

Contracts I Online

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Office Hours: T/Th 3:00-4:30 (sign up through TWEN)

Welcome

Welcome to Contracts I online! This year will be a challenge for us all, but I am determined to ensure that you learn Contracts just as well online as you would in a traditional in-person class (if not, better!). My promises to you:

1. I promise to explain things in as clear a way as possible so that your Contracts experience can be largely self-guided.
2. I promise to be available for in-person (Zoom) meetings to help you navigate Contracts, the stress of 1L year, and the stress of entering law school under difficult circumstances.
3. I promise that you will learn Contract law as well as any student who takes Contract law in-person.
4. I promise to help you succeed in Contracts and law school—as long as you keep putting in the work on your end.

Format of Course

This course has been designed as a mix of asynchronous and synchronous learning. I will be pre-recording all Contracts lectures for this class, which will be available on Panopto through Bridges. Your weekly assignments will consist of:

- a) Doing the required readings and;
- b) Watching the asynchronous class prior to our designated class time.

For instance, our first class is Tuesday August 18. Prior to that class, you will read pp. 1-18 in the Textbook and watch the video called “Introduction.” Then, we will meet remotely on Tuesday during our scheduled time slot (12:30-1:45) to discuss the material, go over questions, etc.

All substantive material will be taught through the pre-recorded, asynchronous classes. The twice weekly classes are going to be used for the following purposes (the 5 C’s):

- Clarity:** I will answer all questions that students submit through the “Forum” function in TWEN; questions must be submitted by 9:00am the morning of class.
- Comprehension:** I will test you, including cold calls, on whether you understand the material.
- Choice (Multiple):** I will be preparing a series of multiple choice questions where students will “vote” for the right answer and we will then discuss as a group.
- Conversation:** We will have conversations about interesting, controversial, and/or policy-oriented issues that come up throughout the course.
- Challenge:** We will be taking up pre-assigned practice questions to help prepare for tests and the final exam. These will be short essay questions.

I want to be clear that I will not be doing each of these things in every class. Rather, some classes we will focus on Multiple Choice, other classes we will engage in more conversation, other classes we may do a mix of things. The purpose of these classes is to supplement the learning that you must be doing independently through the pre-recorded classes.

Forums in TWEN

Any questions you have about the material should be submitted in advance of class through the “Forum” link on TWEN. Please do not email me these questions individually. I have used TWEN (rather than Bridges) because TWEN allows for anonymous posts and replies. I know some students may be concerned about posting a question/reply under their name—so hopefully, this alleviates that concern.

I also strongly urge students to post replies to questions that your classmates submit so that you can test your own knowledge.

All students are responsible for accessing the questions prior to class so that you know what will be discussed.

Readings for Course

The readings from this course will come primarily from the required text, *Knapp, Crystal & Prince, Problems in Contract Law, Aspen Publishers: 9th Ed., 2018*. In addition, you should purchase a statutory supplement. I recommend Burton & Eisenberg, *Contract Law: Selected Source Materials*, West Publishers. (Note: you may purchase an older version of this statutory supplement, or any other supplement that contains Article 2 of the UCC and the Restatement of Contracts – they are available for less than \$10 on some websites). Finally, supplementary readings (cases,

newspaper articles, academic articles, etc.) are posted on Westlaw's TWEN website. You are responsible for obtaining a password for Westlaw/TWEN from the library and registering with the website as soon as possible.

I have already mapped out the readings for every single class to correspond with the individual pre-recorded power points. It is highly recommended that you keep pace with the course and *do not read ahead*.

TWEN and Bridges

Bridges is the online course management software that is used by Roger Williams University. Ever since I've been teaching at RWU, I have elected to use a law-specific course management system provided by Westlaw called TWEN (instead of Bridges). All relevant course materials are posted on TWEN, not Bridges. With that said, TWEN does not allow me to upload videos. So all the videos for this class will be uploaded on Panopto though Bridges. All Zoom sessions will also be through Bridges.

This bifurcated system (TWEN and Bridges) is not ideal, I realize. But I did not want to switch everything over to Bridges and then lose some of the desirable features of TWEN (e.g. access to CALI lessons, anonymous discussion forums, easy sign-ups, etc.).

So, bottom line: the "tech" components of this course (videos and Zoom) are on Bridges; the rest is on TWEN.

One additional note on TWEN: TWEN shows you a preview of the document on the home screen, but to get the full formatted document, you must download it to your computer.

Formative Assessments

Pursuant to faculty vote, the Law School has adopted a policy for all first year and required upper level courses that satisfy the following parameters:

1. Faculty must provide students with three formative assessments during the course of the semester; and
2. These formative assessments must count toward the final grade;

Within these parameters, professors have some discretion on when/how to provide these formative assessments. You may be wondering, at this point, *what the heck is a formative assessment?* A formative assessment is simply a fancy way of saying some form of assessment (test, quiz, paper, etc.) that takes place during the semester so that students can gauge how they are doing.

In Contracts I, all students will be required to take the following three formative assessments:

1. **Quiz 1** Date TBD

2. **Quiz 2** Date TBD

3. **Quiz 3** Date TBD

IMPORTANT: If you have documented academic accommodations, please contact the Assistant Dean of Student, Lorraine Lalli, as soon as possible.

Please note that you will have formative assessments in all of your 1L classes. You will also have various writing assignments due during the semester for Legal Practice. You may have multiple assignments/tests the same day or week. This cannot be avoided. It will be extremely important for you to engage in methodical and rigorous time management. Simply “cramming” at the last minute will not work.

Each quiz will be worth 5% of the grade; but your lowest quiz score will be dropped. For instance, if you get 3/5; 4/5 and 2/5, the 2/5 will be dropped and you will get a grade of 7/10 for your quizzes.

Attendance & Completion of Asynchronous Course

I will be counting on you to monitor your own attendance and completion of the asynchronous courses (though I can see who has viewed each class). At the end of the semester, you must submit a certification to me that you have watched all the classes (or specify those that you did not) and you must list the dates that you did not attend the remote classes.

Learning Outcomes

RWU Law has adopted certain learning outcomes for students. By the end of this year-long course, students should be able to:

DOCTRINAL & SUBSTANTIVE KNOWLEDGE

- a) Understand basic “black-letter” law as it relates to contracts.
- b) Apply contract law to given fact scenarios.
- c) Prepare themselves to succeed on the contracts and sales portion of the bar exam.

LEGAL ANALYSIS SKILLS

- a) Analyze and form sound judgments on a range of issues pertaining to contract law.
- b) Draw and synthesize governing legal principles pertaining to contract law from a variety of sources.
- c) Identify the contract issues inherent in actual cases or hypothetical problems.
- d) Identify the legal rules and facts necessary to competently analyze contract issues inherent in an actual case or hypothetical problem.
- e) Assess the strengths and weaknesses of potential legal arguments and counter-arguments on contract issues.
- f) Differentiate the types and relevance of legal authorities bearing on contract issues, including statutes and case law.

WRITING SKILLS

- a) Articulate in writing cohesive and logical legal assessments and arguments pertaining to contract issues, applying legal analysis to those issues.

PROFESSIONALISM

- a) Prepare thoroughly.
- b) Communicate professionally in person and in writing with the professor.
- c) Develop skills of self-regulated learning, reflection, and self-assessment.
- d) Act with integrity and civility throughout this course.

ORAL COMMUNICATION AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- a) Communicate precisely, using appropriate contract terminology.
- b) Listen attentively and proactively.
- c) Interact effectively and sensitively with a broad range of people with differing backgrounds, ideas, and expressions.
- d) Develop public speaking skills.