



TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY  
THURGOOD MARSHALL SCHOOL *of* LAW

# COPYRIGHT LAW

COURSE NUMBER 846

SPRING - 2018

MONDAY/WEDNESDAY \*11:00 – 11:50 AM\* ROOM 212

## ELSA RANSOM

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## THE PROFESSOR

**NAME:** Elsa Ransom

**TELEPHONE:** (713) 313-1047

**EMAIL:** eransom@tmslaw.tsu.edu

**LOCATION:** 231L

**OFFICE HOURS:** Monday, Wednesday: 12 – 2; 3 – 3:30

**By appointment at other times.**

Appointments may be arranged by calling the office number listed above.

### NOTE FROM THE PROFESSOR:

This Class is designed to help students develop their legal analysis and writing skills beyond the first and second years writing experience. It consists of several parts—scholarly legal writing emphasizing the Analysis and Synthesis of Judicial Decisions, the Interpretation of Statutes and Constitutions, the skill of scholarly legal writing using clear, correct, concise, and complete language. The student will write two drafts of a work in progress research paper and a final paper. The final copy will comprise at least two-thirds of the final grade. *Student Rules and Regulations 2017-2018, Article III, Section 2 (B) (1), p 8*

## COURSE BOOKS & MATERIAL

### Required Reading:

Leaffer, *Understanding Copyright Law*, 6th ed., Carolina Academic Press, Durham, NC, 2014.

Individually assigned readings including statutory material, case law and periodical materials.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVE

### DESCRIPTION:

This is a 2-credit-hour survey course designed to enable students to develop proficiency in the fundamental principles of United States copyright law. In this course, students will examine and discuss the fundamental concepts in selected copyright law topics as reflected in federal statutory provisions, federal regulations, appellate court opinions and various other related materials. Students will be expected to demonstrate proficiency in analytical problem-solving skills involving the substance and function of copyright law. Toward this objective, students will be prompted to present oral as well as written analysis of assigned problems reflecting real-world issues in copyright law. Topic areas in which these competencies are expected include the following:

*Subject Matter Eligible for Copyright*

*Requirements for Copyright*

*Ownership and Transfer*

*Formalities, Duration and Renewal*

*Exclusive Rights*

*Infringement Litigation*

*Fair Use and Other Defenses*

*Third Party Liability*

*Remedies*



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**OBJECTIVE:**

It is expected that at the conclusion of this course, students should be prepared for more advanced courses in copyright law as well as for internships involving familiarity with fundamental principles of copyright law.

In addition to the expected competencies discussed above, this course, like other law school courses, is designed generally to challenge students to develop skills in statutory construction, analysis and synthesis; to understand and evaluate legislative intent and judicial reasoning, and to address and resolve issues of justice, policy, process and fact, utilizing principles of sound legal reasoning. In each topic area addressed, students are expected to gain competency in problem solving involving pertinent real-world issues. With regard to each topic covered, students should be able to

- paraphrase* -restate in his/her own words, describe, explain or summarize relevant terms, rules, concepts, policies and rationales;
- interpret* - reason from known information to the unknown; interpret the meaning of relevant terms, rules, concepts, policies and rationales;
- apply* - known principles of law to given facts to determine if the principles control; apply known policies to new situations to determine if a particular principle or rule should apply; and apply known holdings and legal principles in any case studied to a hypothetical situation;
- compare* - two or more principles, cases, arguments and determine the extent to which they are similar or dissimilar.
- predict* - extrapolate from information by identifying implications and consequences so as to anticipate or predict likely results.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students are expected to develop and practice the following analytical and evaluative skills:

*Issue Spotting and Articulation* based on recognition of key facts and applicable rules, policies and rationales;

*Dissection, Comprehension and Interpretation* of complex rules;

*Development and Construction of Arguments and Opinions* based on legal rules or principles;

*Problem Solving* demonstrating ability to reason by analogy, arrive at rational conclusions based on applicable legal principles, examine alternative solutions critically and recognize any pertinent non-legal and/or policy concerns.

*Synthesis* of individual case holdings to conceptualize broader legal principles.

## GRADING

### **Grading Information:**

*Mid-Semester Examination.* 30% of the total grade.

*Final Examination:* 50% of the total grade.

*Written Assignments:* 15% (collectively)

*Class Participation:* 5%

**Periodic Written Assignments including Problem-Solving Exercises.** These are to be prepared outside of class by each student and submitted in typewritten form. Specific instructions regarding format and submission procedures will accompany each assignment.

**Mid-Semester Examination.** **March 9, 2018.** Cumulative coverage of material dating from the first reading assignment and lecture.

**Final Examination.** **Date and Time TBA.** Cumulative coverage of material dating from the first reading assignment and lecture.

## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

Students with disabilities who require accommodations must self-identify those needs to Virgie Mouton, the Assistant Dean for Student Development.

## **PARTICIPATION, ATTENDANCE & PROFESSIONALISM**

**Preparation and Participation.** Each student is expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material assigned. As a general rule, students should stay at least one class period ahead in the assigned reading when preparing for class. Such preparation entails briefing cases, reviewing pertinent statutory material and analyzing problems assigned. Participation requires the student's full intellectual engagement in class discussion regardless of whether or not it is the student's turn to speak. Any student who demonstrates lack of preparation for discussion is subject to a reduction in points that contribute to his/her final grade.

**Attendance.** Mandatory. Students are required to maintain regular attendance in order not to fall behind in course work, as well as to avoid the law school penalties for excessive absences as explained in the TMSL Student Rules and Regulations. All students are expected to remain in the classroom for the entire time that class is in session.

**Honor Code.** Students are expected to read and adhere to the provisions of this document. See TMSL Student Rules and Regulations.



## ACADEMIC CALENDAR

### FALL SEMESTER 2017 (SEVENTY DAYS OF CLASSES)

Orientation	Monday-Friday	August 14-18, 2017
<b>First Day of Class</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>August 21, 2017</b>
Last Day to ADD/DROP	Friday	August 25, 2017
<b>Labor Day (NO CLASSES)</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>September 4, 2017</b>
<i>Purge of all unpaid course selections</i>	Wednesday	September 27, 2017
<b>Mid Term Examinations</b>	<b>Mon – Fri</b>	<b>October 23-27, 2017</b>
<b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>	<b>Thurs – Fri</b>	<b>November 23-24, 2017</b>
Last Day of Classes	Thursday	November 30, 2017
Last Day to Drop a Class	Thursday	November 30, 2017
First Year Professors' Grades due	Thursday	November 30, 2017
<b>*Legislative Tuesday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>December 1, 2017</b>
<b>*Legislative Wednesday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>December 2, 2017</b>
<b>*Legislative Thursday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>December 4, 2017</b>
<b>*Legislative Friday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>December 5, 2017</b>
Reading Day (NO CLASS)	Wednesday	December 6, 2017
Final Examinations	Thursday- Friday	December 7 -Dec. 15, 2017
Commencement	Saturday	December 16, 2017

**\*Legislative Days are make-up days from Hurricane Harvey August 28 – September 1, 2017**

### SPRING SEMESTER 2018 (SEVENTY DAYS OF CLASSES)

School Opens	Tuesday	January 2, 2018
First Day of Class	Monday	January 8, 2018
Last Day to ADD/DROP	Friday	January 12, 2018
<b>M L K Holiday (No Classes)</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>January 15, 2018</b>
<i>Purge of all unpaid course selections</i>	Wednesday	February 7, 2018
Mid Term Examinations	Mon – Fri	March 5– 9, 2018
Spring Break	Mon – Fri	March 12 – 16, 2018
<b>Spring Break (University Closed)</b>	<b>Mon-Wed</b>	<b>March 12- 14, 2018</b>
<b>Good Friday (No Classes)</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>March 30, 2018</b>
Last Day of Classes	Wednesday	April 25, 2018
Last Day to Drop a Class	Wednesday	April 25, 2018
First Year Professors' Grades due	Wednesday	April 25, 2018
Reading Period ( <b>No Classes</b> )	Thur. – Sun	April 26 - 29, 2018
Final Examinations	Mon- Fri	April 30 – May 11, 2018
Hooping Ceremony	Friday	May 11, 2018
Commencement	Saturday	May 12, 2018

**Please note that the calendar events and /or dates are subject to change.**

Approved 5/31/2017 \* Updated 10/18 /2017

## **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

- Any special accommodations must be requested via the Office of Student Affairs.
- You are expected to abide by the Honor Code. (See *Student Rules and Regulations* for Further Details)
- You are expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner – civility toward classmates is mandatory; this is graduate school.

