

Entrepreneurship Law
Spring 2008, Prof. Michael Risch

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this class, though some familiarity with business, finance, IP, etc. will enhance the class experience.

Class Days and Office Hours

Class will meet Mondays and Wednesdays from 11:00-11:50. We will not meet on 1/21.

My office hours are 1:00-2:00 on Mondays and Wednesdays, plus any other time that we might schedule in advance. Additionally, if I am in my office with the door open, please feel free to come in and talk.

You may contact me at michael.risch@mail.wvu.edu.

Class Objectives

1. You will understand and apply basic legal principles that apply to entrepreneurial organizations.
2. You will evaluate companies using principles learned in class.
3. You will help a “seed” organization understand its legal needs
4. You will practice presentation of your analysis
5. You will apply your learning in a scholarly paper

Books and Materials

The books for class will be Jon M. Garon, Own It (Carolina Press) and Wayne McVicker, Starting Something (Ravel Media LLC). I will also be handing out materials throughout class.

The course website is:

<http://www.casesofinterest.com/tiki/tiki-index.php?page=Entrepreneurship+Law+Spring+2008>

You can access the page via the course’s TWEN page as well. The course page includes this syllabus and associated information, and may contain additional materials in the future.

Writing Requirement

There are four writing assignments in class. Three are short writing exercises that are assigned throughout the semester. The fourth is a final paper of scholarly length and quality to be presented in class. Because of class size, I will assign teams to prepare the final paper, and expectations for the final paper will be based on two people contributing to it. We will discuss due dates for the final paper in class.

Class Participation and Attendance

Twenty percent (25%) of your grade will be based on class participation, with an emphasis on

quality over quantity. This includes attendance and participation in class discussion, as well as presentation of the writing exercises and final paper. Because this is a discussion based class, your attendance and participation are critical. Please see the "Class Participation" web page (copy attached) for more discussion.

Other Grading Criteria

The writing exercises will be worth 5% of your grade each, for a total of 15%. The final paper will constitute 60% of your grade.

Final Exam

There is no final exam.

Class Topics and Assignments

The guest speakers and presentations are tentative, and may change based on speaker availability.

Jan 14: What is Entrepreneurship? Garon 3-36, McVicker 1-13.

Jan 16: No class. Exercise: Select a company that you consider entrepreneurial - it may be public or private, sole proprietorship or business association. Write a short (2-3 page) explanation of the company you picked and the characteristics that make it entrepreneurial.

Jan 21: No class - MLK Birthday

Jan 23: Ten students will present their selections to the class. McVicker 14-46.

Jan 28: Guest speaker: the connection of entrepreneurship to law. McVicker 49-75.

Jan 30: The role of IP. Garon 37-54.

Feb 4: Opportunity enhancement: Relevance and relationships. Garon 55-78, McVicker, 77-93.

Feb 6: No class. Exercise: Using the company you selected in the last exercise, write a short (2-3 page) discussion evaluating the company's strengths and weaknesses in both exclusivity and relevance. McVicker 94-128.

Feb 11: Ten students will present their evaluations to the class. Garon 79-93, McVicker 131-152.

Feb 13: Starting up a start-up. Garon 133-149, McVicker 155-181.

Feb 18: Guest speaker: starting up, finance, and venture capital. McVicker 183-209.

Feb 20: Organization, Finance, and Value. Garon 95-112, McVicker 211-233.

Feb 25: Finance continued: venture capital. McVicker 235-258, handouts.

Feb 27: No class. Exercise: Using the company you selected in the last exercise, write a short (2-3 page) discussion evaluating the company's business organization and financing. How was the company formed? How was it financed? What effect did that have on the company? This exercise may require a little digging - if the company is public, information may be available as part of SEC filings. McVicker 261-292.

Mar 3: Ten students will present their evaluations to the class. McVicker 295-322.

Mar 5: Agreements: Franchising. McVicker 325-353, handouts.

Mar 10: Agreements: Joint Development. McVicker 355-380, handouts.

Mar 12: Agreements: Other Agreements. McVicker 383-408, handouts.

Mar 17: Guest speaker - franchising.

Mar 19: Industry approaches. Garon 185-203.

Mar 31: Business plan presentation and in-class evaluation.

Apr 2: Business plan presentation and in-class evaluation.

Apr 7: No class. Exercise: each group should prepare a short (2-3) page thesis and summary document that is a "preview" of the final paper.

Apr 9: Paper presentations

Apr 14: Paper presentations

Apr 16: Paper presentations

Apr 21: Paper presentations

Apr 23: Paper presentations

Social Justice Statement

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veterans status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Disability Services (293-6700).