



**FIRT-1353-031IN (9854)
Legal Aspects of Fire Protection
Course Semester: Summer 2024**

Instructor: Danny McLerran
Email: dmclerran@com.edu
Phone: 915-549-5180
Office Hours: Virtually By Appointment

Director: Gary Staudt
E-Mail: gstaudt@com.edu
Phone: 409-933-8378
Office Hours: By Appointment

Communicating with Your Instructor: ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means.

Announcements: Upon opening the course, Brightspace will default to the course home screen, which includes the Announcements page. This page will include announcements regarding any changes to the schedule and any other pertinent information regarding the course. **It is extremely important that students review announcements every time they enter the course.**

Student Hours and Location: Lecture presentations, discussion questions, review questions, chapter tests, and assignments are completed online. As needed, Teams Meeting may be scheduled to discuss various course materials for further explanation.

Required Text: *Legal Considerations for Fire and Emergency Services, 4th Edition (2022)*, Fire Engineering Books and Videos. J. Curtis Varone, ISBN 13: 9781593705763. The textbook is available at the COM bookstore, <http://www.combookstore.com/home.aspx>.

Course Description: This course studies the rights, duties, liability concerns, and responsibilities of public fire protection agencies and personnel. Topics include basic criminal and civil law, relevant tort law, and state and federal legal systems.

Student Learner Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Summarize basic criminal and civil law
2. Discuss relevant tort law
3. Describe state and federal legal systems

| Student Learner Outcome | Maps to Core Objective | Assessed Via Assignment |
|--|--|---|
| Summarize basic criminal & civil law | Critical Thinking, Communication | Chapters 1, 5, & 7 Review Questions & Tests |
| Discuss relevant tort law | Critical Thinking, Communication, Social Responsibility, Personal Responsibility | Chapters 8 & 9 Review Questions & Tests Chapters 7, 10 & 16 Discussion Topics & Course Project |
| Describe state & federal legal systems | Critical Thinking, Communication | Chapter 1 Review Questions & Test |

Course Requirements

Introductions: Each Chapter includes an introduction with a synopsis of the topic, chapter learning objectives, author's, notes, and a list of cases referenced in the chapter.

Presentations: Each chapter contains a presentation in MS Power Point format. In order to view MS Power Point presentations, students must have MS Power Point.

Note: COM provides Microsoft Office 365 as a free service to students. A link to download the program is in the COM Resources folder on the main menu.

Review Questions: Each chapter and Public Service Ethics includes Review Questions, consisting of five short answer questions. An average of grades for Review Questions will account for 20% of the Course Grade.

Discussion Questions: Selected chapters include a graded Discussion Question. Students are expected to research the topic in the text and provide a response, which can be justified from the text. Students are allowed to utilize other sources if they are cited. An average of grades for Discussion Questions will account for 10% of the Course Grade.

Note: Responses to the Discussion Questions should not be based on personal opinion alone. Students are of course encouraged to express their opinions; however, the response must indicate a clear knowledge of the topic consistent with the legal principle in the textbook or other cited reference in order to obtain a passing grade for their response.

Chapter Tests: Each chapter and Public Service Ethics includes a test, consisting of multiple-choice, true/false questions, or matching questions. Students will be allowed two

attempts for each test. An average of grades for chapter tests will account for 40% of the Course Grade.

Case Briefs: These assignments involve briefing a fire service related case. Complete instructions are provided with the assignments. **Students must obtain approval from the Instructor for the case they wish to use.** In order to obtain approval of the case, students should email the Instructor with the title of the case and the source where the student is obtaining the information for the case. **Students will not be allowed to brief the same case.** Cases will be approved on a first come, first served basis. An average of Case Briefs will account for 30% of the Course Grade.

Determination of Grade: The Final Course Grade is an average based on the following grading criteria. **Note:** Grades for course assignments and the overall course grade are not rounded up.

| Grading Criteria | | Grade Scale | |
|----------------------|-----|-------------|---|
| Discussion Questions | 10% | 90-100 | A |
| Review Questions | 20% | 80-89 | B |
| Chapter Tests | 40% | 75-79 | C |
| Case Briefs | 30% | 70-74 | D |
| | | 0-69 | F |

Late/Makeup Policy: Assignments are due on Mondays at 0800 as per the Course Schedule. Students may submit assignments after the due date and receive a grade. **However, grades for assignments submitted after the due date and time will receive a maximum grade of 75%.**

Students are advised to regularly access the Course Schedule to keep abreast of due dates of assignments. Due dates are listed on each chapter folder on the Course Content page and on each individual assignment.

Course Policies

Attendance Policy: Students are required to login to the course at least weekly. Students failing to login to the course and progressively complete assignments may, after notification, be dropped from the course.

Academic Dishonesty: Any incident of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with college policy and the Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty – such as cheating on exams is an extremely serious offense and will result in a **grade of zero** on that exam and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate disciplinary action.

Student Concerns: If you have any questions, concerns, or issues about any aspect of this course, please contact the Lead Instructor, using the contact information previously provided. If after discussing your concern with the instructor, you continue to have questions, request a meeting through the Lead Instructor with the Director of Fire

Technology, Gary Staudt, 409-933-8378 or gstaudt@com.edu. If after your meeting with the Director you still have questions, request a meeting with Dr. R. E. Davis, Public Service Careers Department Chair at 409-933-8313 or rdavis29@com.edu.

Course Outline/Schedule: Students may complete course materials as quickly as they are able, i.e. students are not restricted from proceeding from one chapter to the next.

| Week | Topics | Assignments | Due Date |
|--|---|--|-----------------|
| 6/03/24 | Chapter 1, Types & Sources of Law Chapter 2, Courts & Court Systems | Introductions Review Questions Chapter Tests | 6/10/24, 0800 |
| 6/10/24 | Chapter 3, Types of Fire Departments Chapter 4, Administrative Agencies | Review Questions Chapter Tests Discussion Response | 6/17/24, 0800 |
| 6/17/24 | Chapter 5, Criminal Law Chapter 6, Criminal Procedure | Review Questions Chapter Tests Discussion Response | 6/24/24, 0800 |
| 6/24/24 | Chapter 7, Civil Liability Issues Chapter 8, Negligence Case Brief #1 | Review Questions Chapter Tests Discussion Response Case Brief #1 | 7/01/24, 0800 |
| 7/01/24 | Chapter 9, Immunity & Liability Chapter 10 - Contract Law & Employment Issues | Review Questions Chapter Tests Discussion Responses | 7/08/24, 0800 |
| 7/08/24 | Chapter 11, Labor Law & Collective Bargaining | Review Questions Chapter Test Discussion Response | 7/15/24, 0800 |
| 7/15/24 | Chapter 12 - Employee Rights & Discrimination | Review Questions Chapter Test | 7/22/24, 0800 |
| 7/22/24 | Chapter 13, Sexual Harassment & Other Forms of Employment Discrimination Chapter 14, Fair Labor, FMLA, Residency, Drug Testing, Electronic Monitoring, Digital Imagery, Social Networking Case Brief #2 | Review Questions Chapter Tests Discussion Response Case Brief #2 | 7/29/24, 0800 |
| 7/29/24 | Chapter 15, Public Accountability Laws Public Service Ethics Chapter 16 - EMS Law | Review Questions Chapter Tests Discussion Response | 8/05/24, 0800 |
| 8/05/24 | Ethics Assignments | Ethics Assignments Review Questions Ethics Test | 8/9/24, 0800 |
| All Assignments Due No Later Than Thursday, 8/9/24, 0800. | | | |

Institutional Policies and Guidelines

Grade Appeal Process: Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the [student handbook https://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student_Handbook_2023-2024_v2.pdf](https://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student_Handbook_2023-2024_v2.pdf). An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.

Academic Success & Support Services: College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

ADA Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Kimberly Lachney at 409-933-8919 or accessibilityservices@com.edu. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the COM Doyle Family Administration Building, Student Success Center.

Textbook Purchasing Statement: A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Withdrawal Policy: Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a "W" grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1st 8-week session is February 28. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is April 22. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is May 1. The last date to withdraw for spring mini session is May 29.

FN Grading: The FN grade is issued in cases of failure due to a lack of attendance, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.