

IBT Syllabus

NOTE

Before buying books, see “Course Books” on the next page.

1. Contact Information

Email is the most efficient method. To make an office appointment, please contact me directly. (My secretary does not make appointments for me.)

<i>email address:</i>	Richard.k.neumann@hofstra.edu
<i>office location:</i>	Room 213 — at the very end of the corridor that begins opposite room 206
<i>telephone:</i>	516-463-5881 (<i>but email works better</i>)
<i>secretary:</i>	Joyce Cox, room 216. Tel: 516-463-6339 Joyce.a.cox@hofstra.edu

I’m available outside class as much as you wish. I’ll meet with you as many times as you want, so don’t hesitate to ask. But I don’t have “office hours.” Instead contact me by email, and we’ll set up an appointment. That way you won’t feel rushed by a line of students waiting outside.

When you work at a firm or other organization, you’ll call the partners or supervisors by their *first* names, so I’d rather be called “Richard.” *You’re becoming a lawyer.* But if formality seems more natural to you, I’ll cheerfully answer to “Professor Neumann” as well.

2. Course Books

Don't buy the casebook's 2d edition. Buy the **3d** edition instead. Check the ISBN (below) to be sure.

If you buy online, the seller's webpage should show the ISBN. If it doesn't, shop elsewhere. A seller who won't tell you a book's ISBN isn't reliable anyway. If you buy in the bookstore, check the ISBN on the book's copyright page (the page right after the title page).

Casebook: Chow & Schoenbaum, *International Business Transactions: Problems, Cases, and Materials*
3d edition — red cover, hardbound
ISBN 978-1-4548-4941-4

Documents Supplement: Chow & Schoenbaum, *International Business Transactions ... Documents Supplement*
3d edition — green (actually teal) paperback
ISBN 9781454859987

IBT Supplement: photocopy — pick this up in the basement copy room
blue cover
no ISBN

3. Assignments

By Saturday each week, you'll receive the assignment for the following week's class.

For the first few weeks of the semester, assignments will be posted on the school's assignments webpage. Eventually you'll receive assignments by email. Until you start receiving assignments by email, check the school's assignments webpage weekly.

(This course does not use TWEN or Blackboard.)

4. No Laptops During Class

IBT doesn't lend it self to laptop note-taking. Surveys at other schools report that students are more satisfied with the learning environment in no-laptop courses. Although some students prefer to use laptops, a larger number of students in the surveys say that classrooms are quieter, they can hear the teacher and other students better, and they feel more engaged in the classroom experience with fewer distractions.

In IBT, laptops may not be used during class.

5. Course Learning Goals

The following should be **your goals** as a student. They are the benchmarks against which you will be evaluated throughout the course. (*Italicized citations are to the law school's Learning Outcomes for Graduating Law Students, which appears on the school's website.*)

1. **Know thoroughly** the following:
 - the fundamental rules and policies of contract law — 1(a)
 - the three sources of law: common law, legislation, and judicial interpretation of legislation — 3(a)

2. **Be able to do** the following at a **professional** level — equal to a lawyer admitted to practice:
 - conduct yourself in professional settings in a manner that meets the standards of the legal profession (class is a business meeting in which everyone should behave as professionals) — 7(a)
 - express your analysis orally and in writing in a manner that meets the standards of the legal profession — 5(h) & 7(a)
 - extract rules and policy from treaties, statutes, cases, and transactional documents such as Incoterms — 5(a)

2. **Be able to do** the following at an **introductory** level:
 - analyze transactions as well as the process of contracting and the lawyer's role in deals — 5(g)
 - problem-solve in light of a client's objectives, anticipating consequences and assessing risks — 6(b)

6. Class Attendance

A sign-in sheet will be circulated at the beginning of every class. You're responsible for making sure that you sign it. This **must** be done in the classroom or immediately afterward in my office. My secretary will not allow you to sign the attendance sheet in her office. At the end of every class, ask yourself, "Did I sign the sign-in sheet?" If you can't recall having done it, come up to the front of the room and sign it before you leave.

Falsifying a signature on an attendance sheet can lead to failure in the course and a charge of academic dishonesty under Part I(3)(e) of the school's Code of Student Conduct. Signatures are spot-checked by comparing them to other examples of your signature on file with the law school.

Unprofessional tardiness can be counted as absence.

7. Studying Outside of Class

Every state has delegated to the American Bar Association the duty of accrediting law schools. If you graduate from a law school that isn't accredited by the ABA, nearly every state will not allow you to take that state's bar exam.

The ABA requires that teachers at ABA-accredited law schools have policies on how much out-of-class studying is needed to do a reasonably good job of learning the material. In higher education generally there is plenty of well-documented data on how much time it takes to prepare for class based on the amount of reading assigned and the content's level of difficulty.

Based on that data, it will take you *at least* six hours of out-of-class work per week, on average, to read the material, prepare for class, and organize your notes in this course. *It is almost impossible for you to get a good grade without doing that much work.*

Those are six *out-of-class* hours — in addition to the two hours per week we spend in class.

8. Professionalism

Class is a business meeting. ***You are expected to behave in class with the same level of professionalism that governs a lawyer's behavior in any meeting where the lawyer is an active participant.***

- It's unprofessional to ***arrive late*** without a compelling reason. If you walk into class late, you *must* see me after class and explain why. If you don't have a compelling reason, you'll be counted as having an unexcused absence. Compelling reasons do **not** include things like "I couldn't find a parking space." A professional plans ahead and allows extra time to arrive early at professional obligations.
- It's unprofessional to ***leave the room*** except in an emergency. If you leave the room during class, you *must* see me after class and explain why. If you don't explain an emergency, you'll be counted as having an unexcused absence. Needing to use the restroom isn't an emergency. We'll take a ten-minute break midway through class, and that's what the break is for. In a courtroom, a trial will go on for hours. If you ask for a restroom break in the middle of a cross-examination, the judge's jaw will drop in astonishment. This isn't college. *Class is a business meeting.*
- Using your phone or other device to check your texts or email during class is unprofessional behavior. If you do it, you can be counted as absent for that class. *Class is a business meeting.*

9. Grading

Your course grade will be the sum of the following

25%	midterm
70%	final exam
5%	quality of contribution to class discussion

minus a deduction for excessive absences (see below).

Exams: See “Course Coverage” below for what will be tested on the midterm and final exams.

The exams will primarily involve problem-solving. You’ll be given fact situations and asked how you would go about solving the problems in the facts to advance your client’s interests. You’ll need to know law to do that. But you’ll also be graded on how well you’ve learned how to think like a problem-solving lawyer (which is one of the goals of the course).

After the midterm exam has been graded, I’ll provide a memo explaining how it could have been answered, and if you wish, I’ll meet with you to go over your exam. The same will happen after the final exam has been graded.

Grade effect of unexcused absences: You are allowed two unexcused absences. If you miss more than two classes and haven’t provided an excuse for the extra absences, your semester grade point score will be reduced by four points for each excess unexcused absence. For example, if your scores from the midterm and final exams, together with class contribution, add up to 80 points and if you have three unexcused absences (one of which is penalized), your semester grade will be based on 76 points.

Excused absence definition: An absence is excused if illness, family emergency, or a similar situation prevents attending class — and if you provide notification of that before or as soon as possible after class.

It’s up to you to keep track of how many times you’ve been absent and which of those absences have been unexcused. No one will notify you when you have used up your limit of two unexcused absences.

10. Course Coverage

Look at the casebook table of contents. A casebook’s TOC gives you the big picture — an overview of the entire course.

Chapter numbers in the IBT Supplement are identical to the casebook’s chapter

numbers. For example, letters of credit are covered in both casebook chapter 4 and IBT Supplement chapter 4. Thus the chapter number listings below apply to both books.

We'll cover the chapters in the sequence below. (But we won't cover everything in every chapter.)

Chapter 1 — *intro*

Chapter 2, 3, & 4 — *international goods sales and letters of credit*

The **midterm exam** will test **goods sales and letters of credit** (*above*).

Chapters 5, 6, & 7 — *business relationships, investment, intellectual property*

Chapter 8 — *dispute resolution*

Chapter 9 — *corporate social responsibility*

The **final exam** will test **everything** — *including goods sales and letters of credit*.

11. Medical Conditions

If you have a medical condition that might be relevant to school work, such as dyslexia or ADHD, please feel free to discuss it with me privately and confidentially so we can work out something that could be helpful to you in the course (and perhaps in school generally).