UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

Legal Issues in Managing Information (LBSC 735) – 3 credit hours
Fall 2009 Syllabus

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Catalog Description of Course
Legal issues related to collecting, maintaining, and providing access to information materials. Includes ownership, copyright, privacy, freedom of information, and related issues in archives, libraries, and other settings.

Slightly More Detailed Description
This course is designed to analyze legal issues related to the management of information in contexts in which information professionals are likely to be involved—such as libraries, government agencies, archives, information management, and corporate settings. In an age defined by information, knowledge of the legal issues that establish how information is required to be protected, maintained, collected, stored, and accessed is extremely important. While there are far too many laws related to information and different issues related to management of information for this course to cover every specific context, the course will provide an overview of the most important legal issues in managing information so that students will be able to apply the course to particular professional situations that they may encounter.

Goals of Course
The primary goals of this course are to prepare students to understand:
• Key laws related to the management of information;
• The contexts and applications of these laws;
• The roles of law in shaping information access, collection, provision, and storage;
• Professional and ethical issues related to the law;
• Sources of policies and guidance for legal issues related to managing information; and
• How to critically assess and apply laws to specific information management contexts.

Course Approach and Expectations of Student Participation
This course meets once a week on Thursdays from 5:30 to 8:15 p.m. in HBK 0105. The course will be conducted as a seminar. It is imperative that every student participates in the discussions of course materials. Based on critical examination of course readings, each student should develop an analytical stance concerning the issues in the course.

Office Hours & Contact Information
My office hours for Fall 2009 are Wednesdays from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. and Thursdays from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., and I can be contacted via phone (301-405-1741) or email (pjaeger@umd.edu).
Assignments and Grading
Your grade will be based on five items:

1. Classroom participation. This seminar is a discussion-based course. You are expected to read all of the assignments, to think through the issues they raise, and to articulate your thoughts on the materials. Clearly, you need to attend class to participate in the discussions. Attendance will be taken every week, with absences being excused in cases of illness, religious observances, and other reasons in line with university policies, or if the university is closed due to inclement weather. Classroom participation will constitute 30% of your final grade.

2. Two scenario papers. In Week 5 and Week 9, students will receive a description of a hypothetical information management scenario that raises legal issues. They will need to identify the legal issues at hand in the scenario and provide an analysis of how to address these issues. The papers should be 3-4 pages. Each will be due at the beginning of the following class session (Week 6 and Week 10). The case scenarios will each constitute 15% of your final grade, for a total of 30% of your final grade.

3. Presentation. Each student in the course will present a critical summary of one article they find that relates directly to the topic of that week. The article can be research or news. It will be a 5-minute presentation to the class and will include a brief overview of the reading, how it relates to the topic of that week’s class session, and one question for discussion. The presentation will constitute 10% of your final grade.

4. Final paper. Due in Week 14, the final paper for the course will be an opportunity for students to relate what they have learned in the course to the field they work in or hope to work in. Students will select a topic or combination of topics from the course and discuss their relation to a particular professional context and the unique legal issues in managing information in that professional context. The paper will be 10-12 pages in length. More detailed instructions on the structure, content, and other expectations for the final paper will be distributed in Week 5 of the course. The final paper will constitute 30% of your final grade.

All papers for the course should be double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font. The margins should be 1 inch exactly on each side. Citations—both in the text and in the references section—must conform to the most recent APA style manual. Pages should be numbered and format should be consistent.

Classroom Environment
As a graduate seminar, the classroom environment should be professional and respectful. Discussions should be based on course readings and critical thinking. Issues of policy can involve strongly held beliefs and current political controversies. Remember--your classmates may have different perspectives on issues than you, but they still deserve your respect. As another aspect of respect in the classroom environment, turn off or mute all phones and other communication devices during each class session. If you use your laptop in the classroom, limit the usage of the computer to course-related reasons (i.e., taking notes).
Students with Disabilities
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Disability Support Services office, and (2) discuss any necessary academic accommodation with their teachers. This should be done at the beginning of the semester.

Extensions
Timeliness is extremely important in graduate work, and extensions will only be available during personal emergencies. Students who need to request an extension should discuss the matter in advance with the professor. If an extension is granted, the work must be submitted within the extension period to avoid grade penalties. Unexcused delays in submission of the paper will result in a deduction of half of a letter grade for each day the paper is late, while unexcused delays in presentations will result in a deduction of half a letter grade for each class meeting the presentation is late.

Academic Honesty
Work submitted in this course will be individual and original, in line with the University’s Academic Honor Code and Honor Pledge. Engaging in any academic dishonesty will result in consequences in line with university policies. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to plagiarism, cheating, buying work, multiple submissions of the same paper, forging signatures, submitting fraudulent documents, and facilitating the academic dishonesty of others. When writing papers, be sure to carefully and thoroughly cite all materials you use in writing your paper and make sure all ideas and quotations are properly acknowledged.

Weekly Topics and Assignments
WEEK 1: INTRODUCTORY MATTERS (SEPTEMBER 3)
A. Introduction to course and discussion of course expectations
B. Locating course materials
C. Overview of topics and concepts to be covered

WEEK 2: LAW AND INFORMATION PROFESSIONS (SEPTEMBER 10)
A. Professional responsibilities
B. Public interest groups and information law

Preparation:
WEEK 3: INFORMATION AND LAW (SEPTEMBER 17)
A. How courts handle information issues
B. Libraries and legal proceedings
Preparation:

WEEK 4: TYPES OF LEGAL ISSUES OF INFORMATION (SEPTEMBER 24)
B. The range of legal issues related to information
Preparation:
- Visit [www.usa.gov](http://www.usa.gov) and [thomas.gov](http://www.thomas.gov) and search for legal resources.

WEEK 5: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PART I (OCTOBER 1)
A. Issues of fair use, distance education, interlibrary loan, orphan works
Preparation:

WEEK 6: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PART II (OCTOBER 8)
A. Problems of determining ownership – Read the papers in chronological order!
B. Scenario Paper I due
Preparation:

**WEEK 7: PRIVACY I (OCTOBER 15)**
A. The range of laws related to information privacy
B. Discuss Scenario Paper I

Preparation:

**WEEK 8: PRIVACY II (OCTOBER 22)**
A. Privacy in practice

Preparation:

**WEEK 9: RECORDS (OCTOBER 29)**
A. Legal issues of records in an electronic world

Preparation:

WEEK 10: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (NOVEMBER 5)
A. Freedom of Information
B. Classifications and other post-9/11 changes
C. Scenario Paper II due
Preparation:

WEEK 11: FILTERING AND LIMITATIONS OF ONLINE ACCESS (NOVEMBER 12)
A. Filtering of access to online information
B. Controversies with laws intended to limit access
C. Discuss Scenario Paper II
Preparation:

WEEK 12: DIGITAL LIBRARIES AND ONLINE INFORMATION (NOVEMBER 19)
A. Legal issues with digital libraries
B. Legal issues with the ways in which information is organized and made accessible online
Preparation:


**WEEK 13: NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

**WEEK 14: WARRANTS AND NATIONAL SECURITY LETTERS (DECEMBER 3)**

A. Warrants for information and National Security Letters

B. **Final Paper Due**

**Preparation:**


**WEEK 15: (DECEMBER 10)**

A. Discussion of final papers

B. Course grades

C. Any other administrative matters