CONTRACTS

SYLLABUS

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Course Objectives

This course is designed to help you develop a foundation of knowledge about contract law. As practicing attorneys, most of you will encounter contract-related questions and disputes on a regular basis. The concepts and skills you learn in this course will aid you in (1) counseling clients during the planning stage of transactions, (2) drafting contracts that achieve your clients’ goals, and (3) negotiating and advocating effectively for your clients’ interests. At the end of the semester, you should understand and be able to apply the legal rules regarding the requirements for a valid contract-based cause of action, how courts interpret contract language in litigated disputes, many of the most commonly encountered contractual defenses, and the remedies awarded to successful plaintiffs.

You will also continue to develop the following generally applicable practice skills:

1. Case reading, synthesis, and application;
2. Statutory reading, interpretation, and application;
3. Transactional drafting and strategy;
4. Collaborative problem-solving; and
5. Extemporaneous speaking ability.

Required Text

E. Allan Farnsworth et al., Contracts: Cases and Materials (8th ed. 2013).

Recommended Supplement

E. Allan Farnsworth et al., Selections for Contracts (any edition).

It is strongly recommended that you acquire a physical copy of Selections. Selections contains all of the Uniform Commercial Code (“UCC”) and Restatement (Second) of Contracts (“R2d”) provisions you will need to study for this course. You need not acquire the latest version—the 2013 edition, for example, contains all of the material we will cover.

There are dozens of contract-law supplemental texts available. Using these is generally not recommended. Instead, please raise your question(s) with your professor or your peers.
Office Hours

My official office hours during this semester are from 11:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. That said, I also have an open-door policy: my office door is usually open during regular business hours, and if it is open, please feel free to stop by. If you’d like to meet but your daily schedule precludes doing so during business hours, please contact me to set up an alternative time.

Grading

The inputs to your final grade for this course will be your (1) score on the final examination, and (2) attendance.

1. Final Exam

   The exam will likely comprise both multiple-choice and essay questions. The exam will likely be “closed” format, which does not allow use of any preprinted materials. Closed format also does not allow use of electronic devices, except that you may be required to use a laptop equipped with exam software to complete the exam.

2. Attendance Policy

   If you do not exceed six (6) absences, your attendance will not negatively impact your final grade. If you do exceed six (6) absences, your final grade will decrease by one letter grade (e.g., B to C) for each excessive absence. If you arrive late to class, it will count as an absence.

Laptops and Cell Phones

Use of laptops during class is permitted. Use of cell phones during class is not permitted. Please silence your cell phones before entering the classroom.