

## SYLLABUS FOR BUSINESS LAW 308

California State University, Northridge  
Business Law 308 Fall 2021  
Class: Mon & Wed 12:30-1:45 PM via Zoom  
Office hours: Monday 2:00- 3:00 PM  
via Zoom and by appointment

Professor Lauren Ross  
e-mail: lauren.ross@csun.edu  
Office: Virtual only via Zoom  
Office phone: (818) 847-0211  
Ticket Number 13560

**Text: Business Law: The Ethical, Global and Digital Environment, 18th ed.,** Prenkert *et al.*  
The textbook and Student Study Guide are available hardcopy at the campus bookstore (new, used and as a rental) and elsewhere. They are also available as an e-text online at <https://create.mcgraw-hill.com/shop/> and enter Prenkert 18<sup>th</sup> ed. The text is mandatory for this course, the Student Guide is at your option and you might find it helpful with examples.

**This is the best way to buy the text that is required for the course and is described this way on the CSUN Campus bookstore website:**

**Business Law II (CSUN Custom) (BLAW 308)**

1. **Edition:** 18th
2. **ISBN:** 9781307707342
3. **Author:** Prenkert
4. **Publisher:** MCGRAW HILL CREATE (CUSTOM PUBLISHING)
5. **Formats:** PAPERBACK

Prerequisite: BLAW 280. Co-requisites/Prerequisites for Business majors: BUS 302/L. Study of the role of law in business, including the study of legal institutions and their role in facilitating and regulating business. Topics include agency and employment law, the various forms of business organizations and securities law.

### **Department of Business Law**

Our mission is to equip students with the academic knowledge, problem solving, analytical and professional skills in the areas of business law, business ethics, and real estate necessary to achieve their personal and professional goals.

### **Student Learning Outcomes of the Undergraduate Program**

Classes are taught using the Socratic method, with its goal of participatory learning and the development of reasoning skills. This active learning process requires students to articulate, develop and defend positions, to think critically and to engage in problem-solving. Students learn to formulate an effective legal analysis by synthesizing information, identifying legal issues, distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts, using facts and law to support argument, reasoning by analogy and reaching conclusions based on analysis. In addition, students in all Business Law courses study ethical issues in a business context, with actual topics depending on course content.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE**

1. To provide students with an understanding of the legal environment in which business decisions are made. Students will become aware of the complexity of legal rules, regulations, and court decisions affecting agency law, partnership law, corporate law, and employment law.
2. To encourage students to comment on and evaluate the law. Students will learn to identify the functions, policies, and trends in the law; to compare various forms of doing business; and to consider social, economic, and ethical influences on the law.
3. To develop analytical reasoning and writing skills. We will read court decisions, prepare written briefs of the decisions, orally defend interpretations of the cases, and answer hypothetical questions in class. Students will learn to recognize similarities and differences between different cases and different factual situations. Exams will include short essay questions that require the student to analyze factual situations, identify legal issues, and apply the law in determining the outcome of a hypothetical case.

## **CLASS PREPARATION**

The assignments are listed in this syllabus by week. We usually cover one chapter per week. If we do not finish the entire chapter in the assigned week, we will conclude it and the next assignment the following week. Each case covered in the text shall be briefed in writing using the IRAC method, unless otherwise noted in this syllabus. The briefs will be submitted via Canvas and will count as part of the homework component of the course grade. The written briefs will not be accepted late.

You may be called on at random throughout the semester to read your brief in class. If you are not in attendance and therefore do not have a brief if called upon, that will count as unprepared and will reduce your homework score.

There are written homework assignments listed on a weekly basis. The written assignment is due on the date it is listed as assigned. Homework assignments must be submitted via Canvas by the end of the Monday class session along with the case briefs. **HOMEWORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DUE DATE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.** The homework will not be given a letter grade and will not be returned to you. Homework will help you in preparation for the exams. Doing the homework will help you with the exams and give you a better understanding of the material.

You are responsible for all material listed in this syllabus, whether you have attended a class or not.

## **BRIEFING CASES**

To brief cases, case problems and questions, use the "IRAC" format:

*Issue:* What question must be answered in order to reach a conclusion in the case? This should be a legal question which, when answered, gives a result in the particular case. Make it specific (e.g. "Has there been a false imprisonment if the plaintiff was asleep at the time of 'confinement?") rather than general (e.g. "Will the plaintiff be successful?") You may make it referable to the specific case being briefed (e.g. "Did Miller owe a duty of care to Osco, Inc.?" ) or which can apply to all cases which present a similar question, (e.g. "Is a duty owed whenever

there is an employment relationship?") Most cases present one issue. If there is more than one issue, list all, and analyze all issues raised.

*Rule:* The rule is the law which applies to the issue. It should be stated as a general principal, (e.g. A duty of care is owed whenever the defendant should anticipate that her conduct could create a risk of harm to the plaintiff) not a conclusion to the particular case being briefed, (e.g. "The plaintiff was negligent.")

*Application:* The application is a discussion of how the rule applies to the facts of a particular case. The application shows how you are able to reason on paper and is the most difficult (and, on exams, the most important) skill you will learn.

*Conclusion:* What was the result of the case?

With cases, the text gives you a background of the facts along with the judge's reasoning and conclusion. When you brief cases, you are basically **summarizing the judge's opinion**. Most briefs are one page long. They must be available to you during class on the day they are to be discussed.

### **DELIVERY OF COURSE AND MATERIALS**

All course sessions and office hours will be delivered solely via Zoom. It is not required that the student has video. All assignments, papers and exams will be transmitted solely via Canvas.

### **EXAMS AND GRADING**

There will be two midterms and a final exam. Each midterm will count for 25% of the course grade; the final will count for 45% of the course grade and timely homework submission will count for 5% of the course grade. The final exam is cumulative. Grades will include "+" and "-". The failure to take an exam at the scheduled time will result in an "F" on that exam, unless **prior** arrangements are made with the professor. It is within the professor's sole discretion to allow an exam to be taken at a time other than the official time scheduled for the exam but in no event after the exam is given to the class.

Exams may be essay, multiple choice and/or true-false. If any student is caught cheating, it will result in an automatic "F" in the course and will be referred to the Dean's office for further action.

Course grading will be based on 1000 possible points and the professor has discretion to grant bonus points for attendance and participation in class sessions and breakout sessions.

### **NUMBER/LETTER GRADING RELATIONSHIP**

4.0 A	95% - 100%	2.0 C	73% - 76%
3.7 A-	90% - 94%	1.7 C-	70% - 72%
3.3 B+	87% - 89%	1.3 D+	67% - 69%
3.0 B	83% - 86%	1.0 D	63% - 66%
2.7 B-	80% - 82%	0.7 D-	60% - 62%
2.3 C+	77% - 79%	0.0 F	below 60%

## **GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS ON TAKING EXAMS**

Answer each question fully, clearly, and in the order given. Mere conclusions receive no credit. You should:

- Discuss the issue.
- Define and discuss any principles of law, legal theories, etc., relevant to the question.
- Fully apply the given facts to the legal principles on which you rely. Do not ignore any facts, even if they do not support your conclusions. Do not assume that I know that you know something - tell me in your exam what you know, defining every legal term used.
- The actual conclusions you reach could be the least important part of your answer - but you must base your conclusions on complete and intelligent applications of the facts to the legal principles involved.
- If further facts could affect the outcome of the problem, state with particularity what they are, and how they could affect the outcome.
- You should write in straight paragraph form. Students earning higher grades tend to use essay format that incorporates the IRAC process. Discuss the issues involved, the applicable legal rules, and an application of the law to the facts to reach your outcome. Discuss all issues - some questions have more than one issue.
- If you need scratch paper to make notes, use your exam itself. Although you must turn it in, it will not be graded. You may also designate a page of your bluebook as "notes" and it will not be graded.

## **COURSE TOPICS**

- I. Agency and Employment Law
  - A. Agency
    1. Agency Relationships
      - a. Nature of Agency
      - b. Formation of Agency
      - c. Duties of Agent toward Principal
      - d. Duties of Principal toward Agent
      - e. Termination of Agency
    2. Third-Party Relations
      - a. Contract Liability of the Principal
      - b. Contract Liability of the Agent
      - c. Tort Liability
      - d. Criminal Liability
  - B. Employment Law
    1. Legislation Protecting Employee Health, Safety and well being: worker's compensation, OSHA, FMLA
    2. Legislation Protecting Wages, Pensions & Benefits: Social Security, Unemployment Compensation, ERISA, and FLSA
    3. Equal Opportunity Legislation
    4. Title VII
    5. Employee Privacy
    6. Job Security

- II. Business Organizations
  - A. Choosing a Form of Business: Sole Proprietorships, Partnerships, LLPs, Ltd. Partnerships, Corporations, Professional Corporations, LLCs
    - 1. Liability Considerations
    - 2. Tax Considerations
  - B. Partnerships
    - 1. Creation of Partnerships
    - 2. Creation of Joint Ventures
    - 3. Partnership Property
    - 4. Operation of Partnerships
      - a. Fiduciary Duties
      - b. Authority
      - c. Liability for Torts & Crimes
    - 5. Dissolution and Winding Up
  - C. LLCs, Limited Partnerships, LLLPs
    - 1. LLCs: Tax Treatment, Formation, Rights and Liabilities, Dissolution
    - 2. Limited Partnerships and LLLPs: Creation, Rights and Liabilities, General Partners distinguished, Dissolution
  - D. Corporations
    - 1. History and Nature of Corporations
      - a. Forms
      - b. Piercing the Corporate Veil
    - 2. Organization and Financial Structure of Corporations
      - a. Promoters and Pre-incorporation Contracts
      - b. Incorporation Process
      - c. Finance
      - d. Consideration for Shares
      - e. Share Subscriptions, Issuance, Transfer
    - 3. Management
      - a. Corporate Powers
      - b. Directors' Powers & Duties
      - c. Officers' Powers & Duties
      - d. Managing Close Corporations
      - e. Liability for Corporate Torts and Crimes
      - f. Insurance and Indemnification
    - 4. Shareholders' Rights and Liabilities
      - a. Meetings, Elections
      - b. Fundamental Rights
      - c. Inspection and Information Rights
      - d. Preemptive Rights
      - e. Distributions: Dividends
      - f. Shareholder Direct Suits cf. Shareholder Derivative Suits
      - g. Shareholder Liability
      - h. Dissolution and Termination

## ASSIGNMENTS

- Week 1: 8/30-9/1 Introduction to courts and legal system; review of Business Law 280 concepts; review of IRAC and briefing methods; in-class brief of sample case; review “How to Brief a Case” uploaded on Canvas
- Week 2: 9/6-8 The Agency Relationship (Chapter 1/35)  
Homework Problems: 3, 4, 8  
Brief all cases
- Week 3: 9/13-15 Third-Party Relations of the Principal and the Agent (Chapter 2/35)  
Homework Problems: 2, 7  
Brief all cases
- Week 4: 9/20-22 Employment Law (Chapter 12/51)  
Homework Problems: 1, 4, 10  
Brief all cases
- Week 5: 9/27 More on employment law and review for midterm  
9/29 FIRST MIDTERM
- Week 6: 10/4-6 Introduction to Forms of Business and Formation of Partnerships (Chapter 3/37)  
Homework Problems: 4, 8, 10  
Brief all cases  
  
Operation of Partnerships and Related Forms (Chapter 4/38)  
Homework Problems: 4, 11  
No briefs
- Week 7: 10/11-13 Partners’ Dissociation and Partnerships’ Dissolution and Winding Up (Chapter 5/39)  
Homework Problems: 1, 9  
Brief all cases **except** *Urbain v. Beierling*
- Week 8: 10/18-20 Limited Liability Companies, Limited Partnerships, and Limited Liability Limited Partnerships (Chapter 6/40)  
Homework: Problems 1, 8  
No briefs
- Week 9: 10/25 Review  
10/27 SECOND MIDTERM

- Week 10: 11/1-3      History and Nature of Corporations (Chapter 7/41)  
Homework Problems: 7, 9  
Brief all cases
- Week 11: 11/8-10      Organization and Financial Structure of Corporations (Chapter 8/42)  
Homework Problems: 3, 4  
Brief all cases **except** *Tedeton v. Tedeton, Coyle v. Schwartz*
- Week 12: 11/15-17      Management of Corporations (Chapter 9/43)  
Homework Problems: 3, 4, 5  
Brief all cases **except** *Paramount v. Time, Coggins v. New England Patriots, United States v. Jensen*
- Week 13: 11/22-24      More on corporations
- Week 14: 11/29-12/1      Shareholders Rights and Liabilities (Chapter 10/44)  
No homework  
No briefs
- Week 15: 12/6-8      REVIEW
- Week 16: 12/13      LAST CLASS/REVIEW
- 12/20/21                      FINAL EXAM- CUMULATIVE**  
**Via Canvas 12:45-2:45 PM**