Gustavus Adolphus College
BUSINESS LAW EM 265

Location: Beck Hall 301
Instructor: Russell V Michaletz, JD, CPA
Classes: E/M 265-001  8AM, MTWF
Prerequisites: E/M-101, E/M-102, and E/M-110.
Course Text: *Business Law, Text and Case* by Clarkson (13th ed.)
Office Hours: MTWF 9-10:30, 11:30-12:30 or by appointment
Office: Beck 137
Cell Phone: 612-799-4592 (voicemail works well on my cell, and I will return the call promptly)
E-mail: rmichale@gac.edu;

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**Course Description:**

This course is the study of the principles of business law with particular emphasis on legal reasoning. Topics covered in the course include contracts, business entities, business liabilities, employment, and government regulation. It is important overview preparation for those students preparing for careers in accounting and law and their related examinations. It also provides practical information valuable to anyone pursuing a career in business.

While the course is designed to provide the student with standard business law substantive information, class and team activities will also offer the students the opportunity to practice the business behaviors which will enhance their career opportunities and to prepare them to thrive in high performance organizations.

One of the strengths of an education at a liberal arts college is the graduate’s ability to collaborate and team in the workplace.
Therefore, working together as teams to learn the business law material will be expected, even if not always easy. While your grade will be largely determined by individual performance in projects and tests, you will not be successful in your careers without learning from your colleagues through team activities.

You will be assigned to a team of 7-8 students (6 teams). Your colleagues will assess your individual participation in team activities at two points during the semester, and this assessment will have an impact on your grade.

**Course Calendar (Subject to change as our pace changes):**

See Moodle

**Grading:**

Total potential points = 200 (not including any extra credit opportunities) earned as follows:

**Class Reading Questions:** Students will be expected to do the assigned reading and prepare answers to 6 pre-assigned discussion questions per chapter, or groups of chapters. Student teams will present their collective answer to one question, which will be randomly assigned at the beginning of the class period. You will earn points for successful participation as a team, subject to modification for personal participation (or lack thereof) on the team. (10 points maximum)

**12 Important Concepts:** There will be 12 Important Concepts, discussed and developed into test essay answers by the class during the course. These concepts will have lasting value to the students in their careers. Commitment of these 12 concepts to memory will be tested in the quizzes, each worth 5 points (60 points total).
Course Summary Question: There will be a course summary question that will ask you to identify and describe 10 business legal risks that you have come to appreciate through this course (10 points).

Questions based on the reading: There will be 55 multiple choice test questions spread through all quizzes, one point each (55 points total). In addition, there will be one question, which asks you to define 10 important legal terms from the course reading (10 points).

Case briefs: Each student will brief three cases of their choice, spread throughout the semester, emailed to me for review and sufficiency, prior to the class, and potentially presented in class (5 points for each brief of about 300-500 words, prepared to my satisfaction). I expect these briefs to be the work product of the student, with minimal assistance from their peers. See Moodle for due dates for these briefs (15 points total).

Group case study exercise: Students will actively participate, as a member of their team, in a two-part case study with an outside attorney. The first case study will be worth 10 points, and the second worth 10 points (20 points total).

Current business law events: Each student will prepare a legal analysis of a business law issue in the news where the outcome is uncertain at this time. The analysis should be on an issue that is of personal interest, examine law on both sides of the issue, and come to a conclusion on a likely outcome if litigated. This exercise will give you practice of how to do research on real time business issues. You may need to use Library Services to access worthy sources of authority for your analysis, and the Writing Center to help you develop good writing skills.
Your analysis should run about 1000 words, and may be selected for presentation in class. I expect that we will have a one on one discussion of your intended issue by March 31st so that your work doesn’t get delayed until the end of the semester when it will be too late for you to achieve the maximum score due to lack of feedback from me.

This project will be worth a maximum of 20 points and points will be awarded at my discretion. However, you will receive feedback (if time allows), similar to what you should expect in your careers, which will give you an opportunity to improve the depth of your research, your analysis and findings, and your written product so as to achieve the maximum score (20 points total). Please include a bibliography structured as you wish.

**Extra Credit Points:** There will be extra credit point opportunities both within quizzes, the final exam, and for current events reports on a daily basis (maximum 3 current events points for the semester). To receive extra credit points for current events, the student should bring a fresh news item to class and be prepared to verbally present the facts, issue, and status of the business law news item for presentation to the class. Knowing what is going on in the business world will enhance the impression you will make on your supervisors in your career. Use this opportunity to develop habits to follow news on issues that relate to the class. With practice, you will become proficient in spotting business law all around us in our lives.

**Grading:** Total Points based on 200 maximum (extra credit points will not increase the denominator for grading purposes)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>186-200</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180-185</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>174-179</td>
<td>B+</td>
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</tbody>
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Career job interviews have increasingly relied on identifying whether the prospect has a proven history of behaviors that are indicators of success in a high performance organization. I reserve the right (but not obligation) to increase any cumulative point total by 1-3 points based on proof of showing, to a standard used by high performance organizations, any one or more of the following business behaviors during the semester:

1. Leadership through a difficult situation or process
2. Collaboration and teaming attitude, especially through mentorship of the teammate requiring assistance
3. Critical thinking and attention to detail
4. Thorough research and resulting written communication
5. Effective oral communication of difficult concepts
6. Willingness to adapt, reinvent, and stretch yourself beyond your natural abilities
7. Thinking outside the box and helping others see things in a new paradigm

Attendance:

Since most of the exam material and model answers will be discussed and developed in class by teams, and the case studies require team collaboration, you owe it to your teammates to be “present and accounted for” just as you will be in your long-term
career of choice. Hard work and dedication is expected in high performance organizations, and this class is no exception. I reserve the right (but not obligation) to enhancing or reduce any student's cumulative point total for effort and active participation with their teammates in this course.

**Emergencies:**

Students should discuss planned absences with me in advance so that I can help you with keeping up with the course. It is expected you will help your team by participation in preparation for class activities even if you will be absent for the actual team presentation. Students will not be allowed to make up the exams without making suitable and timely arrangements with me.

**Communication:**

I have become paperless in my career, and hope students and teams will prepare all documents for my review electronically, and transmit them to me by email (rmichale@gac.edu) so that we both always have records at our disposal.

**Disability Services**

Gustavus Adolphus College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or you think you may have a disability of any nature) and, as a result, need reasonable academic accommodation to participate in class, take tests or benefit from the College’s services, then you should speak with the Disability Services staff, for a confidential discussion of your needs and appropriate plans. Course requirements cannot be waived, but reasonable accommodations may be provided based on disability documentation and course outcomes. Accommodations cannot be
made retroactively; therefore, to maximize your academic success at Gustavus, please contact Disability Services as early as possible. Disability Services (www.gustavus.edu/advising/disability/) is located in the Academic Support Center. Disability Services Coordinator, Kelly Karstad, (kkarstad@gustavus.edu or x7138), can provide further information.

**Academic Honesty**

At its November 2006 Faculty Meeting, the faculty approved changes to *Faculty Handbook* Section 2.2.9: “Through information provided in syllabi and/or other means, faculty members will explain to students how the Honor Code will operate in their respective courses.”

Please e-mail to me the following statement within 2 weeks of the beginning of the course:

“On my honor, I pledge that I have not given, received, or tolerated others’ use of unauthorized aid in completing this work.”

Full descriptions of the Academic Honesty Policy and the Honor Code can be found in the *Academic Catalog* (online at www.gustavus.edu/general_catalog/current/acainfo).

For more information about the Honor Code, contact Dean Brenda Kelly (bkelly@gustavus.edu or x7541).

**Help for Multilingual Students**

Support for English learners and multilingual students is available through the Academic Support Center’s English Learning Specialist (www.gustavus.edu/advising/). The ELS can meet individually with
students for tutoring in writing, consulting about academic tasks, and helping students connect with the College's support systems. When requested, the ELS can consult with faculty regarding effective classroom strategies for English learners and multilingual students. The ELS can provide students with a letter to a professor that explains and supports appropriate academic arrangements (e.g., additional time on tests, additional revisions for papers). Professors make decisions based on those recommendations at their own discretion. In addition, English learners and multilingual students can seek help from peer tutors in the Writing Center (www.gustavus.edu/writingcenter/).

Questions about these policies can be directed to Dean Paula O’Loughlin (poloughl@gustavus.edu or x7541) or Dean Brenda Kelly (bkelly@gustavus.edu or x7541).

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

At the end of the semester, I would like each student to:

1. Have 12 core business law concepts roll off the tip of their tongue with minimal effort
2. Recognize and be familiar with many rules and terms tested in future professional exams and business situations
3. Improve several good business behaviors and habits to prepare them for acquiring and thriving in a career in a high performance organization
4. Improve their ability to contribute in a collaborative and teaming environment, and
5. Be satisfied that they did not leave any opportunity on the table to get the most they can out of the course.