Spring 2015

Legal and Ethical Environment of Business

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Recommended Citation

Grants Collection

Affordable Learning Georgia Grants Collections are intended to provide faculty with the frameworks to quickly implement or revise the same materials as a Textbook Transformation Grants team, along with the aims and lessons learned from project teams during the implementation process.

Each collection contains the following materials:

- Linked Syllabus
  - The syllabus should provide the framework for both direct implementation of the grant team’s selected and created materials and the adaptation/transformation of these materials.
- Initial Proposal
  - The initial proposal describes the grant project’s aims in detail.
- Final Report
  - The final report describes the outcomes of the project and any lessons learned.

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Syllabus
The Legal and Ethical Environment of Business (BUSA 2106): Fall 2015
CRN 85700   TT 2:30 – 3:45 p.m.  206 Aderhold Learning Center
CRN 80983   TT 4:00 – 5:15 p.m.  400 Langdale Hall

INSTRUCTOR: Susan Willey, J.D.   E-mail: willey@gsu.edu or via D2L
Phone/voice mail: 404-413-7487   Office: 1131 RCB
Office Hours: Most Tuesdays from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 pm

TEXT: Instead of a required textbook to purchase, you will be using a free, on-line textbook that I am creating for BUSA 2106, supplemented by slides (posted on D2L), in-class exercises, and other materials distributed in class. You can link to the e-book through D2L or directly at http://gsu.speedslate.com/modules/. From the pull-down Modules tab, go to the appropriate module, where you will find an Overview, Learning Objectives, and Questions to Consider before you begin the module to guide you in identifying readings, videos and websites that discuss what is important to know in that module, as well as additional materials to explore if you wish to understand a topic more deeply. This semester, I will not be assigning particular readings or videos, although you will find some tagged as “featured” and others as “enrich your knowledge.” I want you to explore the e-book, focusing on the topics that you need to understand better to do well on the quizzes, tests, and in-class exercises. Have fun!

The e-book is organized into 12 modules to reflect the topics you will study this semester. Although it has more than 250 links to videos, readings and websites (many maintained by federal administrative agencies like OSHA and the EEOC), it is still under construction. As a result, content may be added during the semester and you will also see some “placeholders” for future content and interactive exercises.

For your convenience, the e-book can be accessed on a desktop or laptop computer, tablet or iPad, or a mobile device. At the end of the semester, you will be asked to assess the format, content and accessibility of the e-book in the Course Assessment. In addition, if you find other material online that you think should be in the e-book, please send me an email with the link for me to review. Thanks!

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS ON D2L/BRIGHTSPACE (D2L): All course materials for this section, including quizzes and the gradebook, will be posted on D2L. I will also use D2L to make announcements and to answer course-related questions. Please check D2L several times a week to ensure that you don’t miss announcements and other course information. Notify me if you have problems taking D2L quizzes or in accessing course materials.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The legal environment plays a significant role in facilitating and constraining business activity. To be competitive, American business must understand and strategically use the legal environment to minimize risk and enhance productivity. This course provides you with an overview of US statutory and judicial efforts to regulate business activity in several areas: business entities, corporations, agency and employment law, tort law, products liability, and the protection of intellectual property. Strategic responses to competitive pressures may also require managers to make difficult ethical decisions. After an introduction to ethical theory and decision-making models, we will focus on the application of ethics to business decision-making.
COURSE/LEARNING OBJECTIVES: A key rationale for requiring this course is that an understanding of law and ethics is a vital part of an undergraduate business education. By the end of the course, you should be able to

- Recognize, assess and analyze case problems and other legal issues affecting business.
- Apply legal analysis principles to resolve business problems.
- Anticipate legal problems before they occur and participate more effectively in resolving disputes that do arise.
- Communicate effectively about legal and ethical issues using appropriate oral and written conventions.
- Evaluate legal arguments and evidence to apply legal doctrine to solve business problems.
- Explain how law can be used strategically as a tool to reduce or manage business risk.
- Identify and analyze contemporary legal issues to promote an interest in the legal environment and a framework for maintaining that interest beyond the classroom to enhance lifelong learning.
- Appreciate the ways in which law both facilitates and restricts business activities.

Finally, after successfully completing BUSA 2106, you should:

- be more aware of the complexity and unpredictability of the law,
- be more sensitive to ethical issues confronting business, and
- have a greater appreciation of the role of law and the courts in balancing legitimate, competing interests of the parties.

Remember that "real world" legal problems are murky and ill-defined, with neither a clear structure nor a "right" answer. They require analysis, the application of previously learned legal doctrine, and thoughtful judgment to construct and defend a reasonable solution -- all skills you will be working on in this course.

ELIGIBILITY FOR RCB COURSES: Keep in mind that students may not register for any 3000/4000-level course taught by the RCB unless they have

- Earned at least 45 semester hours of college-level credit and
- Completed RCB Area F courses (Acct 2101-2102, Econ 2105-2106, CIS 2010, and BUSA 2106) with a cumulative GPA of 2.8 or better. To meet this requirement, Area F courses may be attempted only twice.

COURSE SECTION POLICIES

CLASS FORMAT: Given the class size, this class will be conducted in a lecture-discussion format, with frequent in-class team exercises that will be scored and count toward your course grade.

ATTENDANCE does NOT count toward your grade in this class, but students with perfect attendance (e.g., NO absences or tardies) will receive 10 EC points. Attendance also determines eligibility for additional EC. In the event class is cancelled due to bad weather, I’ll post announcements to inform you what you need to do so that we can stay on the schedule in the syllabus. Make sure to check D2L!

A special word to VA students: Due to required University oversight of students receiving VA benefits, you have a special burden of faithful class attendance. Under present guidelines, absence for a ten-consecutive calendar day period necessitates a report to that effect to the VA Office at GSU, with (presumably) a consequent adverse effect on your status vis-a-vis the U.S. Government.

PROFESSIONALISM AND STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY: Last year, the RCB adopted Professionalism Expectations that it expects students to follow in all RCB classes. I have posted these standards on D2L and would like you to read them carefully. Most students taking BUSA 2106 are business majors who aspire to be successful business professionals in the near future. It is our hope that you will cultivate these behaviors until they become habitual, as we believe that they will help you achieve your career goals.

While one aspect of professionalism is assuming more responsibility over your conduct, another is to accept more responsibility for your performance in this class and greater accountability for your own success (or failure). In real terms, that means coming to class on time and prepared for that day's assignment, so that we can build on your knowledge to discuss course content, problems and hypothetical, and current legal issues in class. In addition, accountability means reading the syllabus and posted items on D2L carefully so you don’t have to ask me what will be covered on the test, or if you have to furnish your own scantrons for tests (you do!).
THE CLASSROOM: BOTH A LEARNING COMMUNITY AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING GROUND

Please show respect for the instructor and your classmates:

- Be punctual for class — when you’re tardy, you may miss important course announcements and you disrupt the learning process for others. If you do arrive late, enter and take your seat quietly.
- Be courteous -- turn off all cell phones and pagers, don’t whisper to others in class, or engage in other behaviors that disrupt me or your classmates who wish to learn.
- If you use any electronic device (e.g., phone, computer, iPad) in a manner inappropriate to your full attention in class, I will ask you to shut it down.
- Participate in class discussion and group activities, but don’t interrupt other students or attempt to dominate the conversation. Stay focused on the assigned topic.
- While I don’t object to hats and baseball caps in the classroom, I do require you to take them off or turn them backwards during all tests.

RIGOR AND CRITICAL THINKING: This course is deceptively rigorous, as it requires you to critically examine and apply legal rules, not simply memorize them. Don’t expect to understand the course content instantly — this is not an immediate gratification course, which makes it particularly frustrating for some students. Nor is it likely that you will be able to master the material from classroom presentations alone. If I am teaching the class properly, you should encounter questions and problems that you cannot immediately answer. For most students, it takes additional time and effort outside the classroom to attain the level of understanding and mastery I expect. (The rule of thumb is 2 hours outside of class for every hour spent in class — which would a minimum of 9 hours total each week.) That means hard work, sustained and focused concentration, and patience to do well. Assess the amount of time you have available for BUSA 2106 — if it’s not enough to do well this term, you might consider taking the course in a later semester.

“The signs of rigor are the signs of struggle — students should have their eyebrows furrowed, and they should be doing hard work. Failure should be seen as part of the day, as a necessary part of learning and taking risks.” — Amanda Ripley, The Smartest Kids in the World and How They Got That Way

ACADEMIC HONESTY: “People get hired for their technical training. They get fired for their lack of character.” — Booker T. Washington. “It takes 20 years to build a reputation, and five minutes to ruin it.” — Warren Buffet.

Academic honesty goes directly to the question of are you an individual of character and integrity. Academic dishonesty not only affects you, it affects the reputation of Georgia State University and will be severely punished.

All university and college regulations concerning academic honesty apply to BUSA 2106. GSU students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity; at a minimum, students should be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts.

The GSU Academic Honesty Policy represents a core value of the University. All members of the University community — including students — are responsible for knowing and abiding by its tenets. Lack of knowledge of the contents of the University Policy on Academic Honesty is not an acceptable defense to any charge of academic dishonesty.

You are expected to carefully review the online Policy prior to undertaking any research or other assignments. The following is an excerpt of the policy the GSU Student Handbook Student Code of Conduct. I have posted the full “Policy on Academic Honesty” on D2L.

Behavior consistent with College and University policies on academic honesty and treatment of members of the University community is expected of all. Cheating, plagiarizing, submitting the material for credit in more than one class, and other deceptive conduct with respect to a student’s work output will be dealt with according to the University Policy on Academic Honesty.

Plagiarism and misrepresentation of work are serious offenses, which can lead to expulsion and a grade of “F” for the course. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, taking material from any source written by another and presenting it as your own by failing to indicate full and accurate attribution to the correct author/creator. This includes marginally altering material taken from another source and calling it your own creation. Plagiarism includes materials taken from internet sources. Proper citation requires quote marks or other distinctive set-off for the material, followed directly by a reference to the source. The source details may be in the footnotes/endnotes/references section, but only listing a reference without proper indication in the text is not proper attribution and can be considered plagiarism. Misrepresentation of work includes, but is not limited to, presenting material that was prepared for another class or outside work as an original work product that was produced for this class. All
work turned in for this class is represented by the student(s) to be original material prepared in fulfillment of this course’s requirements.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY: Students are allowed only 6 withdrawals during their academic careers at GSU. If you withdraw from this course after drop-add and before the midpoint, you receive a W (unless you already have 6 withdrawals); if you withdraw after the midpoint, you will automatically receive a WF. After 6 withdrawals, a withdrawal at any point in the course results in an automatic F. You can review the full withdrawal policy at http://robinson.gsu.edu/resources/files/ouaa/policy_flyer.pdf

LEGAL DISCLAIMER: Any and all legal opinions or statements as to legal matters made by the Instructor are for class discussion purposes only, and are never to be taken as dispensing legal advice.

DISABILITIES OR SPECIAL NEEDS: Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Office of Disability Services. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of Disability Services of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which accommodations are sought. Please let me know if you have a disability or special need that requires accommodation.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. TESTS (probably 325 pts or 65% of your course grade): There will be two unit tests and a non-cumulative final exam. Tests will be comprised of true-false, multiple choice and matching items drawn from the course materials, lectures, and problems, with a strong focus on the application of the law to business. Read assigned handouts and pay attention in class!

   “Cheat sheet” -- You may bring in one page (8 1/2 by 11, front and back), handwritten, of your OWN notes to use in taking a test. “Cheat sheets” with impermissible content, e.g., chapter outlines posted on D2L that have not been substantially modified to make them your own, as well as those demonstrating unauthorized collaboration, will be confiscated. Test scores will also be penalized.

   MAKE-UP EXAMINATIONS: I schedule make-up tests only if (1) you cannot attend an exam because of serious illness, a death in the family, or a business trip required by your employer, (2) you have supporting documentation, and (3) you notify me of these circumstances before the exam.

2. QUIZZES (75 pts or 15% of your course grade): I anticipate 8 10-point quizzes administered via D2L. Any points you earn above 75 will be added to your quiz total as EC. Quiz questions will emphasize understanding the law (definitions of legal terminology, identification of legal rules, etc.) and application.

3. BUILD-A-BUSINESS IN-CLASS EXERCISES (100 pts or 20% of your grade): I have created 7 exercises (at 15 pts each with 5 EC built in) to introduce you to many of the primary legal and ethical considerations that go into forming and operating a business. Each exercise consists of several questions that small teams will answer in class. I will collect and score your team answers, based on the thoughtfulness and thoroughness of your answers. Dates are identified in the syllabus – make sure that you are present to participate and earn credit.

4. EXTRA-CREDIT (EC) POLICY AND ASSIGNMENTS
   
   A. ELIGIBILITY: Eligibility for extra-credit is based on attendance. To be eligible for the maximum 25 points, you may have no more than 2 absences (whether excused or unexcused). With 3-4 absences, you are still eligible for up to 15 extra-credit points. Students with more than 4 absences are not eligible for extra-credit.

   B. EXTRA-CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS (maximum of 25 pts, which does not include perfect attendance EC or EC built into tests, quizzes or homework. Altogether EC can add more than 5% to your grade): All EC must be submitted on the designated date in the syllabus. I will not accept late EC, so do not ask.

   • Assessment of Module materials (up to 5 pts per module) and/or Annotated bibliography of new materials to post in a Module (up to 5 pts per module). Can be repeated up to the 25 pt EC maximum. Full instructions and due dates are attached to this syllabus.

   • Employee Code of Conduct. Full instructions will be posted on D2L. If submitted on or before Oct 13, eligible for up to 25 points; if submitted after 10/13 an on or before Nov 17, eligible for up to 15 EC pts.
• McDonald’s coffee video review (up to 10 pts). Both the link to the NY Times Retrospective and instructions will be posted on D2L. Due on or before Nov 19.
• Blood donation or volunteer activity (5 pts each, maximum of 10). Documentation due by Dec 3.

5. COURSE ASSESSMENT: “Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State. Upon completing the course, please take the time to fill out the online course evaluation.” In addition to the Course Assessment on GoSolar, please complete the section-specific assessment on D2L that counts as your final quiz score.

6. GRADING: Your grade is based on PERFORMANCE -- the total number of points you earn -- NOT EFFORT or interest. Telling me how hard you work, how much you study, how busy you are, how many external factors interfere with your ability to perform better, etc. will not raise your grade!
I do not assign letter grades to tests and papers, nor do I curve grades. At the end of the semester, I total the points you have earned and convert them to a course grade. I anticipate using the following scale to convert your points to a course grades. Note that only perfect attendance EC counts toward an A+ grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>485 - 500 pts, without EC (except for perf. attend)</th>
<th>A+</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>465 – 500 pts</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>450 – 464 pts</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>435 – 449 pts</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>415 – 434 pts</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>400 – 414 pts</td>
<td>B-</td>
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INCOMPLETE GRADES: We do not give incomplete grades in this course, except for cases where a student missed the final examination for an excusable reason. According to GSU policy, the grade will automatically be converted to an F if it is not removed by the end of the second academic term after the “I” is assigned.

7. TIPS FOR SUCCESS: This course requires time and effort to master the terminology; to understand the laws, their underlying logic and their impact upon American business; and to complete the written work properly. To be successful, you will need to do more than memorize statutes and cases, or regurgitate facts and rules. You will need to demonstrate the ability to
  ➢ understand specialized legal terminology and explain complex legal concepts in everyday language,
  ➢ analyze business problems from a legal perspective and apply legal rules to real-life business situations,
  ➢ identify ways in which managers can use the law strategically to reduce risk, and think critically.

Learning: A number of variables influence learning. One of the key factors is to be engaged with the material. Note taking during class keeps you both listening and engaged. To help you organize the material, I will post very limited outlines for each chapter before we cover it in class. Print them out (double or triple-spaced) and fill in the definitions and legal rules, examples, and problems that will help you better understand and retain the material.

Another powerful determinant of how much students learn (and how well they'll perform) is the amount they study. To make maximum use of your time and effort studying,
  ➢ Try to relate course content to ideas you're already familiar with to make the course mean more and to gain “ownership” over the content. Meaningful material is easier to learn.
  ➢ Include concrete examples and hypotheticals in your class notes to make connections to abstract ideas easier to recall and understand. This will also help you in preparing for the tests.
  ➢ Use outlines, lists, or concept maps to organize your class notes and course material.
  ➢ Process information actively. Go beyond “shallow” learning and memorization to process course content more deeply: apply rules to new situations to test your understanding of legal theory and how it operates.
  ➢ Distribute your study efforts. Don’t cram -- engaging in repeated study over time maximizes learning.
  ➢ Consult the “Study Smart, Not Hard: Tips for Success in BUSA 2106” on D2L.
**TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE**

For each topic, I have “assigned” the module in the e-book. I may post announcements on D2L recommending some of the readings, videos, and websites that I think may be more helpful to your understanding of that module, and which are designed to deepen and enrich your understanding of those concepts. The Build-a-Business Exercises will be completed in class, collected and graded, so if you are absent on a B-a-B day, you’ll receive a 0 for that exercise. After the introductory materials, I am trying to organize the topics as an entrepreneur who forms a business might encounter them – from selecting the appropriate entity, to trademarking a name and protecting intellectual property to entering into contracts required to open and maintain the business to a variety of employment related issues, and ultimately to potential tort and product liability.

Quiz due dates will be posted on D2L, so check it regularly to make sure that you don’t miss any! Remember – quizzes and build-a-business exercises count 35% toward your course grade. Announcements, significant departures from and corrections to the syllabus (e.g., changing the date an assignment is due), will also be announced in class and posted on D2L.

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### Tentative Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>SUBJECT AREA</th>
<th>ON-LINE MODULE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 25</td>
<td>Introduction: What is Law?</td>
<td>Intro to Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 27</td>
<td>Definitions, Functions &amp; Sources of Law</td>
<td>Intro to Law</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Critical Legal Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 1</td>
<td>Law and Ethics; Ethical Theory</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>B-a-B EX 1: Risks and Ethical Concerns</em></td>
<td><em>Ranking Ethical Principles (D2L)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 3</td>
<td>Ethical Decision-Making &amp; CSR</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
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<td>Sept 8</td>
<td>State and Federal Courts</td>
<td>Courts &amp; Jurisdiction</td>
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<td>Sept 10</td>
<td>Subject Matter and Personal Jurisdiction</td>
<td>Courts &amp; Jurisdiction</td>
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<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>Pretrial Process; Jury Selection</td>
<td>Dispute Resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 17</td>
<td>Trial and Appeal; ADR</td>
<td>Dispute Resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 22</td>
<td>Comparing Civil and Criminal Procedure</td>
<td>Criminal Law</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Review for Test 1</td>
<td>Sample Test Questions (D2L)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 24</td>
<td><strong>TEST 1: Introduction to Law, Ethics, Courts &amp; Jurisdiction, Dispute Resolution and ADR, Criminal Law (100 points?)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 1</td>
<td>Non-Corporate Entities: Sole Proprietorships, Partnership, and Limited Partnerships</td>
<td>Business Entities</td>
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<td>Oct 6</td>
<td>Corporations and Corporate Governance</td>
<td>Business Entities</td>
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<td><strong>B-a-B EX 2: Entity Selection</strong></td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Course</td>
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<td>Cybersquatting on Trademarked Names</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 15</td>
<td>Elements of Common Law Contracts; Exculpatory Clauses</td>
<td>Contracts</td>
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<td>Contracts: Assent Defenses</td>
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<td>Introduction to UCC Goods Contracts</td>
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<td><strong>B-a-B EX 3: IP and Contracts</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 20</td>
<td>Contracts: Discharge, Breach &amp; Damages</td>
<td>Contracts</td>
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<td>E-Mail Contracts; E-Signatures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Primary Business Contracts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 22</td>
<td><strong>TEST 2: Business Entities, IP and Contracts (100 points?)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 27</td>
<td>Agency: Formation, Duties &amp; Termination</td>
<td>Agency</td>
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<td>Oct 29</td>
<td>Liability of Principals, Agents, and Independent Contractor</td>
<td>Agency</td>
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<td><strong>B-a-B EX 4: Agency and Employment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 3</td>
<td>Worker Protection Laws</td>
<td>Employment Law</td>
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<td>WARN; Immigration Law and Employment</td>
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<td>Nov 5</td>
<td>Title VII: Theories, Remedies and Defenses</td>
<td>EEO</td>
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<td>Protection Against Retaliation</td>
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<td>Nov 10</td>
<td>Title VII: Protected Classes</td>
<td>EEO</td>
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<td>Equal Pay Act</td>
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<td>Nov 12</td>
<td>ADEA (Age), ADA (Disabilities) and Protections for Veterans</td>
<td>EEO</td>
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<td><strong>B-a-B EX 5: EEO</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 17</td>
<td>Intentional Torts</td>
<td>Torts</td>
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<td>Nov 19</td>
<td>Negligent Torts &amp; Special Negligence Doctrines</td>
<td>Torts</td>
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<td><strong>B-a-B EX 6: Torts</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 23-27</td>
<td>No Class. Happy Thanksgiving!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 1</td>
<td>Warranties and Strict Product Liability</td>
<td>Product Liability</td>
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<td><strong>B-a-B EX 7: Warranties and Product Liability</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 3</td>
<td>Strict Product Liability</td>
<td>Product Liability</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>THURS.</strong></td>
<td><strong>DEC 10</strong></td>
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<td>**FINAL EXAM: Agency, Worker Protection, and EEO law; Torts,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Warranties and Product Liability (125 points)</td>
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<td>2:30 – 3:45 class: 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. in 206 Aderhold LC</td>
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<td>4:00 – 5:15 class: 4:15 – 6:45 in 500 Langdale Hall</td>
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PERSONAL GRADE RECORD

I will post a password-protected grade book on D2L. While I strive for accuracy, I may enter a grade incorrectly. Contact me if you detect a discrepancy between your grade record and the grade book.

TESTS: 325 probable points

TEST 1 _____ pts out of 100
TEST 2 _____ pts out of 100
FINAL _____ pts out of 125
______ 10 pts EC for perfect attendance

QUIZZES: 75 points (8 @ 10 pts)

Quiz 1 _____ pts Quiz 2 _____ pts Quiz 3 _____ pts Quiz 4 _____ pts
Quiz 5 _____ pts Quiz 6 _____ pts Quiz 7 _____ pts Quiz 8 _____ pts

Build-a-Business In-Class Exercises (7 at 15 pts)

EX 1 _____ pts EX 2 _____ pts EX 3 _____ pts EX 4 _____ pts
EX 5 _____ pts EX 6 _____ pts EX 7 _____ pts

EXTRA-CREDIT (maximum of 25 if eligible for EC)

Code of Conduct _____ out of 25
Module Assessment _____ out of 25
McDonald’s Coffee _____ pts out of 10
Annotated Bibliography _____ pts out of 25
Volunteer/Blood _____ pts out of 5/10
Misc EC _____ pts

GRADE SUMMARY:

Test Total (325 possible) _____
Quiz Total (75 possible) _____
B-a-B Total (100 possible) _____
Allowable Extra-Credit (max of 25) _____
TOTAL POINTS: _____ out of 500 pts _____%
Module Review Extra Credit

You may earn up to **10 EC points** for reviewing **at least 5** videos, readings or websites (but NOT the Overview, Questions to Consider or Learning Objectives) for one of the modules in the e-book, listed below with dates each review is due.

After you have watched or read the posted materials you selected, write a 1-2 paragraph thoughtful “review” for **each** item that identifies the specific item for review by name and also addresses the following questions:

- Was the video, reading or website helpful in teaching you content? Why or why not?
- How helpful was it in supplementing the slides?
- Was it interesting and engaging?
- Should it remain as a link in the e-book or should it be deleted and replaced with something else?
- If you were to rate this item with 1 to 5 stars (with 5 being the highest positive rating, like an Amazon or Yelp rating), what rating would you give it?

You may repeat this EC for up to 10 more points by reviewing a second module from the list below.

Post your Module Review EC in Dropbox and bring a print copy to class. Due on the following due dates:

- Business Entities  
  October 8
- Intellectual Property  
  October 15
- Contracts  
  October 27
- Agency  
  November 3
- Employment Law  
  November 5
- EEO  
  November 17
- Torts  
  December 1
- Product Liability  
  December 3
Initial Proposal
### Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants: Round 2
Summer 2015, Fall 2015, Spring 2016
Proposal Form and Narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Name(s)</th>
<th>Georgia State University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Team Members        | Susan Willey, Clinical Professor of Legal Studies, Department of Risk Management and Insurance  
                       Zoe Salloom, Senior Instructional Designer, Center for Instructional Innovation  
                       [willey@gsu.edu](mailto:willey@gsu.edu)  
                       [zsalloom@gsu.edu](mailto:zsalloom@gsu.edu) |
| Sponsor, Title, Department, Institution | Greg Howell, Associate Director, Office of Sponsored Proposals and Awards, Georgia State University |
| Course Names, Course Numbers and Semesters Offered | BUSA 2106, Legal and Ethical Environment of Business  
Offered Summer, Fall and Spring terms every year |
| Average Number of Students Per Course Section | 65  
Number of Course Sections Affected in AY 2016 | 38-40  
Total Number of Students Affected in AY 2016 | 2400 to 2600 |
| Award Category (pick one) | ☒ No-Cost-to-Students Learning Materials  
☐ OpenStax Textbooks  
☐ Course Pack Pilots  
☐ Transformations-at-Scale |
| List the original course materials for students | Required Textbook:  
$250.00  
**Total Cost**  
$600,000 to $650,000 |
| Plan for Hosting Materials | ☐ OpenStax CNX  
☒ D2L  
☐ LibGuides  
☐ Other  
_______________________________________________ |
| Projected Per Student Cost | $0  
Projected Per Student Savings (%) | 100% |
1. PROJECT GOALS

BUSA 2106, The Legal Environment of Business, is one of the top 50 enrolled lower division courses in the USG. At Georgia State University, roughly 2000 students annually take BUSA 2106. Nearly 60% of our students are eligible for Pell Grants and 55% actually receive them to help finance their education. In surveys of my students, between 6 and 17% admit not purchasing the textbook. Our primary goal is to make GSU education more affordable by replacing the required textbook with sustainable, interactive, educational content developed from no-cost, publicly available materials. Later, we plan to create short, content videos both to supplement these materials and to facilitate hybrid and/or flipped BUSA 2106 classes, perhaps with support of a Transformations-At-Scale grant.

**Description of Transformation:** In 30 years of teaching The Legal Environment of Business course, I have reviewed and/or used textbooks by all the major publishers, including the free Open Textbook, Business Law and the Legal Environment on Merlot II. Available textbooks are expensive and provide too much information for a one-semester course. They also do not adequately engage students, provide them with sufficient opportunities to apply content, promote critical thinking, or keep up with the changing legal environment of business. As described below, we will compile and create no-cost content and post it on a redesigned D2L course site that is more engaging and interactive than available textbooks.

**Identification of Affected Stakeholders:** GSU BUSA 2106 students and instructors are the primary stakeholders; future stakeholders include BUSA 2106 students and instructors at other USG institutions.

**Impact of Transformation on Stakeholders and Course Success:** The immediate impact of the transformed course will be significant cost savings to students in the piloted classes. As discussed in the assessment and sustainability sections below, we anticipate that the redesigned course and content will improve student preparation, engagement and performance, permitting instructors to engage students in higher-level thinking activities in class. Posting materials on D2L will also provide instructors with quality teaching materials and produce more continuity across sections, particularly those taught by part-time instructors. After the pilot, we will engage in collaborative efforts with other BUSA 2106 instructors at GSU to expand and enrich the no-cost materials in the transformed course as we implement it in more sections.

1.1 TRANSFORMATION ACTION PLAN

**Identification, Review, Selection and Creation of New Course Materials:** In transforming BUSA 2106, we will retain the structure, legal topics, and learning outcomes of the current course. To replace the textbook, we will identify and select legal content readily available on federal and state government agency websites. For example, the Small Business Administration website provides explanations of partnerships, corporations, LLCs and other entities; factors to consider in selecting the appropriate entity for a business; and discussion of pertinent business law. The Department of Labor and EEOC websites provide legal information on a variety of employment issues from wage and hour issues (FLSA) to worker protection laws (e.g., OSHA, ERISA, FLMIA, COBRA, HIPAA, and WARN), to Title VII, ADA, ADEA and other statutes and regulations to help employers and workers understand employment discrimination laws. Similarly, the Patent and Trademark Office and the US Copyright Office provide a wealth of legal resources on the protection of intellectual property. All these sites are regularly updated, making them ideal for this project. In addition to government websites, we will utilize GALILEO and library databases e.g., LexisNexis Academic to identify appropriate state and federal cases, EBSCO and Factiva to identify relevant news and academic articles that can be posted on D2L. Finally, we will create textual and video content to provide necessary background and context for these legal materials.
Instructional Redesign of Syllabus and Course Materials: The structure and content of the course syllabus will be redesigned to make it more interactive, with live links to the no-cost content posted on D2L instead of assigned readings and problems in the textbook. The website will also be redesigned to make that content accessible and interactive, allowing students to progress through linked readings (e.g., statutes, regulations, cases and current articles), content enhancing videos (e.g., the New York Times McDonald’s Hot Coffee retrospective) and interactive assignments such as web quests, mind-mapping or infographic exercises.

Activities and Role of Each Team Member: Content expert Susan Willey will identify, select and create no-cost content. She will work with Senior Instructional Designer Zoe Salloom to create an interactive D2L course site for these materials that is user-friendly and serves the needs of both undergraduate students and faculty teaching BUSA 2106.

Providing Open Access to Transformed Course: We will create the content as HTML documents, with links to interactive components. The transformed course will initially be made available to BUSA 2106 instructors at GSU and other USG institutions through a reusable D2L shell, and will later be made available on other platforms, e.g., as a website open to everyone, through the BOR learning objects repository and/or through one or more of the open textbook sites such as collegeopentextbooks.org.

1.2 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE MEASURES

We will compare student performance on quizzes, tests, and assignments in the transformed course with my student scores on similar tests and assignments in prior text-based versions of BUSA 2106. We’ll analyze that data to determine how student attainment of learning outcomes changes after textbooks have been replaced by the new content on D2L and to determine if there is any apparent effect on student retention by comparing the DFW rate to data from prior semesters.

I have administered course-specific assessments on D2L for a number of years that ask students to identify which course objectives listed in the syllabus they believe they have attained in the class, as well as whether and how the textbook, tests, quizzes, assignments, and other course materials contributed toward those learning outcomes. I will modify that instrument to assess how replacing the textbook with no-cost materials on D2L has affected their attainment of specified learning outcomes and how they evaluate the effectiveness of these materials in facilitating their learning of course content.

1.3 TIMELINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Milestone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01/15/2015</td>
<td>Begin designing D2L course site for revamped BUSA 2106.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/15/2015</td>
<td>Complete initial collection of open source materials from Galileo and Merlot databases, government websites, Youtube and other available sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/30/2015</td>
<td>Organize collected materials in D2L.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/01/2015</td>
<td>Submit interim status report to ALG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/08/2015</td>
<td>Complete beta test of redesigned course in Maymester class and compile preliminary assessment data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/15/2015</td>
<td>Complete revisions to course website and e-materials based on beta test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/24/2015</td>
<td>Implement revised content and course redesign in two fall sections of BUSA 2106.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/10/2015</td>
<td>Complete collection of assessment data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/15/2016</td>
<td>Submit final report to ALG with full analysis of assessment data.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.4 BUDGET

$10,000 Stipend.  $5,000 will be used to obtain a release for Susan Willey that has been pre-approved by her department chair if the grant is funded to allow Professor Willey sufficient time to collect and organize materials, write chapter objectives and basic textual materials supplemented by links to government websites, videos and other available open source materials.  $5,000 will be used for release time for Zoe Salloom to design the D2L site and to develop videos and interactive exercises posted on it.

$800 Expenses.  Projected expenses include cost of travel to the required kick-off meeting on February 2, 2015 and any remaining funds will be used to create additional content videos and disseminate the results of this pilot to GSU colleagues.

1.5 SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Once the D2L course site has been redesigned with selected and created materials and links as a no-cost alternative to a traditional and expensive textbook for BUSA 2106, it will be necessary to maintain the site so that the textless version of the course is sustainable and can continue to be offered each semester.  While government websites (e.g., PTO, SBA, EEOC, SEC) are generally stable and updated regularly, links to content on GALILEO databases, Merlot, Youtube, and other websites will need to be verified to assure that they are still viable.  The Robinson College of Business enables the legal studies faculty to hire law students as GRAs to assist in administering our large class sections and to provide research support; they will also be tasked with responsibility to verify and update links each semester, as well as to assist in identifying additional no-cost materials to enhance the redesigned website.

As indicated previously, a preliminary version of the transformed D2L site will be beta-tested in May 2015 and a revised version piloted in 2 sections of BUSA 2106 in Fall 2015.  After assessment data has been collected and analyzed to determine if students have attained course learning outcomes at the same or improved levels compared to those using a textbook, the D2L course site will be shared with other GSU legal studies colleagues for implementation in more sections of BUSA 2106 in Spring 2016.  Ultimately, we expect all full-time and part-time legal studies faculty at GSU to utilize the D2L course site to replace their BUSA 2106 textbooks, while allowing them to modify content as needed to meet their students’ needs.  As more instructional content videos are developed and more interactivity is added to the D2L website, we plan to offer it to BUSA 2106 instructors at other USG institutions.

1.6 REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

We have attached letters of support from Martin Grace, interim chair of the Department of Risk Management and Insurance, where BUSA 2106 is housed at GSU, and Greg Howell, Associate Director, Office of Sponsored Proposals and Awards in the Georgia State University’s University Research and Services Administration, who will be responsible for receipt and distribution of funding for this proposal.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:  ALL PROPOSAL DOCUMENTS, REFERENCES, AND ATTACHMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN A SINGLE EMAIL TO ALG@GATECH.EDU.
November 20, 2014

Center for 21st Century Universities
Georgia Institute of Technology

Dear Members of the Review Committee:

I am offering my support to Prof. Susan Willey's proposed project under the Affordable Learning Georgia grant RFP.

I have the unique perspective of having taught the class (BUSA 2106) that Prof. Willey’s grant proposal covers and I have been part of hallway conversations for a number of years on how to use our resources and our student's debit cards more effectively. Currently, a typical textbook has twenty-four to thirty chapters of which we cover sixteen or so. Working with the textbook publishers we have managed to get one of them to provide our students with a custom looseleaf version of the textbook for approximately $80 (if purchased directly from the publisher) instead of paying full retail price of $250, but with no buyback opportunities. Almost every year in the recent past, we have had tedious negotiations about the production and pricing of this custom book. The current version will not be available for Fall 2015 classes, and we do not know if we will be able to continue to offer our students a custom version for less than $100. Creating our own set of materials will both free us from this process and enable us to tailor course materials to the needs of our classes.

Professor Willey is uniquely skilled to lead this development team. She has taught the course for many years, knows our student's capabilities very well, and is highly respected in the legal studies academic community for her approach to pedagogy. In addition, while this course serves many students at GSU it is a Top 50 undergraduate course across the University System of Georgia institutions. Thus, the materials created by Prof. Willey could be the basis of course materials at other USG campuses. Further, since the materials will come from the public domain, other institutions can update the course for local needs. The major benefits of this proposal, if funded, will be a platform for innovation at GSU and for other interested professors across the state and real resources savings for our students.

I am happy to hear about these grant opportunities and I am wholly supportive of Prof. Willey’s application to develop innovative materials for BUSA 2106.

Sincerely yours,

Martin F. Grace
Regents’ Professor
James S. Kemper Professor
Interim Chair, Risk Management & Insurance

Endorsed by GSU Office of Sponsored Proposals and Awards

Greg Howell, Associate Director
Final Report
Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants

Final Report

Date: December 16, 2015

Grant Number: #61

Institution Name(s): Georgia State University

Team Members (Name, Title, Department, Institutions if different, and email address for each):

Susan Willey, Clinical Professor of Legal Studies, Department of Risk Management and Insurance, Robinson College of Business, willey@gsu.edu

Zoe Salloom, Senior Instructional Designer, Center for Instructional Innovation, zsalloom@gsu.edu

Project Lead: Susan Willey

Course Name(s) and Course Numbers: BUSA 2106, The Legal and Ethical Environment of Business

Semester Project Began: Spring 2015

Semester(s) of Implementation: Fall 2015

Number of Course Sections Affected by Implementation: 2

Total Number of Students Affected by Implementation: 180

1. Narrative

This project saved 172 students a significant amount of money. Because we have so many students taking BUSA 2106 at Georgia State (17 sections offered in fall 2015 with a total of 1069 students), we have successfully negotiated with the publisher for lower textbook prices for our students. Currently, students in the other sections are paying between $75 and $250 for the course textbook, depending upon whether they rent a book for the term, buy an e-version, or purchase a hardcover copy. Thus, the savings just for the students in my sections piloting the free e-book could range from $12,900 to more than $40,000.

Students were very pleased at not having to purchase a textbook. Overall, they were also generally pleased with the content of the free e-book that we are developing, finding the more than 250 videos, websites and readings currently in the book’s 12 content modules to be user-
friendly, engaging, and substantive. Because we deliberately piloted the book without assigning particular content in each module, students were also able to tailor their use of content to their individual needs, exploring the book much like they do the internet, allowing one topic to lead them to the next. We did not anticipate that some students would not appreciate this aspect of the book, but would ask for specific assignments and more guidance in selecting which materials to read and study. We plan to address this concern by adding tags such as featured, recommended, enrich your knowledge or topics of special interest in the spring.

In the comparison semesters, students using the e-book had a higher GPA and lower DFW rates than students using a traditional textbook. This was true in this semester, too – I piloted the free e-book in two sections, while teaching a third section using a traditional textbook with typical reading assignments and end-of-chapter problems.

While using the e-book has not transformed my classroom teaching yet, it has demonstrated the power of video assignments in engaging and motivating millennial students who seem to be reluctant to read to learn course content. I had already incorporated more in-class exercises into my teaching to get students more engaged in the classroom and now plan to use short videos in future classes to stimulate discussion and problem-solving, similar to the manner in which we have embedded them into the e-book.

The project has definitely been challenging. I unexpectedly picked up a class of 120 BUSA 2106 students shortly before the start of the semester when a colleague took a medical leave. With more than 300 students this semester, I found that I did not have time to locate and add as much open-source content to the e-book as I had hoped. Nor did we have time to develop interactive exercises, self-assessments, infographics, and additional content for the book. I have a much lighter student load in the spring and hope to devote considerable time to expanding and refining the book.

2. Quotes

These anonymous student comments appeared in their end-of-course assessment for my sections of BUSA 2106 using the digital book we are creating for the ALG grant. The complete file of comments is included in the data attachment.

“I liked the e-book because it helped me save money at the beginning of the semester and is always accessible. I think that being able to explore videos was more effective because I would only watch the videos in the subjects I was weak on.”

“I like the fact that the e-book is so simple and clean cut. I also loved the fact that it was free. In addition to that, the videos were really helpful, which is something we wouldn’t be able to receive with a regular textbook.”
“I think that our particular generation isn’t too interested in reading; we are asked to do it for every class to review something we’ll be lectured on anyway. The videos seem like a much more progressive way to capture our attention, and help us to grasp the concepts. It is often very helpful to hear the same idea discussed/presented by two or more people, to solidify our understanding.”

“The e-book was awesome. I understand information better when there are visuals and activities, which mainly why I’ve done well in this course the second time around.”

“I personally like the e-book. I normally am not a fan of e-books because I tend to not use them as much because it’s not physically in front of me; that may just be a personal problem due to my memory. When I did access it, I found it helpful for the materials I was researching.”

3. Quantitative and Qualitative Measures

3a. Overall Measurements

   Student Opinion of Materials

   Total number of students affected in this project: 171

   **Was the overall student opinion about the materials used in the course positive, neutral, or negative?** We did not explicitly ask students this question. Instead, I created five survey items that I included in the Course Assessment I posted on D2L. These items asked students to assess the structure and format of the e-book, the quality of the content (videos, readings and websites), and accessibility of the e-book on a variety of platforms. In addition, there was an open-ended question that invited students to comment on the book and their experience in using it. Of the 171 students enrolled in the two sections using the free digital textbook, 137 submitted the Course Assessment.

   The five items and student responses are being submitted separately as supporting data. The comments are generally quite positive, with many students stating that they “loved” the e-book because it was free, more convenient than a large textbook, and accessible on a variety of devices as long as they had an internet connection. A few called the book “awesome,” one called it a “fantastic idea” and one even labeled it “perfect.”

   The primary concern that emerged from student comments related to their need for more guidance in determining which items to read or watch; one student even recommended that the content be ranked in terms of helpfulness. A few noted that there are currently too many placeholders awaiting content and one student commented that the book “will take a lot of refining” as we continue to add content and exercises.
Here are some of the key quantitative findings from the survey items:

- **Positive:**
  - 76.6% of the students reported that the e-book was easy to find in D2L, with students accessing it on desktop and laptop computers, tablets or iPads, and Smartphones. Slightly more than 70% indicated that they preferred accessing the digital book via a laptop computer.
  - 63.5% of the students reported that the book is user-friendly and that it was easy to find the posted materials.
  - 60% indicated that they liked being able to select their own content from the array of available materials, based on their particular individual needs.
  - 59.1% found the videos informative and helpful in understanding content, with only 39.4% finding the readings and websites informative and helpful.
  - 36.5% reported that they also found the videos engaging and fun to watch.
  - 28.4% reported that after they assessed the content of a module for extra-credit (see instructions attached to the syllabus), they became more aware of the variety and value of the posted course materials and started using the digital text more regularly.
  - Slightly more than a third of the respondents (34.3%) indicated that they used the Module Overview, Objectives and Questions to Consider as a Study Guide to determine what they didn’t understand as they prepared for tests and quizzes.

- **Negative:**
  - 35.8% of the students responding to the survey would have preferred more guidance in deciding which readings and videos to view to reinforce their understanding of basic concepts in each module.
  - 12.4% of the 137 respondents indicated that they prefer courses with a textbook and wish that they had had a traditional text for BUSA 2106 and 10.9% reported that they never even opened the e-book or any of the posted materials.

**Student Learning Outcomes and Grades**

Was the overall comparative impact on student performance in terms of learning outcomes and grades in the semester(s) of implementation over previous semesters positive, neutral, or negative?
Choose One:
- **XXX** Positive: Higher performance outcomes measured over previous semester(s) and the same semester
- ___ Neutral: Same performance outcomes over previous semester(s)
- ___ Negative: Lower performance outcomes over previous semester(s)

**Student Drop/Fail/Withdraw (DFW) Rates**

Was the overall comparative impact on Drop/Fail/Withdraw (DFW) rates in the semester(s) of implementation over previous semesters positive, neutral, or negative?

**Drop/Fail/Withdraw Rate:**

8.1% of students, out of a total 180 students affected at the start of the fall semester, dropped/failed/withdrew from the course in the final semester of implementation.

Choose One:
- **XXX** Positive: This is a lower percentage of students with D/F/W than previous semester(s)
- ___ Neutral: This is the same percentage of students with D/F/W than previous semester(s)
- ___ Negative: This is a higher percentage of students with D/F/W than previous semester(s)

3b. **Narrative**

**Student Performance and Grades:** Fall 2015 students in the two sections using the free e-book outperformed students in the section using a traditional textbook. Of the 172 students using the e-book, the class average was a 2.97 compared to a 2.66 for the 115 students in the section using a traditional textbook, where all students took the same quizzes and tests, completed the same in-class exercises and had the same extra-credit opportunities.

These students also outperformed students from a BUSA 2106 section taught in Fall 2014 that used a traditional textbook. The Fall 2014 class average for the 115 students who completed the course was 2.4 on a 4 point scale.

**DFW Rates:** I chose a similar BUSA 2106 class from Fall 2014 to compare DFW rates. That semester I had 118 students enrolled in a late afternoon class, as I did this semester, with students in Fall 2014 using a traditional textbook and students in Fall 2015 piloting the free e-book.
In Fall 2014, I had 3 withdrawals, and of the 115 students completing the course, there were 12 Ds and 8 Fs (17.4% of the class). Combined with the withdrawals, the DFW rate was 19.5%. The class average was a 2.4 on the traditional 4 point grading scale.

In contrast, in Fall 2015, two sections with a total enrollment of 179 students used the free e-book. There were 7 withdrawals, with 172 students completing the course. Of those, there were 2 Ds and 5 Fs (3.8% of the class). Combined with the withdrawals, the DFW rate was considerably lower, at 7.7% of those who had initially enrolled, and the class average was 2.97 on a 4 point scale.

Despite this seemingly drastic drop in the DFW rate and substantial increase in GPA, it is unclear whether the e-book is the primary explanation. Given the high numbers of Ds and Fs in Fall 2014, I also added a number of graded in-class exercises this fall, to provide students with more grades to offset lower scores on tests and quizzes. This change may have been more responsible for the change in DFW than the e-book.

Perhaps a better comparison is looking at performance and DFW rates in these two Fall 2015 sections against another large section of BUSA 2106 that I taught this fall with a traditional textbook. All three sections had identical quizzes, tests, in-class exercises, and extra-credit opportunities, though the students using the e-book could earn some of the EC points by reviewing and evaluating content in designated e-book modules. Once again, students using the free e-book outperformed students using a textbook and had lower DFW rates. Of the 117 students enrolled who used a textbook in Fall 2015, there were 3 withdrawals, 6 Ds and 8 Fs, which results in a 14% DFW rate. Of the 114 students who completed the course, 12.1% earned Ds or Fs, in contrast to the 7.7% in the two sections using the e-book. The average course grade in the section using a textbook was 2.66, compared to the 2.97 in the sections using the e-book.

4. Sustainability Plan

Materials will be placed on a Georgia State University website that will require no username or password to access. The book contents can be used there or by using the link to a downloadable zip file of the content. The introductory page of the website will also have a contact e-mail for issues and suggestions.

Links will be checked and updated before each semester by a member of the Center for Instructional Innovation. Other content and activities will be updated as needed.
5. Future Plans

After researching student learning styles more than 25 years ago, I began providing my classes with an array of supplemental course materials, assignments, in-class activities and assessments purposefully designed to enable students with different ways of learning to succeed in my classes, though the textbook and lecture still provided students with essential content. In the past decade, it has become increasingly evident that more students are not purchasing a textbook (typically between 12 and 17% percent in many classes), and larger numbers of those who purchase a book don’t read it before class to prepare for that day’s content.

I decided to apply for this grant to create an e-textbook from open-source materials that would be free to students and that I hoped would encourage more of them to prepare for class. Even though it was free to students in two of my classes this semester, 10.9% still didn’t use it. I also recognized that more students do not want to read a textbook or article, and prefer to learn content through video and interactive exercises. Creating this digital textbook allowed me to select substantive, relevant and engaging content materials that I hoped would motivate, engage and inspire today’s learners. We also designed the book to allow students to personalize their learning experiences by selecting those materials they believed would best help them understand the content of that module.

Using the e-book this semester has convinced me that replacing a traditional textbook has succeeded in engaging more of my students, even though the book is still “under construction” and needs both more content (particularly short readings) and interactive exercises for students to assess their understanding of the material. Going forward, I plan to expand multimedia content and create more exercises and infographics that effectively summarize material for visual learners. In addition, to provide students with more guidance on which materials to select, our team will work at developing a way to classify items more clearly (e.g., recommended, featured, enrich your knowledge, special interest topics).

We have already submitted a proposal to the USG Teaching and Learning Conference in Athens in April. I also plan to write and submit a paper to present at regional and/or national professional meetings of the Academy of Legal Studies in Business in the pedagogy and curriculum track to encourage other faculty to develop such works and/or to invite them to contribute to or use this e-book. Zoe Salloom and I will also investigate other teaching and learning conferences with the goal of also presenting this project and our conclusions to faculty and instructional designers. Ultimately, we would like to also submit at least one paper for publication in scholarly teaching journals or other higher education outlets.

6. Description of Photograph

Left to right: Susan Willey, Zoe Salloom and Emerson Stewart, an undergraduate student seated at the computer who has been a technical assistant on the project.