

Introduction to Contracts
Course Number JRM 5010
University of Florida Levin College of Law
Master of Studies in Law | Fall 2025 | 2 Credits

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Office hours: Tuesdays and Fridays 4:00 – 5:00 pm
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Meeting ID: 716 886 0129

Meeting Time: Tuesdays at 7:00 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course introduces the law and theory of legally enforceable agreements and promises, including elements of contract formation; consideration; effects of non-performance; conditions for relief from or discharge of obligations; and remedies.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

A Short and Happy Guide to Contracts, Third Edition
By Epstein, Markell, and Ponoroff.

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Weeks 1 and 2—October 14 and 21: Introduction to Contracts; Offer and Acceptance

- **Reading:** Introduction and Chapter 1
 - **Topics:**
 - What is a contract?
 - Sources of contract law (common law vs UCC)
 - Offer and acceptance
 - Gifts v. enforceable promises
 - **Activities:** Define key terms and discuss applicable case law
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Week 3—October 28: Promissory Liability and Consideration

- **Reading:** Chapter 2
 - **Topics:**
 - The doctrine of consideration
 - Mutuality of obligation
 - Contract modification
 - **Activity:** Analyze hypothetical contract enforcement scenarios and discuss applicable case law
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Week 4—November 4: Defenses to Enforcement

- **Reading:** Chapter 3
 - **Topics:**
 - Statue of Frauds
 - Defenses
 - Illegality, public policy, and unconscionability
 - **Activity:** Discuss hypothetical defenses to contract enforcement and discuss applicable case law
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Week 5—TBD, No Class on Nov. 11 (Veterans Day): Terms of the Deal

- **Reading:** Chapter 4
 - **Topics:**
 - Parol evidence
 - Ambiguity
 - External evidence
 - Implied terms
 - **Activity:** Interpret hypothetical contract terms and discuss applicable case law
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Weeks 6 and 7—November 18 and TBD (No Classes Thanksgiving week): Excusing Performance

- **Reading:** Chapter 5
 - **Topics:**
 - Nonperformance
 - Conditions precedent, subsequent, and constructive conditions
 - Impossibility
 - Force Majeure
 - **Activity:** Discuss issues concerning contract performance and applicable case law
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Week 8—December 2: Enforcing Performance

- **Reading:** Chapter 6
 - **Topics:**
 - Specific performance
 - Damages
 - Limitations on damages
 - **Discussion:** Analyze enforcement scenarios and discuss applicable case law
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Week 9—December 9: Third Parties and Final Exam

- **Reading:** Chapter 7
- **Topics:**
 - Third party beneficiaries
 - Assignments
 - Delegations
- **Activity:** Discuss third parties to a contract and final exam to be taken sometime during the week of December 8-12.

GRADING AND EXAM FORMAT

Grading will be consistent with College of Law policy. Your final grade will be based on the final exam 40% (final week of classes), periodic quizzes 40% (times will be announced at least one week prior), and periodic assignments 20%. **The final exam will be held the final week of class.** All grades are final. There will be no regrading or revisions from me, except to correct any mathematical or clerical errors in computing the final score. The final exam will be a mix of essay and multiple-choice questions. The issues and topics for exam questions will come from the course readings and class discussions. The exam will reflect fairly the topics discussed in class and the textbook. Accordingly, the best way to prepare for the exam is to complete the reading assignments and attend class.

Make-up exams will be allowed only as consistent with the College of Law policy found here: <https://www.law.ufl.edu/life-at-uf-law/office-of-student-affairs/current-students/forms-applications/exam-delays-accommodations-form>

Grade Scale & Grading Policies:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>
A	4.0
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.67
C+	2.33

C	2.00
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.00
D-	0.67
E	0.00

The law school grading policy is available at <https://www.law.ufl.edu/uf-law-student-handbook-and-academic-policies>. Note that the mandatory mean does not apply to MSL or LLM students.

STATEMENT RELATED TO ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students requesting accommodations for disabilities must first register with the Disability Resource Center (<https://disability.ufl.edu/>). Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which must be presented to the Assistant Dean Brian Mitchell. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester. Students may access information about various resources on the UF Law Student Resources Canvas page, available [here](#).

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Observance of Religious Holidays:

UF Law respects students' observance of religious holidays. Students, upon prior notification to their instructors, shall be excused from class or other scheduled academic activity to observe a religious holy day of their faith. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence. Students shall not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity because of religious observances.

Absence Due to Illness:

A student who is absent from class or misses any required class-related activity because of illness should contact their instructor, if feasible, as early as possible prior to the missed class or activity. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered during an excused absence. Students should contact their college by the deadline to drop a course for medical reasons. Students can petition the Dean of Students Office to drop a course for medical reasons. The university's policy regarding medical excuse from classes is maintained by the Student Health Care Center.

STUDENT COURSE EVALUATIONS:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Click [here](#) for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and may complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluer.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students [here](#).

COMPLIANCE WITH UF HONOR CODE:

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Law Honor Code located [here](#). The UF Law Honor Code also prohibits use of artificial intelligence, including, but not limited to, ChatGPT and Harvey, to assist in completing quizzes, exams, papers, or other assessments.

UF students are also bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the University Conduct Code](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

RECORDINGS:

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is

posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student.

RESOURCES:

Wellness:

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

Academic & Tech Support Resources:

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

On-Line Students Complaints: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process](#).