

**Hagerstown Community College**  
**MASTER SYLLABUS DOCUMENT**

**COURSE:** PLS 105 CONTRACTS & TORTS  
Prerequisite: PLS 101 or concurrent registration

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** Donald E. Beachley

**SEMESTER/YEAR:** Fall 2016

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course provides students with a foundation in the substantive legal principles of tort law and contract law. Students learn the elements of various tort actions, the damages recoverable, and the defenses available. Students also study the formation of contracts, the elements of breach of contract actions, and the remedies available in and the defenses to such actions. This course also stresses ethics as well as attitudes, skills and behaviors required in a professional setting.

**TEXTBOOK:** Okrent, Cathy. *Torts And Personal Injury Law*. Fifth Edition. Delmar, Cengage Learning, 2015.

Helewitz, Jeffrey. *Basic Contract Law for Paralegals*. Eighth Edition. Wolters Kluwer Law & Business, Aspen Publishers, 2015.

**COURSE CONTENT OBJECTIVES:**

Students should have a working knowledge of tort causes of actions and the defenses thereto. In addition, students should know the types of relief (damages) that are available to a client.

Students will know the elements necessary for contract formation, the relief available for breach of contracts, and the basic elements of the Uniform Commercial Code.

**Total Hours of Coursework:**

To earn one academic credit at HCC, students are required to complete a minimum of 37.5 clock hours (45 fifty-minute “academic” hours) of coursework per semester. Those hours of coursework may be completed through a combination of hours within the classroom and hours outside the classroom. Certain courses may require more than the 37.5 minimum hours of coursework per credit.

For most classes, students should expect to do at least 2 hours of coursework outside of class for each hour of in-class coursework. For this class, the 2 hours of coursework outside of class will be satisfied by readings in preparation for class, out-of-class assignments, and legal research and/or case analysis.

## Accounting for Credit Hour Requirement:

<u>Assignment/assessment</u>	<u>Clock Hours</u>
In-class instruction, including lectures, projects, exams, quizzes	37.5
Reading two textbooks and other materials as assigned (readings on reserve, cases), taking notes from readings, etc.	45
Completing homework assignments such as preparation of case briefs, preparation of contracts, etc.	15
Studying for minimum of 3 quizzes and exams (mid-term and final)	15
Total	112.5

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon conclusion of this course students should be able to:

- \*demonstrate knowledge of terms and facts of this subject
- \*apply basic knowledge to new situations
- \*solve problems
- \*communicate solutions
- \*demonstrate professional and ethical behavior

## ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES:

Grade	Breakdown
Final:	20%
Midterm	20%
Participation/Attendance	20%
Assignments/Projects	20%
Quizzes	20%

1. There will be two announced exams (midterm and final). The exams will be primarily short answers and essays. The questions on the exam will be **representative** of the material covered. These exams are NOT cumulative. The scores on the midterm and final exams will each constitute 20% of your final grade.  
Grading scale: 90-100 A, etc.
2. There will be periodic quizzes on your reading assignments. These may be unannounced; the purpose is to ensure that you do your reading. I will allow you to make up one quiz.

3. I will give assignments throughout the semester. These assignments are due one week from the date they are assigned, unless specifically stated otherwise, and a penalty of 5 points per day will be assessed for each day the assignment is late. Even if you are absent you should forward the work by e-mail. Everything counts: content, format, spelling, punctuation, timeliness, etc. The grade on these assignments will constitute 20 % of your final grade.
4. Since attendance is a key factor in success I will take attendance each day. Please note that being on time for class as well as staying for the whole class are considered in the attendance grade. Each student starts with an attendance grade of 100%. If you are in a class which meets twice a week the general rule is that 5% is deducted for each full absence. If you are in a class which meets once weekly, 10% is deducted for each full absence. In the case of absence because of emergency or participation in official College functions, it is the student's responsibility to confer with the instructor about the absence and missed course work.

Further, it is the student's responsibility to withdraw officially from any class that s/he ceases to attend. Failure to do so will result in the recording of an "F" grade. Students absent from an announced test or examination, unless authorized, may be given an equivalent exam at a later date at the discretion of the instructor. A special examination fee may be charged.

Meaningful participation is also an important factor and therefore this will also be recorded in the grade book. If you take part in class discussions and class projects, points will be added back in your attendance grade according to your level of participation. The participation grade will be merged with the attendance grade and the total will be 20% of your final grade for the course.

**Again, regular attendance and class participation are essential.**

5. The instructor reserves the right to modify the course content and/or the evaluation (testing) procedures as deemed necessary.

**COURSE POLICIES:** In order to make things run smoothly, I ask that you honor the following:

1. Please don't be tardy. Class will start in a timely fashion. In addition, tardiness will be factored into your attendance/participation grade. Leaving class early is also a factor.
2. The college attendance policy can be found in the 2015-2016 catalog.
3. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to find out what we covered in class and get the notes and assignments from a classmate.
4. You are expected to take the announced tests on the day they are scheduled. If there is a sufficient reason to miss the exam, such as a business trip or an illness, please let me know before the exam.

5. Generally you may not make up missed quizzes. However, if there is sufficient good cause, I will allow you to make up one quiz.
6. You may not bring your small children to class.
7. If you have any special classroom needs please see me privately.
8. Taping of lectures is not permitted.
9. Listen to the radio for announcements of school closings due to inclement weather.
10. Don't assume you are withdrawing from class by not coming. You must follow college policies and procedures.
11. Please turn all cell phones or other electronic items to vibrate or off during class. Please do not have cell phones or other electronic devices out during class and especially not during exams.
12. Bring your book to class.
13. The instructor has the right to modify the course content and/or the evaluation (testing) procedures as deemed necessary.
14. All work in this class is done under the HCC Academic Integrity Policy.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** [debeachley@hagerstowncc.edu](mailto:debeachley@hagerstowncc.edu). You may attempt to reach me Monday – Friday at (240) 313-2555, but you will probably need to leave a message with my administrative assistant. Please use this phone number sparingly. Upon request, I would be happy to meet with any student prior to class (or at another convenient time).

**SERVICE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students may receive reasonable accommodations if they have a diagnosed disability and present appropriate documentation. Students seeking accommodations are required to contact the Disability Support Services (DSS) office as early as possible. Students may contact a DSS staff member for an appointment at [dss@hagerstowncc.edu](mailto:dss@hagerstowncc.edu) or at 240-500-2530.