submitting the appropriate files on time and in the required format.
- Learning – Graduate studies are designed for more discipline-specific focused learning. I assume you want to learn. My goal is not to solely teach you information that is covered on my exam, but to teach you legal concepts and the application of legal concepts. If you only want to know what is on the exam, you are robbing yourself of the value of learning.
- Exams – The content and format of the exams will vary, but may include (without limitation) the following: multiple choice questions, problems, or essays. The exams will be administered on the date outlined in our course. You must plan to take the exams on their scheduled dates. Make-up exams/quizzes are given ONLY under extenuating conditions (a death in the family and travel associated therewith, hospitalization, medical emergency, or physical injury). Documentation/proof of the extenuating circumstance must be received in a timely manner, and a grade other than zero is at my discretion in such instances.
- Graded work – There are several issues regarding grading/scoring: 1) I do NOT re-grade work. Once an assignment is returned with a grade/score it cannot be resubmitted. 2) If you disagree with the posted grade/score on an assignment, you must email me with the specific discrepancy no more than three (3) days after the grade/score is posted. 3) You are NOT permitted to submit an assignment used in a previous course or in a previous attempt at this course.

Evaluation & Grades

Grades are based upon total points received.

Exam 1	33 1/3%
Exam 2	33 1/3%
Exam 3	33 1/3%
TOTAL	100%

The levels of mastery are:

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
<60%	F

Email/Phone

Emails are typically the best way to contact me. I will try to respond to all emails within 24 hours during the week. Emails received Friday evening or during the weekend may not receive a response until Monday. If you do not receive a response in that timeframe, please re-send the email. You are also welcome to call me with questions and/or to schedule a meeting either before or after class.

Assignments

Readings: Each lesson will have a set of readings from the text. This may include appendices in the text and/or additional other resources that are critical to understanding key concepts.

Exams: There are three examinations in this course. These exams will test your understanding of the material covered. The third/final exam is not cumulative. Details of the exam coverage are provided during the course.

Course Schedule

The course schedule is outlined in eCollege. Students can view the assignments section of each module to allow students to read ahead. Quizzes, discussion threads, and exams will open as indicated.

Ethics

Integrity is the hallmark of the accounting profession and will be stressed throughout the course. Any type of student breach of ethics, including, but not limited to: illegal activity, dishonest conduct, cheating, plagiarism, or collusion will result in failure on the assignment and/or further academic sanctions (i.e. failure of the course, dismissal from class and/or referral to the Dean of the College of Business). You will be required to sign the Academic Honesty Policy and submit it within the first week of class.

Academic Honesty Policy

The College of Business at Texas A & M University-Commerce will strive to be recognized as a community with legal, ethical, and moral principles and to practice professionalism in all that we do. Failure to abide by these principles will result in sanctions up to and including dismissal. Five different types of activities that will bring sanctions are as follows:

- **Illegal activity** – Violation of any local, state, or federal laws that prohibit the offender from performance of his or her duty.
- **Dishonest Conduct:** Seeking or obtaining unfair advantage by stealing or receiving copies of tests or intentionally preventing others from completing their work. In addition, falsifying of records to enter or complete a program will also be considered dishonest conduct.
- **Cheating:** The unauthorized use of another's work and reporting it as your own.
- **Plagiarism:** Using someone else's ideas and not giving proper credit.
- **Collusion:** Acting with others to perpetrate any of the above actions regardless of personal gain. You must sign and return the Academic Dishonesty Policy by February 1st or have 10 points deducted from your final score. If you do not submit this form before the end of the course, your grade will not be released.

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*). A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation

requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation in this course, within the first week of the start of this court, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services Texas A&M University – Commerce
Gee Library, Room 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Withdrawals/Drops/Adds

University policy will be followed in regards to withdrawals during the semester. *It is the student's responsibility to conform with the university rules relating to dropping or withdrawing from the course.*

Student Conduct: Gun Carry

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M- Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change as needed to meet the objectives or administration of the course at the discretion of the professor. It is not anticipated that there will be any substantive changes.

COURSE SCHEDULE OVERVIEW AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week Discussion Topic

1. Introduction to Law (August 31)
 - a. Read Chapter 1, plus Appendix 1 & 2
2. Courts & Dispute Resolution (September 7)
 - a. Read Chapter 2
3. Contracts (September 14)
 - a. Read Chapter 4, parts I, II & III
4. Contracts (cont.) (September 21)
 - a. Read Remainder of Chapter 4, plus Appendix 3
5. ***Exam 1 (September 28)***
6. Creditor-Debtor Issues (October 5)
 - a. Read Chapter 5
7. Torts (October 12)
 - a. Read Chapter 6
8. Agency & Employment Law (October 19)
 - a. Read Chapters 8 & 9
9. International Business Transactions (October 26)
 - a. TBD / Handout
10. ***Exam 2 (November 2)***
11. Intellectual Property (November 9)
 - a. Read Chapter 7
12. Business Forms (November 16)
 - a. Read Chapter 3, plus Appendix 5 & 7
13. ***THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (Nov 23)***
14. Regulatory Regimes (November 30)
 - a. Read Chapter 11, plus Appendix 4
 - b. FCPA Article TBD & Video: <http://video.pbs.org/video/1114436938/>
15. Business Relationships (December 7)
 - a. Read Chapter 10
16. ***Exam 3 (December 14)***