



**Department of Health Administration and Policy**  
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## **SYLLABUS HAP 312-002**

### **Spring 2026**

**Course Name, number and section:** Healthcare Law, HAP312-002

**Class Location:** Peterson Hall Room 1105, Canvas

**Class Schedule:** Wednesdays, 9am-10:15am eastern time; Lectures and Assignments  
Available Via Canvas

**Course Instructor:**

Lee Black  
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703.993.1850 (HAP Dept. Office)  
Peterson Hall Rm 4405

**Office hours/location:** Wednesdays 10:30-11:30 (Peterson Hall Rm 4405), before and after class, or by prior arrangement. Virtual or phone meetings are also possible.

**Course Description:** Introduces students to the legal environment in healthcare with emphasis on laws and regulations of routine importance to healthcare managers in the areas of labor, contracts, real estate, medical malpractice, general business and intellectual property.

**Course Objectives:** By the end of this course, you should be able to

1. Explain the relationships between the three branches of government and identify the important sources of law in the US system.
2. Evaluate the tensions between public and private interests in healthcare.
3. Define the role and ultimate responsibility of a hospital's governing board in overseeing the hospital's operations and distinguish that role from the day-to-day management of the hospital.
4. Explore the role that non-physician professionals are playing a growing role in healthcare delivery and the regulation of all healthcare providers.

5. Explain the benefits of having an effective corporate compliance program, and identify the legal basis of healthcare compliance.
6. Apply legal concepts (e.g., contract, tort, physician-patient relationship, privacy) to real-world cases.
7. Explain the current legal issues in healthcare law and the roles of Congress, the President, and the Courts in drafting, enforcing, and interpreting the laws and regulations.

### **Required Text:**

*The Law of Healthcare Administration; 10<sup>th</sup> Edition*; J. Stuart Showalter (Health Administration Press). You may buy or rent the hard copy, or use the e-version. Please let me know promptly if you have trouble getting the book.

YOU MUST USE THE 10<sup>th</sup> EDITION!

I will assign other readings throughout the semester, and will provide links or electronic versions in the appropriate weekly modules on Canvas.

### **Course Requirements:**

I expect that students will act professionally. This means: 1) be patient with themselves and classmates; 2) be prepared; 3) always treat classmates with tolerance and respect; and 4) participate actively in all class discussions. I also expect students to show energy and enthusiasm for learning why the law shapes - and is shaped by - the dynamic, diverse field of healthcare administration and policy. Finally, I expect that students will write and submit their assignments in standard English. Please proofread all work you submit! If you believe you need assistance in writing this way, please contact the University's Writing Center. The Center has many qualified, accessible writing resources.

Like any in-person course, you are expected to attend each class and be on time, unless you contact me in advance by e-mail. You must stay for the entire class (unless you contact me in advance by e-mail) and complete required assignments. **Please e-mail me if you cannot attend a particular class or must leave a class early.** I understand emergencies or other unexpected challenges may happen. If they do, I appreciate hearing from you as soon as possible.

\*\*\*Please understand that this course will teach you a new language: health care legal terms, which many of you have not encountered. Our textbook contains many common terms of law (e.g., stare decisis; apparent agency). You will learn better and increase your grade by understanding those terms, which appear in the textbook's margins.

**Make-ups/late work:** I take due dates and project specifications seriously, as will future employers in health care or other fields that you enter. **You must submit assignments on or before their due date, unless I tell you otherwise. I will not accept late work without advance written permission from me (including via email). An assignment that I receive after it is due will lose an incremental letter grade per day, and work will not be accepted more than 1 week after the initial due date without an exceptional reason.** For example, if

you turn in a case study response on Tuesday instead of Monday when due, you will only earn up to an A, not an A+, and on Wednesday will earn only up to an A-.

\*\*\*I welcome students to contact me by e-mail at [lblack7@gmu.edu](mailto:lblack7@gmu.edu) with any questions or concerns about the course. However, I will be available after class for questions and am willing to arrange office visits.

\*\*\***Disclaimer:** This course, including readings and discussions, will not provide anything that students should consider legal advice on which they should rely. If you have a legal concern, please contact a licensed, practicing attorney.

### **Teaching Methods:**

This course is “hybrid”, meaning that much of the course content is online via Canvas, but we will meet in person EVERY week on Wednesdays for 1 hour 15 minutes. Each week consists of a single topic/module and one class sessions. On Canvas you’ll be able to view course video lectures and assignments, and in class we’ll have discussion to reinforce video lecture and textbook content. Your participation grade will be based on attendance and participation in these in-person sessions rather than online discussion boards. It is therefore critical that you attend classes.

### **Evaluations and Grading:**

**NOTE: All written assignments must be formatted as follows: Times New Roman, 12pt font; 1.5 line spacing (between single and double spacing); 1” margins all around; only your name, date, and assignment name as a heading. All citations should be made as endnotes, not footnotes. No funny business!**

#### ***Legal Analysis (2) – 20%***

There will be two case studies that you must respond to. Each one will present a scenario, and you will be provided with questions to guide your response that will require you to recall material from the course, including readings and videos.

#### ***Judicial Briefings/Discussion (2) – 15%***

Students will be assigned to draft two “briefs” of judicial decisions that appear at the end of the assigned chapter on a rotating basis throughout the semester. Students who are assigned to brief a case in a given week must submit the brief on Canvas by 11:59pm on the Monday of that week, under the appropriate assignment “Judicial Brief 1” or “Judicial Brief 2”. We will generally discuss cases during the Wednesday class period. A judicial brief example and a writing guide are available on Canvas.

A portion of your grade for this assignment will be discussion the case in class. It is therefore important that you attend the in-person session during the week you’re assigned a judicial brief.

*Please note that I expect **all students** to at least skim the cases at the end of each chapter, even if it is not your week to submit a written judicial brief!*

### ***Periodic Quizzes (3) – 15%***

Throughout the semester I will post short quizzes on Canvas to test your knowledge and understanding of course materials and lectures.

### ***Class participation – 20%***

Healthcare law is sometimes quite dry and sometimes contentious. Much of what we will discuss this semester relies on statutes, regulations, and court decisions, but often there is room for debate and discussion about how law applies and even what the law *should* be. More than in many other courses, your ability to analyze facts and circumstances is important to reaching what you think might be the best legal outcome. This is why participation is such a large part of the grade in this course. I want to encourage (maybe coerce) you into thinking critically about situations that you might face in your future career and consider various facets of facts, decisions, and outcomes differently that you otherwise might. Therefore, participation includes class attendance, and also your engagement in discussion and class activities.

I will start everyone with an “A” in class participation. However, I will track each week who does and does not participate. Please help yourself and earn a very achievable 20 percent of your grade!

### ***Final Exam – 30%***

The date of the final exam will be determined by the GMU Registrar after request by me early in the semester. I plan for it to be in-person and in the same classroom where class sessions are held. You will be permitted to bring a single sheet of 8 ½” x 11” paper with handwritten notes (front and back) to help you with the exam.

### **Grading Scale:**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	100-94
A-	93-90
B+	89-87
B	86-84
B-	83-80
C+	79-77
C	76-74
C-	73-70
D	69-60
F	59-0

## General Course Policies:

### Academic Standards

Academic Standards exist to promote authentic scholarship, support the institution's goal of maintaining high standards of academic excellence, and encourage continued ethical behavior of faculty and students to cultivate an educational community which values integrity and produces graduates who carry this commitment forward into professional practice.

As members of the George Mason University community, we are committed to fostering an environment of trust, respect, and scholarly excellence. Our academic standards are the foundation of this commitment, guiding our behavior and interactions within this academic community. The practices for implementing these standards adapt to modern practices, disciplinary contexts, and technological advancements. Our standards are embodied in our courses, policies, and scholarship, and are upheld in the following principles:

- **Honesty:** Providing accurate information in all academic endeavors, including communications, assignments, and examinations.
- **Acknowledgement:** Giving proper credit for all contributions to one's work. This involves the use of accurate citations and references for any ideas, words, or materials created by others in the style appropriate to the discipline. It also includes acknowledging shared authorship in group projects, co-authored pieces, and project reports.
- **Uniqueness of Work:** Ensuring that all submitted work is the result of one's own effort and is original, including free from self-plagiarism. This principle extends to written assignments, code, presentations, exams, and all other forms of academic work.

Violations of these standards—including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication, and cheating—are taken seriously and will be addressed in accordance with university policies. The process for reporting, investigating, and adjudicating violations is [outlined in the university's procedures](#). Consequences of violations may include academic sanctions, disciplinary actions, and other measures necessary to uphold the integrity of our academic community.

The principles outlined in these academic standards reflect our collective commitment to upholding the highest standards of honesty, acknowledgement, and uniqueness of work. By adhering to these principles, we ensure the continued excellence and integrity of George Mason University's academic community.

**Student responsibility:** Students are responsible for understanding how these general expectations regarding academic standards apply to each course, assignment, or exam they participate in; students should ask their instructor for clarification on any aspect that is not clear to them.

### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students

can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit <https://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: [ods@gmu.edu](mailto:ods@gmu.edu). Phone: (703) 993-2474.

**Student responsibility:** Students are responsible for registering with Disability Services and communicating about their approved accommodations with their instructor *in advance* of any relevant class meeting, assignment, or exam.

### **Title IX Resources and Required Reporting**

As a part of George Mason University's commitment to providing a safe and non-discriminatory learning, living, and working environment for all members of the University community, the University does not discriminate on the basis of sex or gender in any of its education or employment programs and activities. Accordingly, **all non-confidential employees, including your faculty member, have a legal requirement to report to the Title IX Coordinator, all relevant details obtained directly or indirectly about any incident of Prohibited Conduct** (such as sexual harassment, sexual assault, gender-based stalking, dating/domestic violence). Upon notifying the Title IX Coordinator of possible Prohibited Conduct, the Title IX Coordinator will assess the report and determine if outreach is required. If outreach is required, the individual the report is about (the "Complainant") will receive a communication, likely in the form of an email, offering that person the option to meet with a representative of the Title IX office.

For more information about non-confidential employees, resources, and Prohibited Conduct, please see [University Policy 1202: Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence](#). Questions regarding Title IX can be directed to the Title IX Coordinator via email to [TitleIX@gmu.edu](mailto:TitleIX@gmu.edu), by phone at 703-993-8730, or in person on the Fairfax campus in Aquia 373.

**Student opportunity:** If you prefer to speak to someone *confidentially*, please contact one of Mason's confidential employees in Student Support and Advocacy ([SSAC](#)), Counseling and Psychological Services ([CAPS](#)), Student Health Services ([SHS](#)), and/or the [Office of the University Ombudsperson](#).

### **Canvas:**

The course will use the GMU **Canvas** platform, which you can each access through the GMU website using your username and password. On Canvas, you will find assignments, readings or links to readings, video lectures, and any other materials for the course. Each week will have a Module, and the Module will contain non-textbook readings, assignments, videos and any other relevant material for the week. Assignments are due as stated in the syllabus and course schedule, and must be submitted in Canvas unless otherwise noted.

### **FERPA and Use of GMU Email Addresses for Course Communication**

The [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) governs the disclosure of [education records for eligible students](#) and is an essential aspect of any course. **Students must use their GMU email account** to receive important University information, including communications

related to this class. Instructors will not respond to messages sent from or send messages regarding course content to a non-GMU email address.

**Student responsibility:** Students are responsible for checking their GMU email regularly for course-related information, and/or ensuring that GMU email messages are forwarded to an account they do check.

### **Specific Course Policies:**

**Cell Phones/Tablets/PCs:** Students must respect my and one another's valuable class time. Please turn off the sound features and all messaging functions of electronic voice and communication devices before we begin each class. This includes voice recording.

\*\*\*I will allow students to use laptops, iPads and related devices only for class purposes – to take notes, follow the Showalter textbook online or pull up my PowerPoint slides or other class materials on Canvas, and, of course, to attend class if it moves online for any reason. HOWEVER, it is likely that for many class sessions I will disallow the use of electronics in class.

**Respectful and Courteous In-Person and Online Discourse:** Your interactions with your classmates and myself should be respectful and courteous. At times when we use the Canvas discussion board, I expect discussion board responses to be respectful of others' point of view and courteous. Just because you might disagree with someone doesn't mean you have to be disagreeable! And given the controversies surrounding some of our topics, there will likely be substantial disagreement.

**Weather and Other Class-Related Communications:** It is possible for bad weather to cause the closure of the university. Depending on the policies in place and the amount of notice we have, the class period can be cancelled or move online (e.g. Zoom). If a class must be cancelled for any other reason, I will notify the class as soon as practicable.

## GENERAL GRADING RUBRIC:

Students may earn an "A" grade on their own work as follows:

Clearly identifies and states issue or topic. When appropriate, uses multiple (3 or more) external sources to support or contrast student's own work. Provides critical analysis of the issue or topic and develops own response.

A "B" grade:

Clearly identifies and states issue or topic. When appropriate, uses one or a few external sources to support or contrast student's own work. Provides critical analysis of the issue or topic.

A "C" grade:

Clearly identifies and states issue or topic. Does not use external sources even if appropriate or asked for. Provides only superficial analysis of the issue or topic without demonstrating clear understanding.

## Sample Legal Analysis Grading Rubric:

Category	Proficient	Intermediate	Novice
<b>Identify Cause(s) of Action (4pts)</b>	Identifies all potential causes of action by correct name	Partially identifies cause of action (misstates name, does not recognize multiple COA)	Fails to identify any appropriate cause of action
<b>Identify and Describes Elements or Components of Cause(s) of Action (7pts)</b>	Correctly identifies and describes elements/components	Identifies partial elements/components or misidentifies these. Fails to describe what each element/component require	Fails to identify correct elements or components
<b>Apply Law to Facts (9pts)</b>	Applies correct law to relevant facts. Reaches reasonable conclusion based on application	Incompletely applies law to facts, or incorrectly identifies relevant facts. Conclusion is incomplete or fails to consider relevant facts or legal issues	Incorrectly applies law to facts presented or applies incorrect law