

- **Course Title**

**Applied Agricultural Law
Agricultural Economics 375
Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics
North Dakota State University**



- **Number of Credits**

This course is 3 semester-credits.



- **Instructor and Contact Information**

David M. Saxowsky
Associate Professor
Richard H. Barry Hall 428
Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics
North Dakota State University

E-mail: david.saxowsky@ndsu.edu (*I generally do not check e-mail between Saturday noon and Monday morning; nor do I check e-mail between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. most weekdays*)

Phone: 701-231-7470 any time between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (central time) Monday through Friday [*leave a message (your name, phone number, and a good time for me to call you) if I am unable to answer your call*]

Stop by my office at Barry Hall 428 (*I try to keep a candy jar in my office*)

Schedule an appointment at class or by e-mail for us to meet in person or by phone

Fax: 701-231-7400 (*this is the department's fax number; your fax may be seen by others before I receive it; use your discretion in deciding whether to send confidential information to me via fax*)

Mailing address: David Saxowsky
Agribusiness & Applied Economics
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- **Course Description**

Study of laws affecting agriculture and agribusiness including property ownership, torts, contractual obligations, leasing, and environmental regulation.

This course is a series of readings, discussions and writing assignments leading to a better understanding of the U.S. legal system, legal issues, and laws of practical importance to agricultural producers, agribusinesses, and citizens. The objective of the

course is to introduce basic concepts of law sufficient to permit individuals to identify and decide whether they have encountered a situation requiring legal advice and assistance. An important part of the course also is developing a thought process for organizing and analyzing problem situations.



- **Course Dates**

Spring Semester 2012 (January 9 to May 11)



- **Format for Hybrid Course**

This course is taught as a "hybrid" course; that is, we will meet half the normal time for a 3-credit course and you will study individually for the other "half" of the class time. When we do meet, I will try to lecture as little as possible, and instead facilitate class discussion about what you have studied prior to class.

In preparation for each class meeting, every student will be **REQUIRED** to submit a "weekly message" (more information about weekly messages is available in another section of this Blackboard site). There will be assigned seating during our class meetings with a expectation/requirement that students professionally participate in the discussion.

In addition to the weekly messages and weekly discussions, there will be series of assignments -- probably six writing assignments -- throughout the semester (additional information about the assignments also is available in another section of this Blackboard site).

This course relies exclusively on writing assignments and weekly messages for assessing student learning; there are no exams or quizzes. All assignments will be submitted and returned by e-mail. My e-mail address is isdauid.saxowsky@ndsu.edu. I **STRONGLY** encourage you to use your NDSU or DSU e-mail address for this course. Experience has clearly demonstrated that these campus-based systems work much better for the purposes of this course than does a "hotmail" or other e-mail system.



- **Class Meeting Times and Places**

Fridays

8:00-9:15 a.m. Mountain Time

9:00-10:15 p.m. Central Time

DSU: Murphy Hall, Classroom 155

NDSU: Barry Hall 418 (conference room)

Video Conferencing

This course will be taught via video conferencing (North Dakota Interactive Video Network). The class may be recorded at the instructor's discretion for the limited

purpose of providing a backup in case of technical difficulty or for review if someone missed a class.



Course Objectives and Teaching Philosophy

The overall objective for this course is to help **prepare students to be professionals in the information age**. Consistent with this overall objective, this class will strive to achieve the following points.

1. Enhance skills to be a life-long learner, including the skill to identify and recognize credible sources of relevant information.
2. Enhance communication skills, especially written communications skills. These skills include an understanding of citing references, quoting sources, writing concisely, using subtitles, logically organizing ideas, and applying rules of grammar and punctuation appropriate for a professional.
3. Establish an understanding of selected law-related topics as demonstrated by the ability to accurately describe the selected concepts.
4. Demonstrate an ability to apply law-related concepts to resolve real problems, including the ability to describe the problem, identify and describe relevant legal concepts, and explain how the concept can help resolve the problem.

The course will **focus on writing** because few problems in the real world appear to be true/false or multiple choice. Instead, most problems appear to be essay questions in which the problem solver needs to identify the important facts of the problem, find relevant information, and develop and communicate a solution. Also, the growth in information -- fueled in part by advancing information technology -- is forcing us to rely less on memorized information and more on being able to find and use relevant information to answer the question.

The focus will be on writing relatively short documents because our readers do not have time to read extended pieces; instead, we must practice the skill of concise writing.

- Oral communication skills also are critical for professionals in the information age; however since there is not enough time in any one course to practice all skills, we will focus on writing and trust that you will have opportunity to practice and refine formal oral communication skills in other courses.
- The course will focus on individual work, with little or no team or group work. Again, the assumption is that you will have opportunity to practice and refine teamwork skills in other courses.

The course strives to provide an educational experience, rather than just information:

- **Education:** Increases awareness and knowledge about issues and provides the skills to make informed decisions and take responsible actions. It does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action. It teaches individuals how to weigh various sides of an issue through critical thinking and it enhances their own problem-solving skills.
- **Information:** Providing facts or opinions about issues or problems, but may not enhance critical-thinking, problem solving or decision-making skills.

Although information is an essential element of any educational effort, information is not, by itself, education.

- - *Paraphrased from definitions from the Environmental Education Grants Program, August 31, 2000*

Bloom's Taxonomy

An overall objective is to enhance student thinking skills -- similar to the ideas set forth by Benjamin S. Bloom.

Bloom's Taxonomy is the idea that individuals enhance their skills as they proceed through their education. For example when first beginning to study a topic or concept, the student begins to **know** and **comprehend** the concept. As they continue to refine their understanding, students are able to **apply** the concept and **analyze** situations. Finally, when the topic has been "mastered," the student should be able to **evaluate** ideas and **create** new ones.

The following links provide several descriptions of Bloom's Taxonomy.

- http://education.calumet.purdue.edu/vockell/edpsybook/bloom/bloom's_taxonomy.htm
- <http://www.coe.uga.edu/epltt/bloom.htm>
- <http://www.coun.uvic.ca/learn/program/hndouts/bloom.html>
- <http://www.officeport.com/edu/blooms.htm>
- <http://faculty.washington.edu/krumme/guides/bloom1.html>.

For the purpose of this course (AGEC 375), we will focus on **knowing** and **comprehending** legal concepts. We work at this level because this may be the first time many students are being introduced to legal principles. We also should be able to **apply** some of the concepts because we are adults and experienced learners. At this point in our career, we should be able to go beyond simply knowing and comprehending, even if the concepts are new to us.

Active Learning

Students will be expected to be actively engaged throughout this course. For example, students will NOT be given hypothetical problems to solve. Instead, they will be expected to comprehend the topics and identify how the concept can be applied to their own situation. Restated, assignments will require students to use their own situation as the foundation for demonstrating the application of a concept.

- *"First and foremost, the student is Actively Involved and participates in his or her instruction. Information is not delivered to him or her, rather the student creates it."* See <http://inspiral.cdrl.strath.ac.uk/about/learners.html>.



Detailed Learning Objectives

1. Demonstrate the ability to be an independent life-long learner by accurately and concisely describing a legal concept after self-study and before class discussion.
2. Demonstrate the ability to recognize, understand and apply credible information by appropriately incorporating ideas from an information source into a brief document and appropriately citing the source.
3. Demonstrate a fundamental understanding of the U.S. legal system by briefly describing one or more of the following topics: concept of law, the dynamic nature of

law, the distinction between a legal issue and a policy issue, the long history of some legal concepts, the distinction between an exercise of police power and a taking, the three branches of U.S. government and their respective types of law, the process of locating laws and other credible sources of legal information, or methodology for citing legal references.

- All students will be expected to describe the relationship between statutory law and regulatory law, or the interaction between the role of the legislative branch and the executive branch of government. The discussion must go beyond describing the interactions among the branches of government that were understood before taking this course, e.g., authority to veto legislation, or responsibility of confirming appointments. Instead, the description must demonstrate an understanding of the interaction among the Constitution, statutes, regulations, and common law, for example.

4. Subject Matter Topics

- 4A. Provide a concise overview of several property concepts with enough specificity to demonstrate an understanding of the topic. Possible topics include describing property as a "bundle of legal rights;" real property, personal property, fixtures, severed property, and intangible property; fee simple absolute; life estate; waste; merger; trusts; fiduciary responsibility; joint tenancy and tenancy in common; community property and common law property; easements, statute of frauds; conditions in a purchase agreement; deed (warranty and quit claim), marketable title (abstract, title opinion or title insurance); closing; recording; acquiring land by inheritance or gift; adverse possession and prescriptive easement; escheat; eminent domain; inverse condemnation (e.g., regulation as a taking and exercise of police power); and limitations on ownership rights.
- 4B. Provide a concise overview of several tort concepts with enough specificity to demonstrate an understanding of the topic. Topics include introduction of torts; civil action v. criminal action; types of torts (e.g., trespass, attractive nuisance, nuisance, liability to entrants); state of mind (intentional, negligent, strict liability); types of damages (compensatory and punitive); and legal defenses to tort claims.
- 4C. Provide a concise overview of several contract concepts with enough specificity to demonstrate an understanding of the topic. Topics include purpose of a contract, requirements to form a contract, statute of frauds, statutory and implied terms of a contract (e.g., merchantability, fit for a particular purpose), fulfilling a contract, enforcing a contract, or modifying a contract.
- 4D. Provide a concise overview of a leasing topic with enough specificity to demonstrate an understanding of the topic. Topics include "a lease is a combination of property and contract concepts", types of leases, rights of tenant and owner, ground lease, eviction, and the role of statutory law that address lease arrangements.
- 4E. Provide a concise overview of several laws that address the use and management of natural resources, and identify the legal issues that may arise from enforcing these laws. The discussion must provide enough

specificity to demonstrate an understanding of the topic. Topics include the relative "newness" of resource management laws, interaction between federal environmental laws and state enforcement, point source and non-point source water pollution, disposal of hazardous waste, draining a wetland, acquiring the legal right to use water, and soil conservation.

5. Demonstrate (several times during the course) an ability to apply legal concepts. For example, briefly describe a situation based on the student's experience and describe how a particular legal concept helps resolve or explain the situation. Each example of an application of a legal concept requires a brief description of the situation. Alternatively, demonstrate an ability to apply the legal concept to a real situation, such as a current event based on a local newspaper article or a credible web site. Such an example requires that the student provide a brief overview of the event.

6. Demonstrate the ability to analyze a complex legal issue by presenting and discussing legal arguments from several perspectives.

- For example, briefly describe a tort situation and appropriately apply the legal concept adequate to demonstrate an understanding of how the legal concept(s) helps clarify and resolve the situation/uncertainty; for example, address the actor's state of mind, types of damages, and defenses.
- Another legal issue that lends itself to two perspectives is "whether a contract needs to be in writing." For example, what is the general rule about contracts having to be written, how does the statute of frauds alter this general rule, and how do the exceptions to the statute of frauds impact whether a contract needs to be written?
- A third legal issue that lends itself to two perspectives is 1) the exercise of police power versus 2) a taking that requires compensation under the common law legal concept of inverse condemnation.



Schedule

The schedule for the semester can be found by clicking on "Schedule" along the left edge of this web site.



Scoring and Course Grade

Course activities throughout the semester will fit into two broad categories: 1. weekly messages, and 2. writing assignments.

Scoring

- Weekly messages: 5 points each; 14 weeks for a total of 70 points
- Writing assignment 1: 22 points
- Writing assignments 2-6: 45 points each for a total of 225 points

Total points for the semester -- 317 points

The **final course grade** will be assigned on a curve based on the highest score in the class. To receive an A, your score must be within 90% of the highest possible score; a

B requires a score between 80% and 90% of the highest possible score; a C requires a score between 70% and 80% of the highest possible score; a D requires a score between 60% and 70% of the highest possible score; and a score below 60% of the highest possible score will not receive a passing grade. I reserve the authority to shift this curve downward and thereby raise a student's letter grade.



• **Weekly Messages**

More information about weekly messages is available by clicking on "Weekly Messages" along the left edge of this site.



• **Writing Assignments**

Student learning will **primarily** be assessed through a series of short papers assigned and completed throughout the semester. Each **Writing Assignment** will be submitted twice; I will comment on the first version (draft) and return it; students will have an opportunity to revise the assignment and submit it a second time for grading.

Factors considered in grading the assignments will focus on

- your description of the legal concept(s) you have chosen or have been assigned to address,
- your application of that concept(s) to a problem situation (a situation you identify and describe), and
- the clarity of your writing.

All assignments will be submitted as attachments to e-mail messages.

- My e-mail address is david.saxowsky@ndsu.edu
- I would urge everyone to use Word (not Works) to complete their assignment. On rare occasion, you may find yourself using a spreadsheet such as Excel, but I expect most assignments will be short documents (7 to 9 paragraphs).
- Be sure to indicate in the subject line of the e-mail message the course and assignment number; e.g., "AGEC 375, assignment 1." This is necessary because I will be receiving assignments by e-mail for several courses throughout the semester.

Assignment 1 is an opportunity for you to introduce yourself to me. Indicate your name, major, your professional or career interests, recent work, business or other experiences, and what you hope to gain by completing this course.

Subsequent assignments will be opportunities for you to describe and apply concepts we have discussed in class. Instructions for each assignment will be provided as the assignment is made (*click on the **Writing Assignments** link along the left edge of this page*). Due dates will be set according to the progress of the class; due dates will be discussed and announced in class as well as posted to this web site.

One of the first topics we will be learning this semester is where and how to find credible law-related information on the web. We also will review rules for citing the reference materials you rely on.



More thoughts about the Writing Assignments

For each Writing Assignment (except the last Writing Assignment), you will submit a DRAFT. These initial (draft) papers will NOT be scored/graded. If the final paper is not submitted, the score for that Writing Assignment will be 0 (zero) even though an initial or draft paper had been submitted.

It is NOT the student's privilege to decide to redo a paper after it has been assigned a score by the instructor.

Due dates for all assignments will be determined as we proceed through the semester; as due dates are set, they will be announced in class and posted to this web site (see the Announcement page).

To encourage students to not fall behind on their assignments, a "drop-dead" date may be imposed; that is, a date when scores for uncompleted assignments will be entered as a 0. For example, the drop-dead date for Assignment 1 will be when the class moves onto Assignment 2; the drop-dead date for Assignment 2 will be when the class moves onto Assignment 3. We will follow a similar practice for the remainder of the semester. This deadline is to prevent someone from submitting all assignments during the last several weeks of the semester (doing all the work at the end of the semester is NOT a learning experience and will not be tolerated). For most students, this deadline has no consequence because the assignments will be completed on time, rather than being allowed to accumulate on the student's "to do" list. If you anticipate not being able to keep up with the assignments, contact me or see me after class.

Assignments sent to the instructor by the deadline (according to the computer-generated time and date indicated on the e-mail message) will be considered as submitted "on time" even if there are technical (computer) problems and the assignment needs to be resent.

The instructor will make every effort to acknowledge receiving an assignment; you will receive a brief reply from me immediately after I **receive** your message (note -- this is not when you **send** the message). This brief reply will probably say "Thanks. David." It indicates that I received your message and was able to open the attachment. If you do not receive a reply from me within 36 hours of submitting an assignment, contact me to assure that I received your message and attachment (see me in class, or call 701-231-7470, or send a second e-mail to me at david.saxowsky@ndsu.edu). Likewise, if I have trouble opening your attachment, I will indicate that in the reply and ask you to send the assignment a second time.

Subsequently, you will receive a second message from me after I have read, commented on, and scored the assignment. This message will include an attached Word file with your paper, my comments, and your score.

Students are expected to carefully indicate the purpose of the message in the subject line; such as "AGEC 375; Assignment 1". This will reduce the chance that the instructor will overlook your e-mailed assignment.

Assignments will be scored by the instructor. Unless indicated differently, each assignment will be given equal weight (this may be altered during the semester but such

changes will be announced in class and posted to this web site). Factors the instructor will consider in scoring a paper include

- grammar, spelling, punctuation;
- logical organization;
- proper use of subtitles and other techniques to "guide" your reader through your paper;
- careful, accurate and thorough description of the legal concept(s);
- appropriate description and application of legal concept(s);
- appropriate use and citation of others' ideas;
- thorough discussion of how you apply the legal concepts to your situation;
- the conciseness of your writing; and
- the relevance of the legal concept you are applying to your situation.

Students are encouraged to contact the instructor if they have any questions about the assignments or grading procedures.

I chose this style of assignments because I believe you will be required in the "real world" to write memos and short papers far more often than you will be required to take a quiz or an exam. Hopefully, these assignments will provide opportunities for you to practice concise and accurate thinking and communication.

Expectations will advance with each writing assignment even though basic instructions will remain similar. The following points should be achieved by the end of these assignments.

- Assignment 1 -- a) begin to appreciate the level of writing required for the course, b) be comfortable with the process of submitting a draft, receiving comments, submitting a final version, and receiving a grade, c) have your campus-based e-mail functioning, and d) be comfortable with sending and receiving Word files as attachments via e-mail.
- Assignment 2 -- a) understand the required format for the assignments, e.g., identifying information (name, date, title for document), introduction, subtitles, requirement of discussing three legal concepts and one example, citing references, summary, Works Cited page, b) recognize the need to adequately describe the three legal concepts, c) writing in the third person, and d) recognize the need to adequately describe the situation presented in the example.
- Assignments 3 and 4 -- a) be able to use statutes and court cases to support your explanation (do not rely primarily on a dictionary for your reference), b) effectively introduce and summarize the three concepts in the introduction and summary, c) use appropriate legal terminology, and d) use proper citation format throughout the document and on the Works Cited page.
- Assignment 5 -- able to present complex thoughts such as counter arguments; i.e., the requirement of addressing both relevant legal theories and legal defenses.
- Assignment 6 -- able to develop/draft, revise, and submit a document without needing external feedback on the draft.



Special Circumstances

Any student with special needs or who need specific accommodations during this course to ensure access to campus programs and facilities is invited and encouraged to share these concerns or requests with the instructor as soon as possible.

Veterans and student soldiers with special circumstances or who are activated are encouraged to notify the instructor in advance.



Academic Conduct

All work in this course must be completed in a manner consistent with

- DSU Code of Student Conduct (pages 13-15 of the pdf file at http://www.dickinsonstate.edu/uploadedFiles/DSU/Content/Campus_Life/Residential_Life/DSU%20Student%20Guide%2010_11.pdf and
- NDSU University Senate Policy, Section 335: Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct (<http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/335.pdf>) and A Code of Student Behavior at <http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/studentlife/StudentCode.pdf>.

All students taking any course in the NDSU College of Agriculture, Food Systems and Natural Resources are under the Honor System (<http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/academics/honor.htm>). The Honor System is governed by students and operates on the premise that most students are honest and work best when their honesty, and the honesty of others, is not in question. It functions to prevent cheating as well as penalize those who are dishonest. It is the responsibility of the student to report any violations of the honor pledge to the instructor, honor commission, or the Dean of the College of Agriculture.

Some of you may be familiar with the Honor System from other NDSU agriculture courses in which you had to sign the following statement when taking an exam or quiz: *HONOR PLEDGE: Upon my honor, I have not given nor received aid in writing this examination.*

Academic conduct also is critical in the preparation of assignments. Student are expected to adhere to appropriate practices when relying on the thoughts of others, for example, when using an idea from a publication or another person. Properly citing reference materials and submitting one's own work are important components of appropriate academic conduct.

It is a violation of university policy, unprofessional, and unethical to use someone else's words without identifying the quote and citing the source.



Use of Copyrighted Materials

It is unprofessional, unethical, and in some cases, a violation of university policy and federal law to inappropriately use someone else's ideas or to quote their materials without properly identifying the source and the quoted statement. It is absolutely critical that all work in this course recognize the intellectual property of others. The basic guideline for this course is to cite the source of all ideas incorporated into your work product, whether the idea is presented as words, an image, or an audio or video recording. If the idea is presented as a quote, the quoted materials must be identified with quotation marks and the source properly cited.

The work of others can be reproduced without violating federal law if the reproduction fits the definition of fair use. **Fair use** includes reproducing a work for "purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research ... In determining whether the use made of a work in any particular case is a fair use the factors to be considered shall include — (1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes; (2) the nature of the copyrighted work; (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work" (17 USC 107). However, the source must still be properly cited.

For more information about appropriate use of another person's thoughts, please contact the instructor (david.saxowsky@ndsu.edu).



Student Input

A formal course evaluation will be administered near the end of the semester. However, to help the instructor provide the best course possible, occasionally students may be asked to provide anonymous ungraded comments/suggestions. Likewise, students may leave suggestions/comments for the instructor with Dr. Chip Poland (DSU) or Dr. Cole Gustafson (NDSU).



Prerequisite

Junior or Senior standing. This course is not a prerequisite for any other class.

Students will be expected to read and write at a college level.

All assignments are submitted and returned by e-mail. Students need to know how to use e-mail, word processing (highly recommend Microsoft Word), and e-mail attachments. The course also relies heavily on web-based materials; students need to know how to use web technology to locate and visit appropriate web sites.



Topics and e-Text

The course will address the following broad categories

- Sources of the Law
- Property Concepts
- Tort Obligations

- Contractual Relationships
- Leasing
- Environmental Considerations

These materials will be updated throughout the course; do not be surprised to see changes as we go through them.

Also, you will see that numerous links have been included in these materials. Take time to visit these sites; they will add detail to our class discussions. Plan to spend time at a computer reading these materials; think of this computer time as replacing time you would otherwise spend reading a text. Do NOT expect that "occasionally printing the notes" will be adequate.

Contact me (david.saxowsky@ndsu.edu or 701-231-7470) if you do not have ready access to the internet.

There is **no required textbook** for this course; instead, the subject matter addressed in this course is located at <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/aglawandmanagement/appliedaglaw>. More specifically, we will rely on the materials located at <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/aglawandmanagement/appliedaglaw/coursematerials> under the category of **Applied Agricultural Law -- Course Materials**.



Study Suggestions

A past student asked: What more can be done to understand the topics being addressed in class,' especially if attendance and studying is not an issue.

My response: Ask questions in class. Learning is defined as "to get knowledge;" it is not defined as "waiting until information comes to you." Please take an active role in learning these materials by participating in class discussion.

Another past student asked: I looked over my notes after class to see if I could understand them (the ones I had taken) and they seemed to be very spotty and didn't make much sense to read. I tried to correlate the notes from the web site to your lectures and I'm not sure I'm getting what I am supposed to out of your lecture. I was wondering if you could give me some advice on what to look for to be more successful in this area. What should I be looking for, mentioning something twice, stressing that point (how should I know your stressing it), or just plain telling us to? I don't feel I have the type of notes going for myself to be able to do essay questions for a test.

My response: First, ask questions in class. I do not know what is not clear until you and others provide an indication with either a question or comment.

Second, with respect to the course introductory materials, the goal is to gain an understanding of how the various sources of the law fit together. For example, how do regulations relate to statutes, and how does the common

law relate to statutes, regulations and the Constitution. We should also be gaining an understanding of how individuals can have input into our laws.

Again, ask questions in class. That is the best opportunity to clarify these points.



Some thoughts about learning, teaching, and education

Thoughts on 21st Century Education

What do we need to accomplish during our studies? We need to prepare ourselves for the future.

What can we be expected to be able to do in the future? We do not know for certain, but we can offer some ideas.

It is the **information age** -- we will do more with information and thinking than our ancestors did before us. Rather than shaping a hammer from a rock, we will use our thoughts to create a machine that will shape the hammer.

It is the **information age** -- we need information so we, in turn, are able to provide information to others. We need to be able to receive information from others. We need to be able to identify the type of information we need, to locate the necessary information, to assess it, to assure its credibility, to understand it, to use the information to shape our thoughts, to synthesize the information, combine it with information from other sources, and then to use the information, apply it to solve a problem, implement the solution, or provide the information to others.

Technology is a tool for the information age; it is advancing us further into the information age. But technology is NOT the information age; it is only a tool. *Using information* is the information age.

It is the **information age** -- the amount of information is growing and the type of information is changing. We will not be able to memorize all the information we will need; instead, we will need to be able to ... (*review the earlier paragraph*).

So what must we accomplish with our education? We must achieve

- the ability to keep on learning (which is what happens when we receive and understand information),
- the ability to communicate (which is what we do when we share information or provide information to others), and
- the ability to think (which is what we do as we assess, synthesize, analyze, use, and implement).

The purpose this course is to provide a foundation on which you can learn, think, and communicate in the future. This course is not about you memorizing and repeating the points back to me. This course is about *you practicing* your learning, thinking, and written communication skills, and *me trying to help you in your practices*. This course is not about me only giving information to you; it is about you gathering, shaping and using information with my guidance. Plan to read and write; and in between, you will need to think. You will be expected to take information from a variety of credible sources and combine them into ideas appropriate to help solve the problems, challenges, or uncertainties you will encounter in your lifetime.

Share the URL for the course web site with your parents, siblings, family member, etc. They are welcome to be looking at the same material you are studying during the semester. I would not be surprised if their insight and experience would help you understand the topics we will address. The web site is open to the public --

<http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/aglawandmanagement/appliedaglaw>. Or, you can provide them the URLs for specific pages.



Miscellaneous Points

Students are **expected to conduct themselves professionally**; this includes being thoughtful of others, respectful of different ideas, and focused on understanding the course content.

Students **need access to** a computer, internet connection, internet browser software, a word processing program (recommend Microsoft Word), and e-mail.

I will primarily use the **Announcement page on this Blackboard site** and in-class announcements to communicate to the entire class; occasionally I will send an e-mail to the entire class, if needed.

Take the time to **visit** the links on this Blackboard site and the structure of the supporting web site at www.ndsu.edu/aglawtext.

Suggestions on how to succeed in this course

The following list offers thoughts on the responsibilities of the students and instructor in this course.

Instructor Responsibilities:

- Make sure the course content aligns with the learning objectives, and the interests of students taking the course.
- Understand the context by which the students will be learning the material (what, how, when, where, and why).
- Create, collect, plan, organize, and assess the content in a meaningful and timely way.
- Openly communicate with and engage students.
- Keep the presentation of material and the assignment expectations as clear and fair as possible.
- Provide resources and advice to enhance learning and communication. />
- Give the students the opportunity to develop their didactic skills.
- Understand students' scheduling issues, and work with them to meet their needs as much as possible without compromising their or others' learning.
- Provide student's the opportunity to comment on instruction and use feedback to improve the learning in the course.
- Be available (as described in another section of syllabus).
- Grade and provide feedback to students within a reasonable time after due dates for assignments.

Learner Responsibilities:

- Have a serious attitude and understand that learning takes effort.
- Have a desire to acquire information and a willingness to work and complete tasks in good faith.

- Have a willingness to seek assistance when information is not clear.
- Have a willingness to provide constructive and meaningful feedback to help improve instruction.
- Complete assignments as scheduled.
 - Finish assignments early if you know in advance of a time conflict with a scheduled assignment due date.
 - A late assignment without a valid reason will not be graded.
 - If a death in the family has occurred, the student has 1 week to schedule a make-up time.
 - If an assignment due date is missed due to illness, the student must contact the instructor and submit the late assignment according to the schedule agreed upon with the instructor.
 - Actively participate in the discussion; this is where a significant amount of learning in this course will occur.
 - Lack of participation in discussions will hurt your chances of understanding the course material.
- Check Blackboard for any updates related to the course.

Success Tips for this Course:

- Access course information online regularly; do not put this off until the set class deadlines (that's asking for trouble).
- Actively participate in the discussion. Interaction in the discussions with fellow students is where some of the learning for this class will occur. If you are not active, you will miss out on learning.
- Take time to read materials or references that may be provided (e.g., URLs and linked web sites).
- Ask for clarification if anything is not clear to you. This will benefit not only you but also other students in the course, and will help the instructor enhance the course.