Instructor Information:
Cliff Harbour, J.D., Ed.D.
(he/him/his)
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Basic Information

Catalog Course Description:

Legal aspects and issues affecting institutions of higher learning and their administrations, faculties and students. Analyses of decisions rendered by the federal and state courts concerning procedural and substantive due process, civil rights, and the operation and function of higher education.

Texts:

Kaplin, W. A. and Lee, B. A. *The Law of Higher Education, 5th Edition, Student Version*. Also assigned are 34 appellate court opinions (7 are only recommended and marked with **), five journal articles (2 are only recommended and marked with a **), and a case study to facilitate discussion (Green Mountain). Citations are provided below and the texts are in the Judicial Opinions module in our Canvas class shell. You can also access the appellate court opinions via the Nexis Uni database at the UNT Library website: [http://www.library.unt.edu/](http://www.library.unt.edu/)

Class Meetings:

Wednesdays from 5:30 to 8:20 pm
Section 70 – Chil 245
Section 71 – Collin Higher Education Center

Office Hours:

Tuesdays 3:00 to 5:00 and Wednesdays 2:00 to 4:00

Goals and Objectives:

The goal of this course is to expose non-lawyers to a wide range of legal problems common at higher education institutions. The overall objective of the course is to provide basic knowledge of legal issues at the academy, with the goal of enabling current and prospective college and university faculty and administrators to recognize and identify legal problems and then seek the necessary guidance.
Course Objectives:

1. Understand, describe, and explain the different sources of law in the American legal system.
2. Understand and critique the operation and underlying philosophical assumptions of the adversarial system of justice.
3. Distinguish important procedural aspects of civil and criminal litigation.
4. Understand and differentiate the basic components of the United States Constitution.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the following basic legal concepts including: a) legal precedent, b) jurisdiction (original, appellate, in personam, in rem, and subject matter), c) the parties (e.g., plaintiff and defendant), d) pretrial, trial, and post trial proceedings, e) judicial remedies, and f) the organization of the state and federal courts.
6. Understand, describe and distinguish the legal rights and duties of college trustees, administrators, staff, and faculty.
7. Understand, describe, and analyze institutional and personal liability for torts and contracts.
8. Understand, describe, and analyze the scope and terms of the faculty contract.
9. Analyze and apply the constitutional and statutory prohibitions concerning employment discrimination (race, ethnicity, gender, age, and disability).
10. Analyze and apply the federal law concerning sexual harassment in employment.
11. Analyze and apply the federal law concerning affirmative action in employment.
12. Understand and explain faculty due process rights in personnel decisions.
13. Understand and explain the legal protections for academic freedom.
14. Understand and explain the legal status of students in higher education (including transgender and DACA).
15. Analyze and apply the federal law concerning affirmative action in student admissions.
16. Understand, describe, and explain the legal principles required in student disciplinary and academic grievance proceedings.
17. Understand, describe, and explain student rights concerning student organizations, student newspapers, and student records.
18. Understand, describe, and explain the significance of constitutional and statutory authority for the creation and operation of higher education institutions.

Course Format:

The course will be conducted in a mixed lecture and seminar format. I may also use multimedia, guest speakers, and in-class exercises to facilitate discussion. Students will be expected to have completed the readings for each class session in order to participate actively in class discussion and activities.

Assessment

Grading and Evaluation:

Your grade for this course will be based on your performance on the assignments listed below. Also, although assignment grades will be given in terms of points (e.g. 45 out of 50), please remember we are using a 100 point scale for the course. So, at the end of the course, 90 to 100
points will be an A; 80 to 89 points will be a B, 70 to 79 points will be a C. Please consult the 2017-18 Toulouse Graduate School Catalog for the kind of work associated with each letter grade (e.g., A = excellent, B = good, C = fair, etc.) for assignments and for the final course grade. Here are the point allocations for the assignments:

30 points – Final Project
30 points – Presentation of Two Briefs (15 points each)
20 points – Higher Education Law Leadership Paper
20 points – Class participation
100 points – TOTAL

Learning Activities

1. **Final Project (30 points):** Each student must complete the Final Project. The final project and its instructions will be posted in the EDHE 6790 Canvas course shell on September 19. The final project (your answers/essays responding to the questions) must be submitted to me by December 5 as a Word attachment e-mailed to Cliff.Harbour@unt.edu Your submission must be one document and it must be double-spaced. The purpose of this learning activity is to provide you with an opportunity to thoroughly examine major issues or legal decisions in higher education that you have studied in the course. Except as noted in the posted instructions, the paper must be well organized and well written and comply with all requirements of the APA Publication Manual (6th Edition).

2. **Presentation of Two Briefs (15 points each – 30 points total):** Each student must brief two cases during the semester. You are now invited to look through the cases (to become familiar with the topic) and the course calendar (to note when the case will be discussed) to determine what cases you would like to brief. Please note that the cases have different lengths and some are more complex than others. Part of my grading for your brief is determined by the length and complexity of the case you are briefing. So, if you select a long case or a complex case, I factor this into your grade. What this means is that a good (but not excellent) brief for a long or complex case typically earns a grade of A. On the other hand, a good (but not excellent) brief for a short and easy case only earns a grade of B. The purpose of this learning activity is to provide you with an opportunity to closely study, analyze, and then explain an appellate court’s judicial decision.

Please send me an e-mail with your two or three preferences for the cases you would like to brief as soon as you can. I will then make briefing assignments and try to assign you a case you have requested. I expect to have briefing assignments made by September 5. Please note that to balance the course calendar, I need to make the assignments in a way that prioritizes the course and the needs of the class first.

Your brief must be presented as a single-spaced Word doc, posted in the Student Briefs Canvas Module of the course for the week your brief is assigned. And, the brief must be posted the day
before the class it is to be discussed. Because you will need to read your brief – it will be the centerpiece for our discussion – it MUST be posted in a timely manner. Briefs that are posted late will result in a deduction of 5 points for every day it is late. It is better to post a so-so brief on time as opposed to a very good brief a day late. The brief must be no more than 1,500 words.

The brief MUST be organized in the following manner:

**Title:** State the title of the case.

**Parties:** State the names of the plaintiff(s) and the defendant(s).

**Court:** Identify the court rendering the decision.

**Procedural posture:** Explain how the case came to the court rendering the decision.

**Facts:** State the facts of the case as provided in the court’s opinion.

**Issue:** State the legal issue (or issues) addressed in the opinion. An issue must be presented in the form of a question. The question needs to focus on a legal issue (e.g., the plaintiff’s legal right, the defendant’s legal duty, etc.)

**Holding:** State the court’s responses to the issues. The holdings should be presented in one or two sentences. The holding needs to start out by offering a Yes or No answer to the question posed in the issue.

**Rationale:** Explain the court’s reasoning in support of its holdings. The court’s reasoning is presented in the majority opinion and it provides the argument the judges/justices used to come to their conclusion.

**Dissenting and Concurring Opinions:** Briefly explain any dissenting or concurring opinions.

**Discussion Questions:** Please include two discussion questions for the class that are based on your reading of the case. Please focus on a legal, social or ethical issue that emerges from the case. Discussion questions must be relevant to higher education.

3. **Higher Education Law Leadership Paper (20 points).** Each student must complete a Higher Education Law Leadership Paper. The Paper must be presented as a double-spaced Word doc, e-mailed to me by October 10 at: Cliff.Harbour@unt.edu

This paper must be a focused writing, based on your interview of a higher education professional, that concisely addresses the professional’s experiences or events where legal issues, rules, or guidelines were relevant to the behavior or decisions made by people involved in the experience or event. The purpose of this learning activity is to provide you with an opportunity to better understand the various legal issues, rules, or guidelines that were relevant to a higher education professional’s work *although these may not have been obvious at the time of the experience or event.* Please organize your paper in the following manner.
A. Please briefly describe the organizational context, the individuals involved (please use pseudonyms), and the experience or event.

B. Please briefly describe the relevant legal issues, rules, or guidelines. You do NOT need to formally identify statutes, regulations, court decisions, etc. The point of the exercise is to enhance your awareness of how the law affected a higher education professional’s experience or event.

C. If applicable, please also describe any relevant individual or institutional rights or duties, and to the extent you can, please describe the nature of the right or duty.

D. Please reflect on the interview, your participant, and any incomplete knowledge or biases YOU might have about the law, higher education, or the relationship between law and higher education.

E. In conclusion, please provide a summary discussion of the events or experiences and the higher education professional’s overall assessment of the events or experiences.

Your paper (excluding title page and references), must be no less than 8 pages and no more than 10 pages in length. The paper must be well organized and well written and comply with all requirements of the APA Publication Manual (6th Edition).

4. Class Participation (20 points). Each student must participate in our weekly discussion. You must participate every week in this discussion - with this important exception - everyone gets one free unexcused absence. However, you cannot use this unexcused absence for the week you are presenting a brief. Two or more unexcused absences will result in assigning a grade of 0 points for participation. If a student is absent for more than one class, he or she must schedule a meeting (in person or telephone conference) with me. For further information on the UNT Attendance Policy and guidelines for excused absences, student should consult the policy at: http://www.unt.edu/policy (see 6.039).

Also, in order to earn your participation points, your participation must be substantive. You do not need to make extensive comments to earn the participation points. And, the goal for participation is not perfection - its participation. Think. Discuss. Be engaged. But, quality and not quantity will be touchstone used in assessing participation. I will not provide an assessment of your participation until the end of the course so you have the responsibility of ensuring that your participation is thoughtful every week. The purpose of this activity is to promote growth in your understanding of higher education and its relationship to the law through engagement with course materials and colleagues.

**TURNITIN NOTICE:** Students may be required to submit written assignments for this class to Turnitin, a web-based plagiarism detection service. Before submitting your paper to Turnitin, please remove your title page and other personal information. (Instructions regarding using Turnitin will be covered in class)
**Academic Integrity & Academic Misconduct**

Academic Integrity is defined in the UNT Policy on Student Standards for Academic Integrity. Academic Dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and sabotage. Any suspected case of Academic Dishonesty will be handled in accordance with University policy and procedures. Possible academic penalties range from a verbal or written admonition to a grade of “F” in the course. Further sanctions may apply to incidents involving major violations. The policy and procedures are available at: [http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm](http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm)

**Eagle Connect**

All UNT students should activate and regularly check their EagleConnect (e-mail) account. EagleConnect is used for official communication from the University to students. Many important announcements for the University and College are sent to students via EagleConnect. For information about EagleConnect, including how to activate an account and how to have EagleConnect forwarded to another e-mail address, visit [https://eagleconnect.unt.edu](https://eagleconnect.unt.edu). This is the main electronic contact for all course-related information and/or material.

**Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)**

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13 and 14 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" ([no-reply@iasystem.org](mailto:no-reply@iasystem.org)) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the spot website at [www.spot.unt.edu](http://www.spot.unt.edu) or email [spot@unt.edu](mailto:spot@unt.edu).

**Equity and Diversity**

As stated by the UNT Division of Institutional Equity and Diversity Resources [https://edo.unt.edu/division-institutional-equity-diversity-resources](https://edo.unt.edu/division-institutional-equity-diversity-resources) at UNT, we are committed to the elimination of discrimination and harassment. UNT is also committed to institutionalizing the concepts of access, a positive campus climate, compliance (with relevant federal and state laws), cultural competency, cultural humility, diversity, equal opportunity, equity, inclusion, and inclusive excellence. In particular, please note that class rosters are provided to instructors with your legal name but without an identification of your gender. Because not all students use the name or sex/gender assigned at birth, I am happy to use the name and pronouns you use. We will take time during our first class to do introductions at which time you can share with all members of our learning community what name and pronouns you use. Additionally, if these change at any point during the semester, please let me know and we can develop a way to share this information with others in a way that is comfortable and safe for you.

**Acceptable Student Behavior**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to
consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [www.deanofstudents.unt.edu](http://www.deanofstudents.unt.edu)

**Emergency Notifications and Procedures**
UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.

**Observation of Religious Holy Days**
If you plan to observe a religious holy day that coincides with a class day, please notify me as soon as possible.

**Retention of Student Records**
Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about students’ records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University’s policy.

**Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault**
UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT’s Dean of Students’ website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: [http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0](http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0).
Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT’s Student Advocate and she can be reached through e-mail at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students’ office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.

**Disability Accommodation**
The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding
your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Disclaimer:

This course provides general information about the law as it relates to institutions of higher education and will include subjective discussion of various matters. Nothing in this syllabus and nothing discussed or presented in class should be construed as personal or professional legal advice. Please always consult legal counsel for legal advice on specific matters.

Readings and Tentative Course Schedule

August 29
Welcome, Introductions, and Review of the Syllabus
Readings:
   1. Kaplin & Lee: General Introduction & Chp. 1

September 5
Background: The Constitution and Civil Litigation
Readings:
   1. Kaplin & Lee: Chps. 1 & 2
   2. U.S. Constitution
   3. Marbury v. Madison, 5 U.S. 137 (1803) (I’ll submit a brief for Marbury.)

September 12
The Authority and Liability of Institutions
(Contract and Tort Liability)
Readings:
   1. Kaplin & Lee: Chp. 3
**September 19**

**Liability of Institutions**

*(Educational Malpractice and Research Issues and Methods)*

Readings:

1. Kaplin & Lee: Chp. 3
4. Other readings mentioned: Dissertations by John Sands and Leigh Wolfe Dawson.

**September 26**

**The Authority & Liability of Institutions**

*(Duty to Warn/Protect; Employment Discrimination – Transgender)*

Readings:

1. Kaplin & Lee: Chp. 4

**October 3**

**The Institution and Its Employees**

*(Employment Discrimination – Sexual Harassment)*

Readings:

1. Kaplin & Lee, Chps. 4 & 7

**October 10**

**The Institution and Its Employees**

*(Employment Discrimination – Race/Ethnicity; Affirmative Action; Due Process)*

Readings:

1. Kaplin & Lee, Chp. 5

**October 17**

**The Institution and Its Employees**

*(Faculty Contracts)*

Readings:

1. Kaplin & Lee: Chp. 5
3. *Board of Regents v. Roth*, 408 U.S. 593 (1972)
October 24
The College and Its Faculty
(Faculty Academic Freedom)
Readings:
1. Kaplin & Lee: Chp. 6

October 31
The College and Its Faculty
(Faculty Academic Freedom; Leadership Issues and Problems)
Readings:
1. Kaplin & Lee: Chp. 6
2. Green Mountain Valley Community College Case Study
3. Lanker v. University of Wyoming (Complaint filed March __, 2010; Judge Downes’ Oral Order, April 27, 2010)

November 7
Student Issues (Access, Admissions, Affirmative Action)
Readings:
1. Kaplin & Lee: Chps. 7 & 8
5. **Students for Fair Admissions Inc. v. Harvard College (November 17, 2014)

November 14
Student Issues (Transgender and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals “DACA”)
Readings:
1. Kaplin & Lee: Chps. 7 & 8
November 21 (CHEC is closed. We will meet online in Canvas this week.)

Student Issues (DACA, Privacy and Campus Security)

Readings:


4. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

   [http://ferpa.unt.edu/what-is-ferpa.html](http://ferpa.unt.edu/what-is-ferpa.html)


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November 28

Student Issues

(Student Conduct and Speech)

Readings:

1. Kaplin & Lee, Chps. 9 & 10


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December 5

Course Review and Synthesis

Final Project is due.

August 26, 2018