



Rotman Commerce UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Course Outline

RSM225H1S
Legal Environment of Business I
WINTER 2015

L0101	W 12 - 2	SS2105	Jeff Rybak
L5101	W 7-9	WO 30	Dan Shear

Note: Please confirm classroom locations on-line.

E-Mail: Specific information to be provided in class
 Webpage: <http://portal.utoronto.ca>
 Phone: Specific information to be provided in class and/or Blackboard
 Office Hours: Specific information to be provided in class and/or Blackboard.

Course Prerequisites

RSM100Y1

Course Scope and Mission

The course is designed to provide students with a basic working understanding of various elements of Canadian "business law". The course will commence with an overview of the structure of the Canadian legal system, the nature of business entities and then will focus on the law of torts and the law of contract.

The course is designed to be "general" in nature and is intended to provide a relevant legal background that will enable students to function in a commercial environment (e.g. accounting, banking, marketing, not-for-profit etc.).

Required Readings

- Smyth, Soberman & Easson, **The Law and Business Administration in Canada**, 13th. edition (©2013) – Pearson Education. [SSE]
- Students should also refer to relevant Statutory references available on the internet. <http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/index.html>

Evaluation and Grades

Grades are a measure of the performance of a student in individual courses. Each student shall be judged on the basis of how well he or she has command of the course materials.

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|---|-------------|
| ▪ Term Test – all sections (Monday, February 9, 2015) – 7 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.(U) | 35%** |
| ▪ Assignment (□□) | 15%* |
| ▪ Final Examination (2 hours) | <u>50%</u> |
| | 100% |

□ depending on conflicts – the test may be moved to 8 pm to 9:00 pm.; test will be 1 hour in duration

☐ there will be one assignment issued after the midterm to be completed in groups.

Specifics as to the assignment due date (etc.) will be provided by the instructor in class. Assignment will be completed in groups. Groups must be formed from students **with your registered sections only**.

**** There will be no class during the week of the midterm, week of February 9, 2015.**

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Missed Tests and Assignments (including midterm examinations)

Students who miss a test or assignment for reasons entirely beyond their control (e.g. illness) may submit a request for special consideration. Provided that notification and documentation are provided in a timely manner, and that the request is subsequently approved, no academic penalty will be applied.

In such cases, students must notify Rotman Commerce on the date of the missed test (or due date in the case of course work) and submit supporting documentation (e.g. [Verification of Student Illness or Injury form](#)) to the Rotman Commerce Program Office within **48 hours** of the originally scheduled test or due date. Students who do not provide Rotman Commerce or the instructor with appropriate or sufficient supporting documentation will be given a grade of 0 (zero) for the missed test or course deliverable.

Note that the physician's report must establish that the patient was examined and diagnosed at the time of illness, not after the fact. Rotman Commerce will not accept a statement that merely confirms a report of illness made by the student and documented by the physician.

Important specific criteria for this course are:

1. If the term test is not written due to illness, a doctor's certificate testifying to this fact must be presented to the instructor. A missed test must be made up by writing a 2000 word paper (essay) on a legal topic agreeable with the instructor (**10%**), writing the term test **and** submitting same as an assignment (**10%**). The value of the final examination will also be increased by **15%**. The term test assignment submission must be submitted to the instructor within five (5) days of the midterm date unless some alternative timing is agreed to with the instructor. If this timing requirement is not fulfilled a grade of 0% will be awarded for this component. **Students are responsible** to contact the instructor on the day following the midterm in order to review logistics and to obtain a copy of the midterm that will need to be submitted as an assignment.

2. Assignments must be handed in at the beginning of class when due. **Late submissions will be penalized a deduction of 20% for each day, including the day required for submission.**

3. The assignments will be provided in class or posted on the section's Blackboard Learning Portal. Assignments must be completed in groups from their registered section only.

Students who, for reasons beyond their control, are unable to submit an assignment by its deadline must obtain approval from the instructor for an extension. Supporting documentation will be required as per the policy on missed tests and assignments.

Accessibility Needs

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course

materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: disability.services@utoronto.ca or <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is a fundamental value essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarships at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the UofT degree that you earn will continue to be valued and respected as a true signifier of a student's individual work and academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously.

The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters

<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm> outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the process for addressing academic offences, and the penalties that may be imposed. You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment (this includes collaborating with others on assignments that are supposed to be completed individually).

On test and exams:

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else's answers
- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to), medical notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated by the following procedures outlined in the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. If you have any question about what is or is not permitted in the course, please do not hesitate to contact the course instructor. If you have any questions about appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information from the instructor or other UofT resources such as College Writing Centres or the Academic Success Centre.

Email

At times, the course instructor may decide to communicate important course information by email. As such, all UofT students are required to have a valid UTmail+ email address. You are responsible for ensuring that your UTmail+ email address is set up AND properly entered on the ROSI system. For more information please visit <http://help.ic.utoronto.ca/category/3/utmail.html>

Forwarding your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or

Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that important messages from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

Blackboard and the Course Page

The online course page for this course is accessed through Blackboard. To access the course page, go to the UofT Portal login at <https://portal.utoronto.ca/> and log in using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in, look for the My Courses module where you'll find the link to all your course websites. If you don't see the course listed here but you are properly registered for the course in ROSI, wait 48 hours. If the course does not appear, go to the Information Commons Help Desk in Robarts Library, 1st floor, for help, or explore the Portal Information and Help at www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/students and review the Frequently Asked Questions.

Recording Lectures

Lectures and course materials prepared by the instructor are considered by the University to be an instructor's intellectual property covered by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students wishing to record a lecture or other course material in any way are required to ask the instructor's explicit permission, and may not do so unless permission is granted (note: students who have been previously granted permission to record lectures as an accommodation for a disability are, of course, excepted). This includes tape recording, filming, photographing PowerPoint slides, Blackboard materials, etc.

If permission is granted by the instructor (or via Accessibility Services), it is intended for the individual student's own study purposes and does not include permission to "publish" them in anyway. It is absolutely forbidden for a student to publish an instructor's notes to a website or sell them in any other form without formal permission.

To Use Turnitin.com:

Normally students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the university's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com website.

For Written Assignments:

Please note that clear, concise, and correct writing will be considered in the evaluation of both assignments. That is, you may lose points for writing that impedes communication: poor organization, weak paragraph development, excessive wordiness, hard-to-follow sentence structure, spelling mistakes and grammatical errors. Students who require additional support and/or tutoring with respect to their writing skills are encouraged to visit the Academic Success Centre (www.asc.utoronto.ca) or one of the College Writing Centres (www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres). These centres are teaching facilities – not editing services, where trained staff can assist students in developing their academic writing skills. There is no charge for the instruction and support.

For Group Work:

Both assignments require students to work in teams of two (2) from the same registered section.

Learning to work together in teams is an important aspect of your education and preparation for your future careers. That said, project-based teamwork is often new to students and you are

therefore reminded of the following expectations with respect to behaviour and contributions to your team project.

1. Read the document entitled, “Working in Teams: Guidelines for Rotman Commerce Students” which is available on the RC portal under the Academic Services tab.

2. When working in a team, Rotman Commerce students are expected to:

- Treat other members with courtesy and respect;
- Honour the ground rules established by the team;
- Contribute substantially and proportionally to the final project;
- Ensure enough familiarity with the entire contents of the group project/assignment so as to be able to sign off on it as original work;
- Meet the project timeline as established by the team.

3. Resolving conflicts:

Conflicts are part of the team’s process of learning how to work together effectively and when handled well can generate creativity and bring-multiple perspectives to the solution.

Student teams are collectively expected to work through their misunderstandings as soon as they arise (and prior to submission of the final project). In cases where teams are unable to arrive at a solution that works for all members, the team must meet with the Rotman Commerce Team Coach** as soon as possible. The Coach will listen to the team and help develop options for improving the team process. All members of the project team must commit to, and, utilize their action plans.

** For an appointment with a Rotman Commerce Team Coach, please contact Nikoleta Vlamis at nikoleta@nikoletaandassociates.com or Elaine Zapotoczny at elaine@nikoletaandassociates.com. Nikoleta and Elaine are highly skilled at facilitating team dynamics and collaboration. Note that the Team Coach’s role is to provide guidance, support and advice on team matters – not to formally evaluate or assess teamwork for academic purposes.

Class Schedule

OVERVIEW

Class One (Week of January 5, 2015)

Overview of the Canadian Legal System

The role of law in society: general overview of the sources of law, including common law and statutes. Overview of the court system and the process of proceeding with an action.

Readings: SSE - Chapter 1 and 2

BUSINESS ENTITIES

Class Two (Week of January 12, 2015)

Sole Proprietorships and Partnerships

Choosing the appropriate business organization. Overview of proprietorships, partnerships, limited partnerships and limited liability partnerships (LLP).

Readings: SSE - Chapter 24

Class Three & Four (Weeks of January 19, 2015 and January 26, 2015)

The Nature of a Corporation and its Formation

Overview of the nature of a corporation and related key elements of its operations and relations.

Readings: SSE - Chapters 25, 26 and 27

TORT LAW

Class Five (Week of February 2, 2015)

The Law of Torts

Basic concepts of negligence

Readings: SSE - Chapter 3

Class Six MIDTERM

Class Six – No class during the week of February 9, 2015. The class is replaced by the common Midterm – COMMON DATE/TIME FOR ALL SECTIONS (see Evaluation above)

TORT LAW

Class Seven (Week of February 23, 2015)

The Law of Torts

Tort law extended to intentional and unintentional interference
Application to manufacturers and professionals

Readings: SSE - Chapter 3 continued and Chapter 4

CONTRACT LAW

Class Eight (Week of March 2, 2015)

The Law of Contracts

Basic elements of a contractual relationship - offer and acceptance

Readings: SSE - Chapter 5

Class Nine (Week of March 9, 2015)

The Law of Contracts

Legal capacity, intention, consideration and legality of object.
Ways to impeach - mistake.

Readings: SSE - Chapter 6, 7 and 8.

Class Ten (Week of March 16, 2015)

The Law of Contracts

Misrepresentation, undue influence, duress and the requirement of writing.

Readings: SSE - Chapters 9 and 10

Class Eleven (Week of March 23, 2015)

The Law of Contracts

Interpretation, privity and assignment

Readings: SSE - Chapter 11 and 12

The Law of Contracts

Discharge of contracts and breach of contract

Readings: Chapter 13 (note remedies will only be covered in a very general manner)

Class Twelve (Week of March 30, 2015)
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Sales of Goods Act

The *Sales of Goods Act* - application to contracts; implied conditions and warranties.
Readings: Chapter 14

Review/other – as per instructor