**Course Master Syllabus**

**Torts - LGLA 2303**

 **(Note: The actual syllabus will vary depending upon the Instructor)**

**I. Course Description / Prerequisites:**  This course presents fundamental concepts of tort law with emphasis on the paralegal's role. Topics include intentional torts, negligence, and strict liability**. LGLA 1351 must be taken before this course.**

**II. Course Rationale / Objectives:**

 This course is designed to provide the student with a comprehensive understanding of the concepts relevant to the major areas of tort law including basic intentional torts, defamation and privacy, negligence, strict (or absolute) liability, product liability, and nuisance.

**III. Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Course-Level Student Learning Outcomes: The student will use terminology relating to tort law; analyze sources relating to tort law; draft documents used in tort law; and, analyze the ethical considerations of the paralegal relating to tort law. The student will display an understanding of the intentional torts; defamation and privacy; negligence; strict liability; product liability; nuisance; deceit; and related concepts. The student will exhibit an understanding of the elements of a cause of action in each area of tort law. The student willdisplay the ability to brief court opinions and identify the legal issue resolved by the court opinion.
2. Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes:
3. To ensure that students understand a broad range of legal concepts and terms.
4. To ensure that students are able to perform legal research and identify and apply the salient holdings of appellate decisions to related fact patterns.
5. To ensure students ability to apply legal concepts to changing fact patterns.
6. To ensure students understanding of the basis for, and ability to draft, the documents used in a broad range of legal environments.
7. To encourage students to develop the initiative and work habits that will make them successful in a broad range of legal environments.
8. Ultimately, to prepare the student to perform well as a paralegal in a broad spectrum of law office / law division environments.
9. SCANS Competencies: The SCANs Competencies that will be developed in this Course are listed on Exhibit A.

**IV. Required/Recommended Texts**: **(Check for current edition or changes)**

 A. Required Purchase:

 (1) Buckley, Torts and Personal Injury Law

 B. Recommended: (1) Black's Law Dictionary

**V. Instructional Methodology:**

 This course will be taught via a combined lecture and Socratic format. Students will be expected to have absorbed the assigned material prior to class, and to be able to respond to questions on the assigned material. In addition, students will brief court cases as assigned and will be prepared to recite on those cases.

**VI. Course Evaluation System:**

1. There will be one midterm exam and a comprehensive final examination, which will be

weighted as follows:

1. Midterm --- 200 points
2. Final --- 300 points (Examinations will last the entire class period)
3. Total course points will be computed as follows:
4. Examinations --------------------------- 500 points
5. Class attendance and participation 150 points
6. Petition/Answer 100 points
7. Rogs 100 points
8. Trial Notebook 150 points TOTAL POINTS 1000 POINTS
9. The final letter grade in the course will be based upon the total available points received, as follows:

 A –900-1000 points

B –800-899 points

C –700-799 points

D –600-699 points

F - 0-5999 points

1. LATE ASSIGNMENTS This class will emphasize not only the substance of tort law, but also procedural points as they might apply to the paralegal. One procedural point is timeliness. Missing legal deadlines can destroy a case, ruin people’s lives (including yours), and may jeopardize a lawyer’s license to practice. Late assignments will not be accepted. If disaster strikes and you need to late file an assignment, be prepared to file a Motion for Leave to File Out Of Time \_\_\_\_, in appropriate form, explaining why the court (this instructor) should allow a late filing. Don’t count on it being granted, but give it a try **if** the facts are compelling.
2. REWRITES You may resubmit any assignment (excluding exams or in-class work) if you are dissatisfied with your grade. You have one week from the date the paper is returned in class in which to resubmit. Note: If you are not in class when the papers are returned, you risk losing your opportunity to resubmit it. Should this happen to you, prepare a Motion for Leave to File Out Of Time Rewrite, in the appropriate form, explaining why the Court (the instructor) should grant it.

**VII. Course Policies:**

1. Preparation for Class

The student will be expected to have read and absorbed all of the material assigned for a particular class session before the class meets.

1. Class Participation Points

During each class, the instructor will be evaluating the quality of the student’s responses. At the end of the semester, the student will be given between 105 and 150 points as a class participation grade.

1. Unprepared Announcements

The instructor should be informed at roll call if a student is "unprepared" for that class. Should a student arrive late, they must immediately inform the instructor if they are “unprepared.” Students will be allowed one announcement of "unprepared" during the course. Additional "unprepared" announcements or any non-responses will result in the loss of class participation points. A non-response is a failure to respond to a question, or a response that indicates that the student is unprepared or poorly prepared for the class. Non-responses when a student has failed to announce "unprepared" will be treated as two "unprepared" announcements

1. Attendance.

Regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students. Two absences will be allowed but you should use them judiciously. Any additional absences will result in the loss of one letter grade, per absence, from your final grade. Arrival in class more than 15 minutes after the beginning of class or leaving class more than 15 minutes before the end of class will be treated as a "one-half absence."

1. Withdrawal.

Excessive absences or “unprepareds” may eventually result in the student being withdrawn from the course. Do not, however, assume that absences or “unprepareds” will automatically result in a withdrawal. They may simply result in a letter grade "F" at the end of the course. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that his or her name is removed from the roll should he or she decide to withdraw from the class. If a student decides to withdraw, he or she should also verify that the withdrawal is submitted before the Final Withdrawal Date. The student is also strongly encouraged to retain their copy of the withdrawal form for their records.

Students who enroll for the third or subsequent time in a course taken after the fall semester, 2002, may be charged a higher tuition rate, for that course.

State law permits students to withdraw from no more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career at Texas public colleges or universities. With certain exceptions, all course withdrawals automatically count towards this limit. Details regarding this policy can be found in the ACC college catalog.

1. Incomplete

An “Incomplete” will not be granted in this course unless the student has a grade of “C” or better on the first exam, and a demonstrable emergency. An incomplete grade cannot be carried beyond the date established by the instructor and cannot in any event be carried later than the last withdrawal date the following semester.

1. Scholastic Dishonesty

A student attending ACC assumes responsibility for conduct compatible with the mission of the college as an educational institution. Students have the responsibility to submit coursework that is the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. Students must follow all instructions given by faculty or designated college representatives when taking examinations, placement assessments, tests, quizzes, and evaluations. Actions constituting scholastic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, collusion, and falsifying documents. Penalties for scholastic dishonesty will depend upon the nature of the violation and may range from lowering a grade on one assignment to an “F” in the course and/or expulsion from the college. See the Student Standards of Conduct and Disciplinary Process and other policies at http://www.austincc.edu/current/needtoknow

1. Academic Freedom

Each student is expected to participate in class. In any classroom situation that includes discussion and critical thinking, there are bound to be differing viewpoints. Students may not only disagree with each other on occasion, but the students and instructor may also find that they have disparate views. It is expected that these differences will enhance the class and create an atmosphere where students and instructor alike will be encouraged to think and learn. Accordingly, rest assured that no student’s grade will be adversely affected by any beliefs or ideas expressed in class.

1. Student Discipline

In the event, a student acts in such a way as to significantly interfere with or disrupt the learning atmosphere of the classroom, the instructor may direct the student to leave the class and may take other measures as appropriate. See the ACC Student Handbook on the web: <http://www.austincc.edu/handbook/>

1. Office of Students with Disabilities

Each ACC campus offers support services for students with documented disabilities.  Students with disabilities who need classroom, academic or other accommodations must request them through the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD).   Students are encouraged to request accommodations when they register for courses or at least three weeks before the start of the semester, otherwise the provision of accommodations may be delayed.

Students who have received approval for accommodations from OSD for this course must provide the instructor with the ‘Notice of Approved Accommodations’ from OSD before accommodations will be provided.   Arrangements for academic accommodations can only be made after the instructor receives the ‘Notice of Approved Accommodations’ from the student.

Students with approved accommodations are encouraged to submit the ‘Notice of Approved Accommodations’ to the instructor at the beginning of the semester because a reasonable amount of time may be needed to prepare and arrange for the accommodations.

Additional information about the Office for Students with Disabilities is available at [http://www.austincc.edu/support/osd/](%20http%3A//www.austincc.edu/support/osd/)

1. Course Calendar

The Course Calendar is a separate document which will be provided with this syllabus.

1. Testing Center

General use of the testing center is not available to students in this course; however, students using the Academic Testing Center must govern themselves according to the Student Guide for Use of ACC Testing Centers and should read the entire guide before going to take the exam. To request an exam, one must have:

* [**ACC Photo ID**](http://www.austincc.edu/support/admissions/student_id.php)
* Course Abbreviation (e.g., LGLA)
* Course Number (e.g.,1311)
* Course Synonym (e.g., 10123)
* Course Section (e.g., 005)
* Instructor's Name

Do NOT bring cell phones to the Testing Center. Having your cell phone in the testing room, **regardless of whether it is on or off**, will revoke your testing privileges for the remainder of the semester. ACC Testing Center policies can be found at http://www.austincc.edu/testctr/

1. Student and Instructional Services

ACC strives to provide exemplary support to its students and offers a broad variety of opportunities and services. Information on these services and support systems is available at:  [http://www.austincc.edu/s4/](http://www.austincc.edu/current/)

Links to many student services and other information can be found at: http://www.austincc.edu/current/

Tutoring is not available for this course; however, ACC Learning Labs do provide free tutoring services to all ACC students currently enrolled in a course that provides tutoring. The tutor schedule for each Learning Lab may be found at: <http://www.autincc.edu/tutor/students/tutoring.php>

For help setting up your ACCeID, ACC Gmail, or ACC Blackboard, see a Learning Lab Technician at any ACC Learning Lab.

1. Use of ACC email

All College e-mail communication to students will be sent solely to the student’s ACCmail account, with the expectation that such communications will be read in a timely fashion. ACC will send important information and will notify you of any college related emergencies using this account. Students should only expect to receive email communication from their instructor using this account. Likewise, students should use their ACCmail account when communicating with instructors and staff. Instructions for activating an ACCmail account can be found at <http://www.austincc.edu/accmail/index.php>

1. Safety Statement

Austin Community College is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. You are expected to learn and comply with ACC environmental, health and safety procedures and agree to follow ACC safety policies. Additional information on these can be found at http://www.austincc.edu/ehs. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the Emergency Procedures poster and Campus Safety Plan map in each classroom. Additional information about emergency procedures and how to sign up for ACC Emergency Alerts to be notified in the event of a serious emergency can be found at http://www.austincc.edu/emergency/.

Please note, you are expected to conduct yourself professionally with respect and courtesy to all. Anyone who thoughtlessly or intentionally jeopardizes the health or safety of another individual will be dismissed from the day’s activity, may be withdrawn from the class, and/or barred from attending future activities.

**LEGAL DISCLAIMER**

Everything that is discussed in the classroom or individually with the instructor is strictly for educational purposes only. The instructor will not and does not provide legal advice to any student. Nor shall any comments from the instructor be considered legal advice.

**EXHIBIT A**

**TORTS & PERSONAL INJURY LAW - LGLA 2303**

**SCANS Competencies**

**Students in this Course will be expected to use or achieve the following Competencies**

**Resources**

1.l. Allocates Time: Allocates time between coursework/work/family/friends.

**Interpersonal**

2.1. Participates as a Member of a Team: Works cooperatively with others on joint assignments.

2.2. Teaches Others: Explains concepts in class.

* 1. Negotiates: Works toward an agreement on the validity of exam questions.

2.6. Works with Cultural Diversity: Works well with men and women and with a variety of ethnic, social, or educational backgrounds in the context of the class..

**Information**

3.1. Acquires and Evaluates Information: Extracts crucial legal issues from court cases.

3.2. Organizes and Maintains Information: Takes notes on assigned material for use in class.

3.3. Interprets and Communicates Information: Evaluates assigned material and explains it to the class.

3.4. Uses Computers to Process Information: Employs computers to process course notes and to obtain, analyze and brief court cases.

**Technology**

5.2. Applies Technology to Task: Understands the overall intent and the proper procedures for setting up and using computers and their programs.

**Basic Skills**

6.1. Reading: Locates, understands, and interprets written information in the text and assigned court cases.

* 1. Writing: Communicates thoughts, ideas, information, and messages effectively in writing.
	2. Listening: Receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal messages during class lectures and discussions.

6.6. Speaking: Organizes ideas and effectively communicates thoughts when being quesitoned in class and during class discussions.

**Thinking Skills**

7.1. Creative Thinking: Uses imagination freely, combines ideas in new ways, when discussing hypothetical problems..

* 1. Decision Making: Chooses the best alternative in multiple choice questions.

7.3. Problem Solving: Recognizes that problems in hypothetical situations and identifies possible solutions.

* 1. Knowing How to Learn: Finds the important information in class discussions and texts and consolidates the information into a useable format.

7.6. Reasoning: Identifies the crucial issue in a court case and recognizes the potential application of the rule in the case to other cases with similar facts and circumstances.

**Personal Qualities**

* 1. Responsibility. Exerts a high level of effort and perseverance in effectively preparing for class and class discussions.

8.4. Self-Management: Motivates self through goal achievement; exhibits self-control and responds to feedback unemotionally and non-defensively, is a "self-starter."

8.5. Integrity/Honesty: Can be trusted to accomplish her/his own work without excessive involvement of other students.