



**Texas A & M University - Commerce**  
**College of Business and Entrepreneurship**  
**Department of Accounting**  
**Accounting 568 - *Business Law for Accountants***  
**Spring, 2019 (online)**

**Professor:** Timothy Letzring, J.D., Ed.D.

**Office:** 203 Education North, Commerce

**Email:** [Tim.Letzring@tamuc.edu](mailto:Tim.Letzring@tamuc.edu)

**Office Hours:** Anytime by email

**Course Location:** Online (D2L/BrightSpace)

**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***

This course

- 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;
- Basic rights related to intellectual property and understanding the various types;
- Various tort actions commonly associated with businesses;
- Liability of businesses connected to actions of employees

#### ***Textbooks and Materials***

**Required Textbook:** The Legal Environment and Business Law: Master of Accountancy Edition (v. 1.0). This book is licensed under a Creative Commons by-nc-sa 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>) license. Book is downloadable from course LMS.

**Access to Internet, D2L/BrightSpace and the TAMUC Library's database:** Connectivity, hardware and software are your responsibility. Completing the Student Tutorial in D2L is highly recommended.

### ***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.
- Complete assignments within the posted time frames.
- Participate in the online discussions.
- Prepare diligently for weekly assignments.
- Respect the learning environment by being prepared and observing online 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 accounting concepts and the application of accounting concepts. If you only want to know what is on the exam, you are robbing yourself of the value of learning.
- Late work – Due dates are posted on our syllabus and in our D2L/BrightSpace course. Assignments handed in late but within 72 hours of the due date are eligible for up to 50% credit. After 72 hours, a zero will be assigned, even in the presence of extenuating circumstances (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.
- Exams – The content and format of the exams will vary, but may include any of the following: multiple choice questions, problems, matching, or essays. The exams will be administered on the date outlined in D2L/BrightSpace. You must plan to take the exams on or before their due dates. Make-up exams/quizzes are given ONLY under extenuating conditions.
- 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) I do not provide extra credit opportunities to individual students—this is a graduate course. If there is extra credit, it will be built in to the course and available to all.

### ***Assignments***

**Readings:** Each lesson will have a set of readings from the text. Some lessons may require accessing publicly available documents and/or additional court cases that are critical to understanding key concepts. The court cases indicated to focused on are included in the text. Reading the entire case, all of which are easily accessible online, can provide additional learning.

**Quizzes:** Each lesson will have a graded quiz, except when there is a full exam in the same week. These will be brief to provide you an opportunity to gauge how well you know some of the key concepts of the lesson. Some lessons will also have an ungraded quiz containing sample CPA exam questions, providing us an opportunity to improve test-taking skills for those students planning to take that exam.

**Exams:** There are four examinations in this course. These exams will test your understanding of the material covered. The final exam is not cumulative, but it may re-cover items from Exam 3. The same principle is applied to exams 2 and 3. Details of the exam coverage are provided during the course.

**Discussion Posts:** Discussion posts occur throughout the lessons. This may include discussion of court cases and/or an important CPA exam topic. These may also reference some of the questions from the quiz. Credit for this is based holistically on your participation rather than fixed criteria.

**Podcasts:** Some of the modules will have a recorded podcast covering key aspects of the material. Some of the podcasts may also have a separate file of associated slides in PDF format.

**Follow-up sessions:** To cover some of the more challenging materials, including the topics of the quizzes and discussion posts, I will hold live sessions using YouSeeU, the app inside the learning management software. When scheduled, these will typically occur on Thursdays at 6:00 PM. However, the introductory session will occur Monday January 14<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00PM. These will be recorded, assuming technology cooperates.

### ***Evaluation***

Grades are based upon total points received.

- |                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| • Exam 1            | 100 points        |
| • Exam 2            | 150 points        |
| • Exam 3            | 150 points        |
| • Exam 4            | 200 points        |
| • Quizzes           | 100 points        |
| • <u>Discussion</u> | <u>100 points</u> |
|                     | <b>800 points</b> |

The levels of mastery are:

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

### ***Email***

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.

[Tim.Letzring@tamuc.edu](mailto:Tim.Letzring@tamuc.edu)

### ***Course Schedule***

The course schedule is outlined in D2L/BrightSpace. Students can view the reading assignments for section of each lesson at the end of the syllabus, to allow students to read ahead. Quizzes, discussion threads, and exams will open as indicated in D2L/Brightspace. The schedule is subject to change based on the unique needs of the semester and this specific course.

### ***Technology Requirements***

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

### *Access and Navigation*

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

### *Communication and Support*

Texas A&M University – Commerce provides students technical support in the use of the MyLeo Learning Management Software. If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

### *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. **Failure to submit a signed Academic Honesty Policy will cause a 50-point deduction from your overall score for the class.**

### *Academic Dishonesty 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.

### *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, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**  
**Texas A&M University – Commerce**  
Gee Library  
Room 132  
**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**  
**Fax (903) 468-8148**  
**[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)**

### ***Other***

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>) and/or consult your event organizer). 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.

### ***CPA Exam Candidates - State of Texas***

Candidates who desire to sit for the CPA in Texas must meet the following educational criteria:

- 1) Have a bachelor's degree;
- 2) Completed 150 semester hours of courses;
- 3) Included in the 150 semester hours, 30 of upper level accounting courses.

You must have a minimum of 15-semester credit hours of accounting courses in the traditional format (face-to-face); 24 hours of upper level business courses; 3-semester credit hours of approved ethics; 2-semester credit hours of approved communication and 2-semester credit hours of approved accounting research. For more information visit Exam/Qualification on the State Board's website:

<http://www.tsbpa.state.tx.us/>

***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 (Specifics of the schedule including quizzes, discussions, and scheduled live sessions will be posted inside D2L/BrightSpace).

1. Introduction to Law (Week of January 14)
  - a. Read The U.S. Constitution and Amendments
  - b. Read Chapters 1 and 2, focus on *Harris v. Forklift Systems*, 510 U.S. 17 (1992).
  - c. Find and read *Marbury v. Madison*, 5 US 137 (1803).
2. Tort Law and Agency (Week of January 21)
  - a. Read Chapters 3, 25, and 26, focus on *Whitlock v. University of Denver* and *Palsgraf v. Long Island RR*.
  - b. Also find and read, *Pitre v. Louisiana Tech University*, 673 So. 2d 585 (La. 1996).
3. Contracts – Part 1 (Week of January 28)
  - a. Read Chapters 4, 5, and 6, focus on *Lucy v. Zehmer*, 84 S.E.2d 516 (Va. 1954).
4. Exam 1 (Week of September 17)
5. Contracts – Part 2 (Week of February 4)
  - a. Read Chapters 7, 8, and 9, focus on *Board of Control of Eastern Michigan University v. Burgess*, 206 N.W.2d 256 (Mich. 1973).
6. Contracts – Part 3 (Week of February 11)
  - a. Read Chapters 10, 11, and 12, focus *Parker v. Arthur Murray, Inc.*, 295 N.E.2d 487 (Ill. Ct. App. 1973).
7. Contracts – Sales, Leases and Risk of Loss (Week of February 18)
  - a. Read Chapters 13, 14, and 15, focus *Pittsley v. Houser*, 875 P.2d 232 (Idaho App. 1994).
8. Exam 2 (Week of February 25)
9. Creditor-Debtor Issues (Week of March 4)
  - a. Read Chapters 20 and 21, focus on *Rodgers v. McCullough*, 296 F.Supp.2d 895 (W.D. Tenn. 2003).
10. Mortgages, Liens, and Bankruptcy; Intellectual Property (Week of March 11)
  - a. Read Chapters 22 and 23, focus on *In re Zygariewicz*, 423 B.R. 909 (Bkrcty.E.D.Cal. 2010).
  - b. Read Chapter 24; The cases in this chapter are interesting, but also find and read *Kirtsaeng v. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.*, 568 U.S. 519 (2013).
  - c. Exam 3 (March 25) (Spring break is March 18-22)
11. Business Forms – Partnerships and Hybrids (Week of April 1)
  - a. Read Chapters 27, 28, and 29, focus on *Gilroy v. Conway*, 391 N.W. 2d 419 (Mich. App. 1986).
12. Business Forms – Corporations (Week of April 8)
  - a. Read Chapters 30, 32 and 33, focus on *United States v. Bestfoods*, 113 F.3d 572 (1998) and *Reves v. Ernst & Young*, 494 U.S. 56 (1990).
13. Anti-trust and FTC (Week of April 15)
  - a. Read Chapters 35 and 36
  - b. Focus on *National Society of Professional Engineers*, 435 U.S. 679 (1978) and *P. Lorillard Co. v. Federal Trade Commission*, 186 F.2d 52 (4<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1950).
14. Employment Law (Week of April 22)
  - a. Read Chapters 37 and 38, focus on *Duncan v. General Motors Corporation*, 300 F.3d 928 (8th Cir. 2002), especially the dissenting opinion.
15. Catch up (Week of April 29)
16. Exam 4 (Week of May 6)