



SELF PROGRAM 2025/2026

Business Law: Understanding the Legal Foundations of Commerce

Emmanuel COHEN

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Course information

Number of credits : 6 credits

Contact hours : 30 hours

Hours taught per week : 2,5 hours or 3 hours

Teaching period : Spring Semester 2026

Course Description :

This course introduces students to the essential principles of business law (with a cultural focus on French law). Students will discover how businesses are created and organized, how contracts are formed and enforced, and what responsibilities managers and directors carry when running a company.

Key topics include:

How to set up and structure a company;

- The rights and duties of corporate directors and shareholders;
- Contract negotiation, formation, and enforcement;
- Liability issues in business transactions; and
- The legal aspects of selling or transferring a business;
- How a French judge could review these legal interactions.

Prerequisites :

None

Course Objectives :

Through clear explanations, practical examples (based on a lawyer's experience), and comparative perspectives (as relevant), the course aims to provide students with the knowledge and tools to understand how law shapes business activities and corporate decision-making.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Explain the role of law in business** and how legal rules influence commercial decisions and corporate governance.
2. **Identify and compare different ways to set up and structure a company**, with a focus on French law and reference to other legal systems.
3. **Describe the rights and duties of corporate actors** (directors, managers, and shareholders), and assess their responsibilities in decision-making.
4. **Understand the process of contract negotiation, formation, and enforcement**, and apply these principles to simple business scenarios.
5. **Analyze liability issues in business transactions**, including contractual and extra-contractual liability.
6. **Discuss the legal implications of selling or transferring a business**, and recognize the protections offered to parties involved.
7. **Evaluate how a French judge could approach business disputes**, and compare this with judicial reasoning in other jurisdictions.
8. **Apply legal concepts to practical examples**, developing problem-solving skills useful for business and legal contexts.
9. **Communicate legal ideas clearly in English**, using accessible vocabulary and structured reasoning.

Assessment:

30% active participation in class

35% mid-term exam (group session in class)

35% final exam (group session in class)

Attendance:

In order to participate, students must be present. Nevertheless, a maximum of 2 (two) unexcused absences will be allowed; otherwise no mark will be given. An unexcused absence at a test (final test or continuous assessment) means no credits for the course.

Bibliography:

Business Law in Plain English: Company & Corporate Law: Master Key Legal & Business Concepts with 200+ Expert Exercises & a Multilingual Glossary in 7 Languages: Advanced Legal English, IDM Law