

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG  
FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

**BUSI1001 – Business Law**

**Course Outline**

**I. Information on Instructor and Tutor**

Instructor: Mr. Beau Lefler  
Email: [BLefler@hku.hk](mailto:BLefler@hku.hk) (recommended)  
Office: Room 205A, Meng Wah Complex  
Phone: 2219-4218 (only recommended during office hours)  
Office hours: Monday 9:00 am to 12:00 pm (additional office hours available by appointment)

Tutor: Mr. Thomas Ng (Rm 601B Meng Wah Complex)  
Email: [thomasng@business.hku.hk](mailto:thomasng@business.hku.hk)  
Phone: 9695-0008

Pre-requisites: None

Textbook: Students have the option of choosing one or both of the following textbooks:

- Business Law in Hong Kong, by D.K. Srivastava, Sweet and Maxwell Asia
- An Introduction to Hong Kong Business Law, Vanessa Stott, Longman

**II. Course Information**

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the fundamentals and general principles of Hong Kong law, and outlines the different types of legal entities used in Hong Kong. It also equips students with a basic understanding of legal issues they can expect to encounter on a daily basis in any business environment: the Hong Kong legal system, contracts (including agency and sale of goods), employment law and torts.

Course objectives

- Understand the broad reach that the law has into ordinary working environments.
- Gain an understanding of the basic structure of the Hong Kong legal system.
- Acquire the ability to critically analyze typical business scenarios in a legal context.
- Improve skills involving: problem solving, group coordination and interaction, and presentation.
- Develop more confidence in engaging in classroom participation.

**III. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)**

1. Distinguish the fundamental components of legally enforceable agreements and demonstrate how parties to such agreements interact with respect to compliance and enforcement.

2. Explain the theoretical reasons for tort law, recognize its application in Hong Kong, and apply fundamental principles such as negligence, duty, causation and defamation to case studies.
3. Illustrate an understanding of the Hong Kong Employment Ordinance and describe the protections afforded to employees and employers in standard employment contracts.
4. Demonstrate effective communication skills related to business law in the written and oral format.

#### IV. Alignment of Program and Course Outcomes

Program Learning Outcome	Course Intended Learning Outcomes
1. Acquisition and internalization of knowledge of major disciplines.	1, 2, 3
2. Application and integration of knowledge to solve problems	2, 3
3. Inculcating professionalism and leadership and competency	2, 3, 4
4. Developing global outlook	2, 4
5. Mastering communication skills	4

#### V. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

1. *Lectures and in-class discussions* – the instructor will lecture and provide material to teach the concepts underlying the Intended Learning Outcomes. Students are encouraged to participate in and will be provided time for in-class discussion meant to facilitate a better understanding of these concepts.
2. *Tutorials* – students must attend mandatory tutorial sessions, during which they will be given an opportunity to ask questions about lecture material and complete assignments and/or quizzes.
3. *Lecture participation* – students will organize into groups to facilitate in-class discussions. These groups will discuss and present answers to ad hoc scenarios and questions.
4. *Group exercises* – students will be given three projects covering ILOs one to three that they must complete in a group setting. These out-of-class projects will be presented in class or handed in to the instructor as described below.

#### VI. Assessment

This class follows a continuous assessment model, which means that the student's progress is assessed throughout the course, rather than just at the end. Students will be assessed according to the following formula:

##### Assessment Items

- |                                       |     |                       |
|---------------------------------------|-----|-----------------------|
| 1. Tutorial participation and quizzes | 15% | (150 points possible) |
| 2. Group exercises                    | 60% | (600 points possible) |
| 3. Final exam                         | 25% | (250 points possible) |

**Total Points Possible** **1000 points**

The table below illustrates the interaction between the ILOs, TLA, and methods of assessment.

ILO	TLA	Assessment
1. Distinguish the fundamental components of legally enforceable agreements and demonstrate how parties to such agreements interact with respect to compliance and enforcement.	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3

2. Explain the theory of tort law, recognize its application in Hong Kong, and apply fundamental principles such as negligence, duty, causation and defamation to case studies.	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3
3. Illustrate an understanding of the Hong Kong Employment Ordinance and describe the protections afforded to employees and employers in standard employment contracts.	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3
4. Demonstrate effective communication skills related to business law in the written and oral format.	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 3

## VII. Standards for assessment

### *Tutorial Participation and Quizzes*

Tutorial Participation and Quizzes – 150 points possible. Each student will attend weekly mandatory tutorial sessions and will be given a bi-weekly quiz. The tutor will provide further information on the quizzes. The tutorials are designed with an active group discussion and Q&A format in mind. In furtherance of this ideal, students will be graded on the extent and contribution of their participation in tutorials.

### *Group Exercises*

At the beginning of the semester, the class will be divided into groups, chosen by the students, with the number of students in each group ranging from five to ten students depending on lecture size. Groups will remain in place throughout the semester. During the course of the semester, students will complete three group projects related to ILOs 1-3 (i.e., contracts, torts and employment law). The groups will be identical to those formed for purposes of in-class participation and discussion. In other words, the student will belong to only one group for purposes of every group-based assessment.

Group Exercises will be comprised of the following projects:

1. Contracts – 200 points possible. Each group should choose one of the contracts provided by the instructor, and which are contracts that people enter into in Hong Kong in the ordinary course of life. Analyze the contract for terms that are unfair, illegal, unethical, against public policy, too complicated for a layperson to understand or just plain silly. Identify up to 10 portions of the contract (e.g., section 5, clause 10(a), or paragraph 2.3) that the group believes should be changed. Draft a letter to the other side of the contract explaining the reasons why you think each of your suggestions is necessary (i.e., the reason that you are suggesting the change), and requesting that changes be made to the contract. Include a draft of proposed alternative language as an attachment to your letter. The letter itself should be no longer than 1500 words. The length of the attached proposed changes will vary depending on the length of the clauses involved.
2. Torts – 200 points possible. The groups are given a hypothetical case structured around a claimed tort or defamation. Each group will be assigned to represent one of the parties, either the claiming party or the defending party. Each group will be required to present their case to the class, which will sit in lieu of a jury. Groups should present their cases to the class based on the elements necessary to prove the claimed tort or defamation (e.g., duty of care, breach of duty, causation, etc.) and the related defenses. Each member in the group must individually participate in the oral presentation of the case (e.g., each student could be responsible for one element or the opening or closing remarks), and the group will be assessed based on the performance of the group as a whole. Each non-presenting student and the instructor will judge the presentation (as outlined below), and the average grade given by the students and the grade given by the

instructor will be weighted equally. In other words, a maximum of 50 points can be earned from the students' average score and a maximum of 50 points can be earned from the instructor's score.

3. Employment – 200 points possible. Each group is given a hypothetical offer letter and employment contract. The group will review the offer letter and employment contract and respond to the offer letter with a counter-offer and revised employment contract. The counter-offer and revised contract should correct anything illegal in the original offer letter and employment contract as per Hong Kong employment law and the Hong Kong Employment Ordinance. The counter offer should be a new letter drafted to the potential employer, and should be no more than 1500 words. The revised employment contract should be done using Microsoft Word, utilizing the “track changes” feature.

**Group Exercises 1 and 3 will be graded according to the following criteria:**

- Content (identification of elements, specificity, creativeness)
- Writing Style (coherence, clarity, mechanics)
- Presentation (structure, balance, source quality)

Group Exercises 1 and 3 should be handed in to the instructor in electronic format via email, by one member of the group before the date and time indicated on the course schedule.

A+ A A-	B+ B B-	C+ C C-	D+ D	F
Very Good to excellent ratings on some or all three criteria. Usually a score of 90 to 100.	Good to very Good ratings on some or all three criteria. Usually a score of 80-90.	Fair to good ratings on some or all three criteria. Usually a score of 60-80.	Fair ratings on all three criteria. Usually a score of 50-60.	Poor ratings on all three criteria or a failure to submit. Usually a score of less than 50.

**Group Exercise 2 will be graded according to the following criteria:**

- Win/lose case
- Persuasiveness
- Content
- Fair distribution of responsibility among group members
- Effective presentation skills

A+ A A-	B+ B B-	C+ C C-	D+ D	F
Very Good to excellent ratings on some or all five criteria. Usually a score of 90 to 100.	Good to very Good ratings on some or all five criteria. Usually a score of 80-90.	Fair to good ratings on some or all five criteria. Usually a score of 60-80.	Fair ratings on all five criteria. Usually a score of 50-60.	Poor ratings on all five criteria or a failure to present. Usually a score of less than 50.

***Final Exam***

Each student must take an individual final exam scheduled at the end of the semester. There are 250 points possible in the final examination. The examination will be open book and test the student's level

of knowledge and skill acquired throughout the semester. Students should expect that the final exam be similar in nature to the group projects.

### Final Course Grade

The final course grade will be given by aggregating the points earned by each student in each of the above categories. The final grade will be determined by the following chart.

A+ A A-	B+ B B-	C+ C C-	D+ D	F
An aggregate score of 900 to 1000.	An aggregate score of 800-900.	An aggregate score of 600-800.	An aggregate score of 500-600.	An aggregate score of less than 500.

### VIII. Academic Conduct

**The University Regulations on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced! Please check the University Statement on plagiarism on the web: <http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism/>.**

Academic dishonesty is behavior in which a deliberately fraudulent misrepresentation is employed in an attempt to gain undeserved intellectual credit, either for oneself or for another. It includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following types of cases:

- **Plagiarism** - The representation of someone else's ideas as if they are one's own. Where the arguments, data, designs, etc., of someone else are being used in a paper, report, oral presentation, or similar academic project, this fact must be made explicitly clear by citing the appropriate references. The references must fully indicate the extent to which any parts of the project are not one's own work. **Paraphrasing** of someone else's ideas is still using someone else's ideas, and must be **acknowledged**.
- **Unauthorized Collaboration on Out-of-Class Projects** - The representation of work as **solely** one's own when in fact it is the result of a joint effort.
- **Cheating on In-Class Exams** - The covert gathering of information from other students, the use of unauthorized notes, unauthorized aids, etc.
- **Unauthorized Advance Access to an Exam** - The representation of materials prepared at leisure, as a result of unauthorized advance access (however obtained), as if it were prepared under the rigors of the exam setting. This misrepresentation is dishonest in itself even if there are not compounding factors, such as unauthorized uses of books or notes.

### IX. Course Schedule

Please see the course schedule on the following page.

**BUSI1001 Business Law****COURSE SCHEDULE\*** (Term 1 - 2011/2012)

Instructor: Beau Lefler

\*Any revision of this course schedule will be announced in class.

WEEK	LECTURING TOPICS	IN-CLASS DISCUSSION	PROJECTS DUE
1 29 Aug - 2 Sep	Course Overview Legal System of Hong Kong		
2 5 Sep – 9 Sep	Legal System of Hong Kong Business Organizations		
3 12 Sep – 16 Sep	Business Organizations		
4 19 Sep – 23 Sep	Contracts		
5 26 Sep – 30 Sep	Contracts		
6 3 Oct – 7 Oct	Contracts		Contracts <b><u>Due by midnight, 7 Oct</u></b> Via email delivery
7 10 Oct – 14 Oct	Contracts		
8 17 Oct – 21 Oct	<b>READING WEEK</b>		
9 24 Oct – 28 Oct	Torts		
10 31 Oct – 4 Nov	Torts		
11 7 Nov – 11 Nov	Torts project presentations		Torts Project Presentations Order by raffle
12 14 Nov – 18 Nov	Employment Law		
13 21 Nov – 25 Nov	Employment Law		Employment Law <b><u>Due by midnight, 25 Nov</u></b> Via email delivery
14 28 Nov – 2 Dec	Review		