

Legal, Social, and Ethical Aspects of Business (MGT 2106)

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Charlotte Alexander
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COURSE DESCRIPTION: MGT 2106 introduces students to business-related aspects of the American legal system. The course covers the development and function of the law, court organization, procedure, and substantive law in torts, contracts, and property as well as constitutional law, administrative law, business formation, and employment law. The course also focuses on enhancing awareness of social responsibility and ethics in business.

PREREQUISITES: None.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: An understanding of law and ethics is a vital part of undergraduate business education. After completing MGT 2106, the student should:

1. Be more aware of the complexity and unpredictability of the law,
2. Be more sensitive to issues of ethics and social responsibility confronting business,
3. Have a greater appreciation of the role of law and the courts in balancing legitimate, competing interests of the parties, and
4. Be able to think critically and communicate effectively about legal and ethical issues.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS:

1. *Business Law* by Henry Cheeseman, 11th ed. (Pearson)
2. A pencil on test days; any writing implement on all other days

CLASS POLICIES:

1. **Classroom community:** Show respect for your classmates and me by being punctual and courteous and participating actively in class exercises and discussions.
2. **Communication:** Students are responsible for all material and communications posted on Canvas.
3. **Use of electronic devices in class:** Students are permitted to use electronic devices (laptop, phone, tablet) in class only to access course materials or for other course-related reasons. **Classes may not be recorded without my explicit permission.**
4. **Academic honesty and plagiarism:** You are required to familiarize yourself with and abide by Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code in all aspects of participation in this course, including the section establishing student responsibilities with respect to academic integrity. Compliance with the Academic Honor Code is a condition of enrollment in the College of Business. If I suspect that any student has violated that Academic Honor Code or the Honor Agreement, I will refer the matter to the Office of Student Integrity for appropriate action.
5. **Disability accommodation:** The Georgia Institute of Technology has established policies with respect to disability accommodation through Office of Disability Services. These policies may be accessed at the Office of Disability Services website located at disabilityservices.gatech.edu. Students seeking disability accommodation should refer to the student guide and documentation pages on this website. Students must comply with the requirements set forth by the Office of Disability Services to receive accommodation.
6. **Legal advice:** Any and all opinions or statements as to legal matters made in this course are for teaching purposes only and are not intended and should not be construed as dispensing legal advice or creating an attorney-client relationship.

7. Changes: This syllabus expresses my administrative policies and intentions for the subject matter for the class; however, I reserve the right to change any policies and/or topics and assignments. I further reserve the right to make changes without notice and within my own discretion.

GRADES AND ASSESSMENTS

Your course grade is made up of the components listed below. Your final course grade will be calculated as a percentage of the points you earn out of the 700 total possible points. For example, if you earn a total of 550 points on all grade components, your final course grade would be $550/700 = 0.785 = 79\%$, or a C. As in this example, normal rounding rules apply. **There is no extra credit in this course.**

Grade component	Points value
Tests	4 tests x 100 points each = 400 points
Case studies	2 case studies x 100 points each = 200 points
In-class questions	100 points
TOTAL:	700 points

A 100-90%; B 89-80%; C 79-70%; D 69-60%; F 59-0%

TESTS: The four tests are partially cumulative. This means that each test primarily covers the new material since the previous test, but some questions may require knowledge from earlier classes as well. There are no questions that are exclusively based on earlier material. The fourth test is held during exam week, and you may take the entire allotted time, but the test is the same length and in the same format as the other three tests. You may bring a one-page (8 ½ by 11”, front and back), handwritten or typed “study sheet” to each test with your own outlines and notes. Though you may study with classmates, the study sheet itself must be your own work. You must turn in your study sheet along with your test, but the study sheet is not graded. If I determine that the study sheet is not your own work, you will receive a 0 grade on the test and, at my discretion, I will treat it as an Academic Honor Code violation. There are no make-up options for tests, except with official documentation as described below. I strongly discourage using general Google searches, ChatGPT, or other materials beyond the required textbook and class material to study for tests, as you will likely encounter incorrect or irrelevant information.

CASE STUDIES: The two case studies require you to engage more deeply with particular topics relevant to class material and current events. On case study days, I will lead a class discussion on the assigned case study materials and will set aside the remaining class time for the written exercise. You will turn in your written work on the provided handout at the end of the class period. There are no make-up options for case studies, except with official documentation as described below.

IN-CLASS QUESTIONS: On random, unannounced class days, you will be required to turn in brief, written answers to questions and prompts given during class. I will grade these on a pass/fail basis. You are allowed to miss two days of in-class questions, i.e. by being absent or otherwise failing to complete the questions, without penalizing your grade. Otherwise, this component of your grade will be reduced in proportion to the number of in-class questions you did not complete.

ABSENCES AND MAKE-UP ASSESSMENTS: Regular attendance is the top factor that students report as a key to success in this class. Attendance is your responsibility and you do not have to report absences or excuses to me. If you miss a graded assessment, I will schedule a make-up time only if you have official documentation, e.g. an Athletics travel letter, an excuse related to approved Institute activities, or a Class Absence Verification from the Dean of Students’ Office. The form to request a Class Absence Verification may be found here: <https://studentlife.gatech.edu/request-assistance>. I will also schedule a make-up time for missed assessments due to religious observances, voting, jury duty, or any other reason listed in the Institute’s attendance policy at <https://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/4/>. Students must read and follow the procedures in the Institute policy in order to request a make-up assessment. Any student who misses class for any reason is always welcome to sign up for my office hours to review missed material.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Deviations from the Course Schedule may be necessary and will be announced in class and on Canvas.

Class	Date	Topic	Reading and Assignments
1.		Introduction to the course and how to succeed	
2.		Law basics Definitions, functions, sources of law	Chapter 1
3.		Ethics Ethical theory	Chapter 42, additional readings provided
		<i>Class canceled due to weather</i>	
4.		Relationship between law and ethics + Case Study prep	Chapter 42, additional readings provided <i>Michigan v. EPA</i>
5.		Case study 1	
6.		Torts Intentional torts	Chapter 5
7.		Negligent torts; defenses	Chapter 5
8.		Product and strict liability	Chapters 5 and 6
9.		Criminal law Common crimes Business and white-collar crime + Test prep	Chapter 8
10.		Test 1	
11.		Contracts Elements of a contract Defenses; breach; remedies	Chapters 9 and 16
12.		UCC	Chapter 18
13.		Agency Introduction to agency law	Chapter 29
14.		Agency liability	Chapter 30
15.		Test 2	
16.		Employment law Discrimination and harassment	Chapter 33
17.		Fair Labor Standards Act Occupational health and safety Workers' compensation Labor law Limitations and expansions of coverage	Chapters 31
18.		Intellectual property Trade secrets and patents	Chapter 7
19.		Copyrights and trademarks	Chapter 7
20.		Test 3	
21.		Courts and ADR State and federal courts	Chapter 2
22.		Pretrial; trial and appeal; alternative dispute resolution	Chapters 2 and 3
23.		Case study 2	
24.		Business organizations Sole proprietorships, general partnerships	Chapter 34
25.		LPs, LLPs, LLCs	Chapters 34 and 36
26.		Corporations Corporate governance	Chapters 37 and 38

Class	Date	Topic	Reading and Assignments
27.		Social responsibility of business Public benefit corporations	Chapter 42 (public benefit corporations), additional readings provided
28.		Test 4	