PERSONNEL LAW
BUS 331
3 Credits

Syllabus
Winter I Term 2012

Instructor: Russ Roberts, SPHR
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Course Description
An in-depth study of personnel law from both a conceptual and practical perspective. Students learn (1) the guidelines established for disciplinary actions, hiring, firing and promotion; (2) the legal response to sexual harassment in the workplace; (3) the responsibility of the employer to provide safe working conditions; (4) equal employment opportunity law; and (5) legal issues as they pertain to physical, mental, and emotional illness and disability.

The course is required for Paralegal Studies majors; fulfills one Business major emphasis requirement for Management, Human Resources Management, and General Business emphases; fulfills one Public Administration Cognate requirement.

Required Text

Course Objectives
Upon completing this course, the student shall be able to:
1. Identify personnel laws as they pertain to employment practices.
2. Describe employer responsibilities to employees, including a safe and non-harassing workplace.
3. Demonstrate a working knowledge of laws regarding equal employment and non-discrimination.
4. Articulate the best response to performance issues and disciplinary actions.
5. Express knowledge of the nature of unions and unionization efforts.

Course Format
A variety of learning methods will be used including, but not limited to: class lecture, class discussion, group work, student presentations, exercises and case studies. Reading the employment law textbook is essential to success in this course.

Attendance
Class attendance is critical, as students are responsible for information learned in the class through presentation, discussion, group work, student presentations, exercises and case studies, in addition to readings. Students may have one excused absence without it affecting their attendance/class participation grade, if the student e-mails or calls the instructor prior to the absence. The student is responsible for information presented or discovered during the class they missed.

Requirements
Class Participation 10%
Mid-Term Exam 20%
Term Paper 20%
Term Paper Presentation 10%
Final Exam (Comprehensive) 40%

Late papers or assignments will be accepted by 4:00 p.m. on the Wednesday following the Monday due date. Prior to 6:00 p.m. on the due date, the student must notify the instructor by e-mail or telephone that the paper or assignment needs to be submitted late. The grade for a late paper, assignment or exam will be reduced by 10%.

Exams
Exams will be comprised of a mix of true/false, matching, multiple choice, short answers and essay questions.
Term Paper
The term paper will be explained in detail during class, with potential topics presented for selection by each student. Students shall present an overview of their term paper to other members of the class. See the Class and Reading Schedule below for more information about term paper deadlines.

Grading Scale
A+ 98-100  A  94-97  A-  91-93
B+ 88-90  B  84-87  B-  81-83
C+ 78-80  C  74-77  C-  71-73
D+ 68-70  D  64-67  D-  60-63
F  59 and below

Assignments
Students are expected to read the indicated texts prior to each class, and participate in class discussions, group work, exercises and case studies.

Class and Reading Schedule
Date           Topic, Reading or Assignment
October 22, 2012  Introductions
Monday
Overview of Employment Law
The Employment Relationship
Chapters 1, 2 -- Pages 3–58 (Read prior to class)

October 29, 2012  Overview of Employment Discrimination
Monday
Recruitment, Applications and Interviews
Background Checks, Employment Testing
Chapters 3, 4, (5) 6 -- Pages 61-95, 101-129, 167-185

November 5, 2012  Hiring and Promotion Decisions
Monday
Affirmative Action
The Business Case for Diversity
Workplace and Sexual Harassment
Chapters (7), 8, 9 – Pages 237-264, 267-303
Term Paper Expectations Presented by Instructor

November 12, 2012  Term Paper Topic Selection Due, with Instructor’s Approval
Monday
Reasonably Accommodating Disability and Religion (Group Presentations)
Work-Life Conflicts and Other Diversity Issues (Group Presentations)
Chapters 10, 11 – Pages 309-344, 349-382
Mid-Term Exam

November 19, 2012  Wages, Hours and Pay Equity
Monday
Employee Benefits
Unions and Collective Bargaining
Privacy on the Job, Information, Monitoring and Investigations
Chapters 12, (13), 14, (17) – Pages 389-421, 461-502

November 26, 2012  Term Paper Outline Due
Monday
Occupational Safety Health
Workers’ Compensation
(Supplemental materials provided by the Instructor)
Performance Appraisals and Disciplinary Actions
Chapters 15, 16 – Pages 507-540, 547-576
December 3, 2012
Monday

Term Paper Due
COBRA and HIPAA (Supplemental materials provided)
Paid Time Off Pay-Out in the State of Nebraska
Reviewing the “Alphabet” – ADAA, ADEA, COBRA, CRA, ERISA through USERRA
Terminating Employment
Chapter 18 – Pages 625-673

Term Paper Presentations to the Class by Students Begin

December 10, 2012
Monday

Term Paper Presentations to the Class by Students Continue
Final Exam (Comprehensive)

Academic Integrity
The Doane College Academic Integrity Policy will be adhered to in this class. All projects and tests represent the student’s own work. Any use of other’s ideas and words without proper citation of sources is plagiarism and will result in penalties to be determined by the Instructor and/or the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.