

# BUS140: Legal Environments of Business- Honors Section

Welcome to BUS 140, Legal Environment of Business. My name is Christina Hata and I am the instructor for this course. I hope you find the class interesting and enjoyable, and that you learn some valuable lessons and concepts you can apply to current and future personal and business situations. Knowledge of the law is helpful in many areas of your life.

**Be sure to print a hard copy of this Syllabus for easy reference.**

## Course Description

This honors course offers highly motivated students an introduction to business-related law, ethics, social responsibility, and government regulations.

## Course Details

**Semester:** Spring 2014: January 13 – May 19, 2014

**Units:** 3 hours; **Prerequisites:** None; **Acceptable for Credit:** CSU, UC

**Section:** 2448 **Meeting Times:** Tuesdays/ Thursdays 2:00-3:20PM

**Class Web Site:** <https://blackboard.miracosta.edu/>

**Text Student Companion Web Site:** link at: <http://beatty.westbuslaw.com> (For each chapter: Interactive Quiz, Crossword Puzzle, Court Case Updates)

## Course Objectives & SLOs

**Discipline Mission Statement:** The business and accounting programs at MiraCosta educate, develop and prepare students to successfully meet the multidisciplinary, technological and ethical challenges of a dynamic global business environment.

### GENERAL OBJECTIVES:

My goals go beyond having you just learn the subject matter. I hope the course and the activities appeal to a variety of learning styles to keep everyone active and interested. As you proceed through the course, you will:

- Learn the subject matter and key points
- Develop an overview of how law and legal issues relate to business
- Be able to apply the concepts to your own business and personal situations
- Think about ethical, social, and business consequences of legal decisions
- Communicate with other students on legal, ethical, technical, and other issues
- Increase your knowledge and improve your technical computer and Internet skills
- Improve your oral and written communication skills
- Discover and explore some interesting web sites that will be useful to you

### SUBJECT MATTER OBJECTIVES:

The specific subject matter objectives for the course are for you to:

- Develop an understanding of the structure and process of the U.S. legal system, including organization, statutory law, case law, criminal law, tort law, dispute resolution, and litigation
- Explore business ethics and social responsibility and how these relate to decision-making by business managers
- Examine and compare legal doctrines in the Constitution, civil law, criminal law, and international law
- Understand the nature, characteristics, and status of contracts, and be able to draft and critique contracts
- Learn and apply the laws related to sales and consumer protection
- Examine the rules related to personal and real property
- Learn the nature and types of negotiable instruments
- Explore and utilize the rules and laws related to agency and employment
- Examine the laws related to insurance, secured transactions, bankruptcy, intellectual property
- Discover the various forms of business organization and how businesses are regulated
- Explore the law related to antitrust, cyberlaw, intellectual property, and the environment

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- From a set of facts, prepare a legally enforceable contract for a party you represent.
- Given a business scenario, determine the relevant legal and ethical issues, present the options, and make recommendations on how you would address them.

- Prepare and deliver a written, oral, or poster presentation on a law topic of interest utilizing legal and business research techniques and appropriate presentation principles established in class.

## Instructor Information

**Name:** Christina Hata; **Background:** MS (Management): University of LaVerne; BS (Business Administration): California State University

**Office:** Room 4810 in the Business Department (Oceanside Bldg. 4800) (shared with Tom Severance).

**Scheduled Office hours:** Tuesdays 11am-12pm, Wednesdays 12:30-1:30pm (unless other obligations interfere). I am in the office most other weekdays at various times. Feel free to stop in if you see me in the office at any time, even if outside the normal office hours, or email to arrange a meeting if necessary.

**E-mail:** [chata@miracosta.edu](mailto:chata@miracosta.edu); **Home Page:** <http://www.miracosta.edu/home/chata>

**Phone/message:** (760) 757-2121 x 6399; **Fax:** (760) 795-6770

**Important Note about Communication:** The best way to get in contact with me is by email. I receive email 24 hours a day and can frequently respond within one or two hours. Please do remember that I teach six classes and generally have approximately 250 students each semester, it is **VERY IMPORTANT** to include your full name, class and section number in all email communications. Failure to do so may result in your email being deleted without reading.

**Teaching and Learning Philosophy:** Together the students and instructor in this course will be creating a learning community. *All members of this community are responsible for ensuring that learning takes place.* Thus, preparation and **contribution** to discussion are very important. Students are expected to complete the assigned reading and preparatory assignments, contribute meaningfully and substantively and complete and submit all assignments by their due dates. The nature of the learning activities includes lecture, discussion, homework, practice problems, and short writing assignments.

## Course Materials

**Required Text:** *Essentials of Business Law*, Beatty & Samuelson, 4th edition, Cengage Learning, ISBN 9780538473804, which can be viewed at <http://beatty.westbuslaw.com> Access to the text is required by the first week of class to complete the assignments. There is a copy of the text on reserve at both the Oceanside and SEC library if needed. You may purchase the text at various locations and web sites, but if you don't purchase it from the MCC Bookstore, you assume and accept all risks, including return policy, delays in delivery, etc. Choose wisely.

Book Price at the MCC Bookstore: New \$129.05 **I RECOMMEND THAT YOU DO NOT PURCHASE ANY MATERIALS LISTED AS "OPTIONAL" OR "RECOMMENDED."**

**Also Required:** Articles as assigned.

**Important Note regarding Textbook Affordability:** Like most of your other courses, the textbook for this course is expensive. I fully encourage you to take advantage of MiraCosta's book scholarship program. Stop by the EOPS office in the 3300 building for more details.

## Course Content

Most weeks we will cover two chapters in the text. For each chapter, you will have the opportunity to earn points for reading and correctly answering quiz questions in Blackboard prior to class. Each class will consist of an interactive lecture and small group work. You will also be able to earn point for attending and participating in class. There will be three exams over the course of the semester.

### Major Assignments:

**Changing the Law:** Many of the laws on the books in California are laws that have been proposed by the citizenry. The people have voted to create many of these laws, while our legislators enacted others. This project will enable you to learn about the laws of our state and give you the opportunity to conduct some legal research. First, you must find a current California law that you believe should be altered, changed or removed from the books. You can pick any area of state law. Once you find the law you would like to change, you are to write a 2-3 page paper proposing your change. This paper should be persuasive and include information about the law as currently written, your proposed change, and the proposed results of your change.

**Drafting a Contract:** You will be given a set of facts regarding an item that you will be “selling.” You will be required to draft a legally binding contract.

**Getting Out of a Contract:** This assignment will require you to find and READ a written contract that you have agreed to in your personal life (cell phone, rental agreement, automobile sale/lease, or something else you propose). After reviewing the contract, you will draft a letter to the other party to release your obligations under the agreement. Your goal is find a way get out of the contract so that you incur no penalty.

**Fight Your Ticket:** It’s Thursday morning, and you wake up at 7:40, realizing you’re going to be late for your 8:00 class. You’ve already been late twice, and your professor has made it clear if it happens again, he’s lowering your final grade. You throw on your clothes and jump into the car in a futile attempt to make it to class on time. As your car flies up Barnard drive, you turn the corner and see the radar gun after it’s too late. The officer writes you a ticket for violating vehicle code 22350 or California’s basic speed law.

In this project, you will “fight” your ticket via trial by declaration; you will state the facts of the case (in your view) and petition the court to find you not guilty. This project will give you further practice in research and application of the laws that govern our state. As an alternate assignment option, you can choose to fight any ticket you have recently received - as long as you have a copy of the ticket.

### **Legal Issues/ Representative Cases Presentation**

Working in groups of four, you will create a fifteen-minute presentation on a legal topic of interest. This project has two parts consisting of a presentation and brief paper. After selecting your topic, together you will develop a presentation that a) provides additional insight into the issue or topic, and b) illustrates at least one key concept through an experiential activity. The format of presentation is as follows:

- Present and explain key legal concepts
- Illustrate with real life example
- Facilitate class discussion

### **Trial Simulations**

Trial simulations give you the opportunity to research and present legal cases in a simulated courtroom. This means that you will be conducting the research, preparing your case (with witnesses), and presenting it to the jury.

### **Field Trip**

This class will visit the Vista Courthouse to observe trials in progress. An alternate assignment is available for students who do not wish to participate.

## **Course Grading**

### **Grading Criteria (Subject to change):**

- 40 points: Changing the Law
- 30 points: Drafting a Contract
- 30 points: Getting Out of a Contract
- 15 points: Fight Your Ticket
- 20 points: Peer Reviews
- 20 points: In-Class Activities
- 30 points: Group Project
- 30 points: Trial Simulations
- 30 points: Courthouse visit paper
- 150 points: Exams (3 @ 50 points. Lowest score will be replaced by highest of either weekly quiz total or in-class activities)

### **Subject to adjustment (lowering) by Instructor in her sole discretion at the end of the semester, the letter grading will be: (percentage of total possible points)**

- A (Excellent): 90% +
- B (Good) 80-89%
- C (Average) 70-79%
- D (Below Average) 60-69%
- F (Failure) less than 60%

**Incomplete Grade:** Students seeking an “Incomplete” grade must consult with me in person no later than the week prior to finals. Incompletes will only be considered for emergency or other unforeseeable justifiable reasons at the end of the term, and only upon agreement of clear conditions for completing coursework. Incompletes are rarely granted and only if the emergency or other unforeseeable justifiable reason occurs after the date for dropping the class. Work, vacation, family concerns, class schedules, time management problems, and other normal issues all students deal with do not qualify.

**Pass/ No Pass Grading Option (for graded classes):** You have the option to choose Pass/No Pass grading for this class. If you choose this option, you must submit a Petition for Pass/No Pass to Admissions & Records before 30% of the class has elapsed. This option for grading is nonreversible once selected. The petition form is available online, or from Admissions & Records. Students planning to transfer should consult with a counselor before opting for Pass/No Pass to ensure this option is accepted by their intended transfer institutions. Check the MiraCosta College catalog or schedule for more detailed information.

## Course Rules & Expectations

**Expectations of Students:** All students are expected to be present, to be prepared, and to contribute actively to discussion in ways that enrich the quality of learning for all. Reading and project/written assignments specified on the course calendar are to be completed **prior** to the due date. Written assignments and projects are due on the dates shown.

We have a contract as joint participants in the course: we are responsible for coming together as prepared professionals, with ownership of our time and a stake in ensuring that it is spent in ways that are valuable to us both individually and as a group.

**Expectations of Faculty:** To be prepared; to return student papers promptly, with appropriate feedback; to be available during office hours and by appointment, to meet with students; to be frequently responsive to email messages; to hold high standards for all of us. Faculty and students together are responsible for creating and sustaining a safe environment that facilitates learning, openness, personal growth, and mutual trust and respect. **The faculty is committed to the success of each student.**

**Late Work Acceptance Policy:** Late quizzes are not accepted. I absolutely understand that sometimes things happen to inhibit your ability to complete assignments (work, personal matters, etc). However, this course is a business course and is designed in part to prepare you for the business world, where deadlines simply cannot be missed! I will accept late projects with a penalty of 10% per each day late (1 day late = 10%, 2 days late = 20%, etc).

**Academic Honesty:** Each student is responsible for performing academic tasks in such a way that honesty is not in question. Unless an exception is specifically defined by an instructor, students are expected to maintain the following standards of integrity:

- All tests, term papers, oral and written assignments, recitations, and all other academic efforts are to be the work of the student presenting the material.
- Any use of wording, ideas, or findings of other persons, writers, or researchers requires the explicit citation of the source; use of the exact wording requires a “quotation” format.

**Plagiarism and Ethics Policy:** Each student agrees to the following statements of student behavior:

- I agree that I, and only I, will be the one completing and submitting class materials (homework, quizzes, exams, written projects, etc.) in my name.
- I agree that I will not directly copy or plagiarize material from books, publications, the Internet, other students’ work, or any other source without proper attribution. I am familiar with, and I agree not to violate, copyright laws. If small amounts of material from other sources are used as part of any class assignment, I agree to clearly indicate such and properly cite the source.
- I agree that, unless approved by the instructor, I will not share answers to homework assignments, quizzes, exams, or any other course material with fellow classmates.
- I acknowledge that failure to comply with any of the above statements may result in failure of an assignment, removal from the course, failure in the course, and discipline action deemed appropriate by the instructor in her sole discretion and/or policies and procedures set forth by the Board of Trustees of the MiraCosta Community College District, fully described in the College Catalog.

**Class Rules:** Please be prepared. Attend regularly. Be on time for class. Pay attention in class. Participate and act interested in the subject. Do not engage in any form of academic dishonesty. **RESPECT** fellow students and instructor. Don’t bring food or uncovered beverages into the classroom. Turn off cell phones.

**Attendance:** Regular attendance for the full class period is important. Please inform me if you will unavoidably miss two consecutive class sessions. Also, be sure not to miss any classes during the first two weeks, and not miss more than four (or “two” if there is only one class session per week) total classes for the semester. Do not interrupt class by entering the classroom if you are more than 10 minutes late. If you enter the classroom after class starts, you must take the closest open sea. Violations to any of these policies subject you to being dropped at instructor’s sole discretion.

**Class Withdrawal Rules:** Students are responsible to complete all necessary paperwork if they decide to withdraw from class. The Instructor must take strong steps to insure all students are attending and active. Therefore, the Instructor retains complete discretion to process a Withdrawal (Drop) for students without additional notice for any of the following (unless discussed with Instructor and approved in advance)

- Failure to complete any assignment during the first two weeks of the semester
- Missing ANY class during the first two weeks
- Missing 2 consecutive classes or 4 total classes during the semester
- Failure to complete 2 consecutive or 4 total Assignments of any type
- Failure to complete ANY project.

## College Policies & Services

**Verified Disability:** A student with a verified disability may be entitled to appropriate academic accommodations. Please contact me and/or the Disabled Students Program & Services Office at (760) 795-6658, or the office of the ADA Coordinator at (760) 795-6866.

### Important Dates and Drop Information:

- January 24, 2014 (Friday): Last day to ADD classes.
- January 24, 2014 (Friday); Last day to DROP classes with no grade and no “W”.
- February 13, 2014 (Thursday): Last day to file Petition for Degree/Certificate and to file for Credit/No Credit; Consider this option if you do not need a letter grade.
- April 18, 2014 (Friday): Last day to Drop class with “W” grade; Drops after that receive a letter grade (generally an “F”); If you discover this course is not for you, make sure to drop by this date. **Students are responsible to complete all necessary paperwork if they decide to withdraw from class.**

**Tutoring and Academic Support Center (TASC):** offers free tutoring for this course (and others) at the HUB. For more information call (760) 944-7748 ext. 7748 or just drop by the HUB. I urge you to take advantage of this valuable resource.

**The Writing Center:** The Writing Center offers assistance with any writing assignment. It has been my experience that writing skills are a critical component of success in the workplace. Develop good skills now! You can drop in for a 15 minute consultation or make an appointment for one-on-one help. Like the TASC, the Writing Center is located in the HUB. For more information call (760) 795-6682. These people are here to help you – take advantage!

**Library Resources:** The MiraCosta College faculty librarians assist students with their research questions, whether academic or personal. Students may obtain assistance from librarians either one-on-one at the reference desk, through class orientations, group workshops, individual appointments, or online. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of library resources. More information regarding the library may be found at their webpage: [www.miracosta.edu/library](http://www.miracosta.edu/library) .

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** This syllabus is subject to change at any time at the discretion of the instructor; notice will be given to the students through an announcement in class, by email, or with an announcement on the class Blackboard site.