**Syllabus Guidelines and Template**

The ABA now imposes some requirements on our syllabi. The following is a sample syllabus that conforms to these requirements. Please feel free to adapt this template for your classes.

The **blue** text provides notes to guide you

The **red** text marks items that you will fill in based on your own information.

The **black** text should remain as is in your final syllabus. Please remember to post your syllabus to Blackboard. It is important for credit-hour policy purposes that we have access to the entire set of your reading and other assignments.

PLEASE DO NOT EDIT THIS DOCUMENT. (Do a “save as” if you want to use it as a template.)

Course Number: Course Title

Semester, Year

## Instructor Information

**Instructor:** name

**Email:** email

**Phone:** office or department phone

**Office:** office location

**Office Hours:** office hours

Homepage: (optional)

## Course Information

Meetings: time/day

Location: building/room

Catalog Description: add catalog description here

Prerequisites: add prerequisites here

Credit Hours: enter number of credit hours here

*Per ABA guidelines, you should anticipate a workload of roughly 42.5 hours per credit for the semester, which includes both in-class and out-of-class time. For elaboration, you may consult* [*BU Law’s Credit Hour Policy*](http://www.bu.edu/law/current-students/jd-student-resources/curricular-requirements/jd-degree-requirements/#credit-requirements)*.*

**Course Description**

Add description if different from catalog description

## **Course Materials**

List required texts and materials, as well as supplementary or recommended materials. Note where materials may be obtained.

## Course Objectives

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **OBJECTIVES** | **ASSESSMENTS** |
| **Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:** | **Students will be assessed on these learning objectives through:** |
| Include broad goals and specific skills that students will learn through the course | Include examples such as examinations, papers and other written assignments or exercises,, presentations, in-class discussion, etc. |

The learning objectives of Boston University School of Law are:

1. Students will possess knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law;

Students will possess the ability to perform:

a) legal analysis and reasoning

b) legal research

c) problem solving

d) written communication in the legal context

e) oral communication in the legal context

2. Students will understand the exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system; and

3. Students will demonstrate the professional skills of collaboration, counseling and negotiation needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession.

4. Students will demonstrate a basic understanding of business fundamentals and be able to read and understand basic financial documents.

Of course, a given course does not have to have all of these objectives. Here is an example (for a Corporations course):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **OBJECTIVES** | **ASSESSMENTS** |
| **Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:** | **Students will be assessed on these learning objectives through:** |
| Know and understand the basic substantive and procedural law of corporations | Final examination |
| Engage in legal analysis, reasoning, problem-solving, and oral communication. | Final examination and classroom participation. |
| Be familiar with the basic ethical responsibilities to clients, to the legal system, and to society in the context of corporate law. | Final examination |

## Course Workload

This course will meet for 26 2-hour sessions with a ten minute break for each session.  In addition, I estimate that the out-of-class preparation and assignments will be about 130 hours spread over the 13 class weeks and exam period. This work comprises case reading and preparation as well as work on the required research paper. (The preceding statement depends on your course. Many courses do not require papers. Most seminars do.)

Note: You should estimate the total amount of out-of-class work. ABA regulations require a total of 42.5 hours per credit. (For in-class work, an hour is 50 minutes. For out-of-class work, an hour is 60 minutes.) Therefore out-of-class work must meet the following minimums:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type of Course** | **Minimum Amount of Out-of-Class Work** |
| Four credit courses | 114 hours |
| Three credit courses | 85.5 hours |
| Seminars (Meet once a week for 2 hours with a ten minute break) | 99.5 hours |
| Other | Please conform to the ABA standard above. |

## Exams/Assignments and Grading

Describe each type of in-class and out-of-class assignment or work product you will require, e.g.:

1. a final exam and /or midterms, quizzes
2. a research paper or papers
3. reaction papers
4. oral presentations
5. negotiations or other simulations
6. drafting of litigation or transactional documents

For each assignment, please state your expectations about the form and substance of the assignment, your grading criteria for the assignment, and its weight in the student’s overall grade.

If you will consider class participation in grading, please state that and also the range of any potential grade adjustment.

## Upper-Class Writing Requirement

This section should be included if the student has the opportunity to use writing in the course to fully or partially satisfy the upper-class writing requirement. Here is an example:

The writing in this seminar can be used to partially satisfy the upper-class writing requirement through the required paper. This paper will be over 3000 words and require at least two drafts. If successful, the paper will qualify as a shorter paper which will partially satisfy the upper-class writing requirement.

Note: YOU MUST SPECIFY THE NUMBER OF WORDS AND THE NUMBER OF DRAFTS. There is a minimum of 3000 words for a shorter paper and a minimum of 6000 words for a longer paper. There is a minimum of 2 drafts. You may require more words or more drafts than these minimums.

## Course Policies

We recommend that you clearly state policies regarding:

1. Ground-rules for classroom discussion (focused on free speech exercised with empathy, respect, social and historical awareness and good faith) so as to facilitate an engaging and inclusive classroom climate.
2. Use of Generative AI Tools in the Exam: you need to elect whether to allow or to forbid the use of ChatGPT and similar tools. **If you choose to allow AI:**
	1. **Formulate a plan for incorporating ChatGPT**. Discuss the plan with students:
		1. Are students permitted to use it? If so, in what specific ways?
		2. Prohibited? If so, is it a blanket prohibition, or specific prohibited uses?
		3. Will you teach students how to use it appropriately?
		4. Will you develop a policy with their input?
	2. **Consider equity issues** as you decide whether to permit, prohibit, or channel:
		1. Do some students have access to the tool, and to the upgraded pay-for-use tool[[1]](#footnote-1), while others do not know how to use it? If use of the tool is expected in your class, can you address the equity concerns?
		2. Will prohibitions, if they are backed up with disciplinary actions, create particular issues for multi-lingual ELL students?
		3. Our students are learning about this tool just as we are. Should there be some space for misjudgments during this transition semester?

## **Attendance and Participation**

 State your policy.

*For further information regarding law school attendance and grading policies, you may consult the Academic and Disciplinary Regulations available from the law school.*

## Ground Rules for Classroom Discussion

We recommend state your policy for classroom discussion. In the alternative, you may want to create a community agreement for classroom discussions. More information on community agreements is available at:

<https://www.bu.edu/ctl/ctl_resource/creating-community-agreements-with-your-students/>

Here is a sample policy on classroom discussion:

An open exchange of ideas can be and often is very educational. However, the classroom is not a free speech zone. Some ideas and expressions that may receive the protection of the First Amendment in the public square, may nevertheless be unwelcome in the classroom. Disparaging speech concerning race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, and disability, and all other forms of hate speech are not permitted in the classroom. In addition, I expect students and myself to treat one another with kindness and respect and to give one another the benefit of the doubt as to our intentions. Given these parameters, I believe that we can have productive and educational discussions that cover a wide variety of viewpoints.

## Disability Accommodations

The School of Law at Boston University is committed to equal access for students with disabilities. If you have a specific disability and require accommodations in this class, please submit the [BU Disability & Access Services](https://www.bu.edu/disability/) (DAS) [online Intake Form](https://www.bu.edu/disability/incoming-students/request-accommodations-new-and-incoming-students/) and contact BU DAS to make an appointment by calling (617) 353- before the start or early in the semester, so that appropriate accommodations can be made in a timely manner. BU DAS will provide the Law Registrar with a letter of approved accommodations. Law faculty are only informed of accommodations that may affect the operation of the classroom. Law faculty are not informed of exam accommodations, to support the blind grading process. Contact information for BU DAS o is as follows: (617) 353-3658 V/TTY or access@bu.edu. All discussions with, and written materials provided to, BU DAS will be kept confidential.

## Course Schedule

**The grid below is merely suggestive.** Some instructors list the entirety of the semester’s assignments by date or by week at the beginning of the semester. Others may prefer to post reading and other assignments in installments throughout the semester, thereby preserving flexibility to account for the pace of the class. Others may list topics and assignments without firm dates initially, making specific assignments on a class-to-class or week-to-week basis. For credit-hour policy purposes, it is important that by the end of the semester, the entire set of your assignments for the semester is available on Blackboard. Identify holidays when the course would otherwise be meeting.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week or date | Topic | Reading Assignment/Other Assignment |
| 1 |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |
| 5 |  |  |
| 6 |  |  |
| 7 |  |  |
| 8 |  |  |
| 9 |  |  |
| 10 |  |  |
| 11 |  |  |
| 12 |  |  |
| 13 |  |  |

1. The free version of ChatGPT sometimes rejected a sign in because the system is overloaded. Those who pay $20/month for a subscription always get through. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)