

TO: Legal, Ethical, and Social Environment enrollee

April 19, 2003

FROM: Michael J. O'Hara, LESE instructor

SUBJECTS:

1. Welcome to class
2. **Reading assignment for first class**

First, let me welcome you to the "Legal, Ethical, and Social Environment" class, BSAD 8010-101 #10150. I look forward to sharing an enjoyable and challenging summer of critical reasoning with you.

For many of you, this will be your first core course from the M.B.A. program, and I want to give you a jump on the process. The reading and writing expectations are quite aggressive, but clearly are manageable if you develop **and** implement a well thought out approach. A single reading of the text material rarely will be adequate. However, you need to avoid excessive underlining. To do so, focus on the rules of law, rather than the facts of one case.

For the first night of class, every person should arrive having **read** and understood the **syllabus**, as well as having **read chapters 1 & 2** as well as have **read all of the Key Slides**. The Exam One is on May 19 and will focus on *memorization* of selected Key Slides identified in the syllabus.

The Key Slides are at this link.

<http://cba.unomaha.edu/faculty/mohara/web/LEp3KeySlides.pdf>

The syllabus for this class is in PDF form and is at this link.

<http://cba.unomaha.edu/faculty/mohara/web/LEu3syllabus.pdf>

Many materials of interest related to this course can be found at this link.

<http://cba.unomaha.edu/faculty/mohara/web/ohara.htm>

The detail of the syllabus is not meant to be intimidating. Rather, it is meant to answer the vast majority of questions concerning procedures in the course.

Do note, however, that this syllabus is an adhesion contract. An adhesion contract is a take-it-or-leave-it contract drafted in a context of reduced bargaining power and often is used as a vehicle for abuse. Accordingly, in an adhesion contract all ambiguous terms are interpreted against the drafter (*me*), unless the other party (*you*) had a reasonable opportunity to discover and eliminate the ambiguity. After that reasonable opportunity, any ambiguity is interpreted reasonably.

WARNING: This is an evening summer class. Some of you may be employed full time, others may have extensive commitments on the home front, or some of you may confront both in addition to this class. To simultaneously accommodate more than one of these means **time management skills are critical**.

Summer school is more difficult, far more difficult, than the fall or spring semesters. Every university course, regardless of when it is offered, has a fixed number of clock minutes.¹ However, during the summer these class minutes flow by faster than during the fall or spring. At first glance, the speed pick up appears to be 2.1 times faster in the first summer night.² However, appearances can be deceiving.³ The real time crunch is between the end of class on Wednesday night and the start of class on Monday night. Between M&W there only are 45.0 clock hours instead of the 165.5 clock hours between fall or spring class meetings. While WtoM initially appears to be moving 2.1 faster than normal, the material MtoW is moving at least an

¹ That is, 2250 minutes = 15 weeks times 3 classes per week times 50 minutes per class.

² That is, 15 weeks divided by 7 weeks.

³ For example, the second summer night is one week shorter and, thus, runs 2.5 times faster.

additional 3.7 times faster. That is, MtoW is 7.6 times faster.⁴ Doing what you plan to do during this summer session, how many *graduate* credit hours have you ever successfully completed during a semester? Was it either 6.3 or 23.4 *graduate* credit hours? Is this task impossible? No. Clearly, it is feasible since 20+ students successfully complete this course every summer. However, you must plan and read ahead.⁵

The law reads slowly. The law reads between 5 pages per hour and 20 pages per hour, depending on the topic and the reader. Typically, there will be about 60 pages of reading per class meeting, thus between 3 and 12 hours of reading between class meetings. Most likely, a single reading will consume a minimum of 4 hours. A single reading rarely will be adequate. An additional item to consider is writing assignments. When there are written assignments, the 4 hours will be wholly inadequate if you have not read ahead.

Between Wednesday and Monday, you would be wise to read all of you Monday **and** Wednesday reading assignments. *Make Tuesday night your "night off" with family and friends.*

Let me give you a second **warning, about fatigue**. *If you are taking one or more first summer session courses, and if you plan on taking one or more second summer session courses, and if you plan on taking multiple courses during the fall semester, then you really need to plan ahead for making your "Go v. No Go" decisions, especially in the second summer night session.* During summer school, if you drop on Thursday of the first week of a summer session, then you will be charged 25% of tuition. This means for a T&R class you must decide to drop after one class meeting. Dropping on the second Monday of a summer session costs you 50% of the tuition. Any delay in making your decision will be very expensive.

The weekend before the start of a summer course you need to read ahead. If you do not feel the surge of curiosity that *you* usual feel at the start of a class as you read ahead, then I would advise you to consider [a] the resource base you will bring to that class, [b] the academic wisdom of your summer agenda, and [c] how best you can optimize your **yearly** academic output. Earning an MBA degree is more like a marathon than a sprint. Your yearly output is likely to be greater if you swiftly drop (*especially, a second*) summer session night class rather than exhaust yourself in a performance that generates no-credit, but costs a substantial fraction of the tuition.

In closing, let me again welcome you to the "Legal, Ethical, and Social Environment": with planning and implementation, success can be yours. Also, let me urge you to spark your curiosity into full flame so that the law will be simultaneously fun and educational.

⁴ That is, $7.8 = 2.1 * 3.7$.

⁵ The speed up is much worse than that. In those 45.0 clock hours of WtoM summer classes there really only are about 4 hours of feasible study time (*after subtracting sleep, bathing, eating, travel, and job*). In stark contrast, in those fall and spring 165.5 clock hours of MtoM classes there really are about 40 hours of feasible study time (*e.g., six nights of four hours each plus two weekend days of eight hours each*). Thus, the study time speed up of MtoW is 10 fold while the study time speed up of WtoM is 4.2 fold (*i.e., $4.2 = 2.1 * 2.0$*). Thus, the workload of MtoW in a 3-hour summer course is equal to a 30-hour load; while the workload of WtoM in that same 3-hour course equals a 12.6-hour load (*ignoring the fact you were going to move all of your studying onto the time WtoM!*).

I strongly suggest you plan on studying both Friday and Saturday nights. Read prior to the start of class on Monday all of the assigned readings for Wednesday. It is not physically possible to do all of the studying for the Wednesday classes if you consistently start after the Monday class. That is why Exam One and Exam Two are on Mondays.