

Privacy Law Spring 2012

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Note: this is a preliminary syllabus. You are to contact me at the above email address for login information for our website and to receive a complete syllabus. Updated versions of the syllabus will be available on our website.

Course Description: This course examines the legal doctrines of privacy and confidentiality used to protect personal information. The aim of the course is to understand how courts and legislatures seek to protect information as new technologies, new security threats and new institutional practices emerge. The course examines the philosophical roots of the concepts of privacy and confidentiality, and traces the development in US law of the protection of an individual's right to control his or her personal information held by others. The course will review developments in Constitutional Law, Tort Law, and Statutory Law, with a strong emphasis on the post 9-11 era. The class will examine case studies of landmark privacy legislation to understand how expectations of privacy and confidentiality are translated into legal frameworks. The course spends a considerable amount of time studying the scope and implications of federal statutes that attempt to establish fair information practices with respect to electronic personal information.

Double Enrollment: You may enroll in only one online course per semester unless you have received written permission from the Dean. If you are enrolled in more than one online course, you must contact the Registrar ASAP.

Grading: Grading will be approximately 30% class homework, 70% final exam.

Assignments/Class Participation: Class readings are critical. You will have no more than six written assignments this semester so it is important to do well on each one and to submit your work in a timely fashion. Missing more than two assignments will result in a full grade reduction. Also, unexcused lateness of any assignment will be treated as your having missed the assignment.

Take home Exam: The final exam will be conducted online. It will be open book, open note and will consist of essay questions designed to measure your analytic and writing skills and application of subject knowledge.

Technology Issues: This course requires extensive use of the Internet. A background in the use of computer technology and the Internet is essential. When you encounter a problem with the

webpage, make every attempt to resolve the matter yourself before contacting me. Sometimes, simply hitting the refresh button or checking to make sure your “caps lock” button is off will fix your problem. I have a large number of students each semester and while I intend to make sure the site functions correctly, I only have time to help with legitimate problems, not user error.

Website Resources: Students are required to provide an email address to my MSLaw email address ASAP. I will then provide you with access information for our class webpage. There you will be able to access updated syllabi, audio files of class lectures, and additional reference materials. When you receive your login information, please acquaint yourself with the website. A couple of great resources include a page on maximizing your course grade and writing samples of what I consider to be sound student writing.

Contact: When emailing me, please do not simply hit “Reply” but rather start a new discussion thread. Also, please place the words “Privacy Law” in the subject line. This will help prevent me from inadvertently deleting an email because I do not recognize the sender of the email or misfiling something you send in a folder for another class. Also, I would appreciate your labeling all assignments in the format (Your Name_Privacy Law_Week #.doc). This will also ensure I do not lose or misplace your assignment and that I can locate it at all times. If you do not submit your homework in this format, it may be lost and not graded.

Help: I do not maintain office hours on campus. However, if you ever have questions, issues or comments, you can always email me. In most cases, I will respond to your email within 24-48 hours.

Meetings: While this class does not physically meet, you are responsible for (1) listening to lectures; (2) completing readings; and (3) submitting your answers to writing assignments on time.

Lateness: lateness, either on weekly assignments or on the exam will be penalized.

Class Schedule: This class meets entirely online. The Spring semester begins Tuesday, January 17 with our first assignment due that Saturday at noon sharp. We have no assignment the week of Spring Break, March 11-18. I reserve the right to modify the syllabus, re-schedule a class, or change the order of class subject matters.

Course Readings: There is no required textbook. All readings will be provided through our website. Readings and assignments are subject to change and will be posted on our website: cheesmanlaw.com

PLEASE CONTACT ME FOR LOGIN INFORMATION. THE FIRST SEVERAL WEEKS' ASSIGNMENTS ARE ALREADY POSTED ON OUR WEBSITE.