



Spring 2026

HAP 750 Legal Issues in Health Administration		
Course information	HAP 750: Legal Issues in Health Administration Online Course	
Instructor	Brian Santo, Esq., MPH, CCEP, CHC, CHPC, CHRC, ICC, PMP Office Hours: By appointment, via email Email: bsanto@gmu.edu Students should expect an email response within one (1) business day. Exams and the business memo will generally be graded within a week.	
Course description	Examines legal issues facing the healthcare industry. Prepares health professionals to understand legal principles, statutes, regulations, and case law related to managing health care organizations and health professionals ' practice. Students are provided with practical knowledge of health law and its application to actual work experience.	
MHA Competencies	A selected set of the MHA Competencies are the basis for the design of this course, including course content; learning objectives; and teaching and assessment methods. For each competency, faculty identify a "Targeted Proficiency Level", which students are expected to attain. Course assessments are designed to measure student progress in attaining one of the following targeted proficiency levels. (See Attachment A: Proficiency Level Definitions)	
	Beginner	Intermediate
	Advanced	

Course Competencies and Supporting Learning Objectives	
Upon completion of the course, participants will be able to:	Target Proficiency Level
Human Resource Management: Understand the rights and protection of employees, effective workforce planning, talent management and staff engagement. <u>Course Learning Objectives</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze laws and regulations that govern the management of human resources, including labor and employment law and laws regulating medical staff management and contracting. Differentiate the human resources practices of an organization necessary for compliance with laws pertaining to diversity and fair employment practices. 	Intermediate

<p>Health Law and Healthcare Regulation: Interpret, analyze and apply local, state, and federal regulations/laws to the operations and governance of healthcare organizations.</p> <p><u>Course Learning Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the principal categories and sources of legal liability that health professionals and organizations face, including the major healthcare laws and regulations that govern the management and delivery of healthcare services, including the impact on corporate structure, management, human resources, medical staff/board relationships, and patient care. Describe the role and function of the governmental and non-governmental organizations and agencies that regulate healthcare organizations through licensing, credentialing, certification, and accreditation. Analyze the laws that regulate the practice of medicine and clinical decision making in healthcare organizations including a healthcare organization’s legal and ethical duties to patients and patient rights and responsibilities. Describe potential legal risks related to healthcare administration and management decisions and how a healthcare organization manages and mitigates risk, including when to engage legal counsel. Discuss current issues in healthcare law and their potential impact on healthcare organizations and patients. 	Advanced
<p>Communicate Effectively: Tailor information, whether written or oral, to an intended target audience. Written and oral communication should be clear and concise, using appropriate slides, charts and/or graphs, as necessary.</p> <p><u>Course Learning Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze a current legal issue and compose a comprehensive business memorandum that provides an analysis of the issue and plausible solutions thereto. 	Advanced
<p>Quantitative Reasoning & Problem Solving: Utilize appropriate analytical techniques and methods to generate recommendations that are financially feasible, politically implementable, and supported by reliable and valid information, while identifying potential risks.</p> <p><u>Course Learning Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze practical management problems in health service organizations applying legal concepts and theories. 	Intermediate
<p>Information Technology: Understand the critical nature of information systems and the need for secure platforms.</p> <p><u>Course Learning Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate an understanding of the data privacy and security provisions (HIPAA) for safeguarding medical information and ensuring patient safety. 	Beginner
<p>Professional and Business Ethics: Conduct oneself in accordance with the highest personal, professional and business codes of ethics.</p> <p><u>Course Learning Objectives</u></p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of the legal contours of some of the principal ethical and moral dilemmas faced by health professionals.</p>	Beginner

Course Content and Expectations

<p>Required textbook(s) and/or materials</p>	<p>Legal Aspects of Healthcare Administration (14th edition, 2023), George D. Pozgar, Published by Jones & Bartlett Learning, ISBN 978-1-284-23152-6.</p> <p>Other additional readings as assigned.</p>
<p>Course requirements</p>	<p><u>Workload</u>: Students are expected to read and digest all assigned readings. The very nature of this course requires student participation in class discussions and all assigned activities. You should read slowly, take notes on the readings, and expect some occasional frustration as you try to absorb legal concepts. In <u>Synchronous Sessions (Modules One and Five)</u> and via online video lecture and course materials, we will place emphasis on those parts of the reading and case studies I believe are most important for your career success, and thus will serve as the focus of your exams.</p> <p><u>Synchronous Session Attendance</u>: Modules One and Five will be partly real-time Synchronous Sessions. As graduate students, you can decide on your own whether to take advantage of these sessions. That said, students who miss these classes may not master the material and therefore may have lower exam grades. I will record the sessions for access later and provide an Assignment opportunity for students who cannot attend the live sessions. Additional content videos will supplement the live sessions.</p> <p><u>Practice Exercises</u>: Each module, students are assigned Practice Exercises. These support the module’s material and will provide you with meaningful learning and preparation for the exams. In reading through and analyzing cases and assigned hypotheticals, students should employ the IRAC structure – Issue, Rule, Analysis, and Conclusion. This will also be helpful in answering exam essays. Please refer to the IRAC 101 materials in the Modules area for more detail. The approach will be discussed further in Module One.</p> <p>NOTE: The exercises, often in the form of case briefs, should NOT be submitted to the professor, but will be discussed during Synchronous Sessions or via the content videos. Students will be called upon and be expected to be prepared to answer questions about the various fact patterns, including working through the hypothetical facts in IRAC format for the Synchronous Sessions.</p> <p><u>Module Discussion Boards</u>: Most modules also include Discussion Boards that students must complete. In registering for this course, you have made a commitment to participate in online class discussions and activities, as assigned. Completion of learning discussions/activities are mandatory, so please plan to participate regularly. Students must actively reflect on readings and other course material to develop and provide original ideas in your responses. Students will be penalized if they do not provide their primary/initial response to the discussion topic by end of the day on Friday and two replies to classmates by end of the day on Sunday. Completion and quality of Discussion Boards directly affect your participation grade.</p>
	<p><u>Module Assignments</u>: Most modules also include Assignments that students must complete. The Assignments range from case studies to short answer questions to multiple choice questions. Answers will be provided automatically upon completion of the activities. Assignments must be completed timely, as assigned, and completion and quality of your work will directly affect your participation grade.</p> <p><u>Technical Competence</u>: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.</p>

Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content, or other course-related issues. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

Disclaimer: Any opinions that I may occasionally express are my own and not meant to coincide with the views of GMU.

Learning methods	X	Student Self-Assessment		Team Effectiveness Assessment
	X	Online Discussions		Peer Review
	X	Class Discussions		Simulation Exercises
	X	Examinations		External Field Experiences
		Experimental Learning Reports	X	Written Research or Reports
	X	Web-based Modules		Strategic/Consulting Projects
		Class Presentations		Reflective Learning/Modeling
	X	Case Studies	X	Comprehensive Examination

- Evaluation**
- 20 percent: Participation
 - 20 percent: Midterm Exam
 - 20 percent: Business Memo
 - 40 percent: Final Exam

- Grading Scale**
- Your evaluation will be based on the following scale:
- 98 percent and above: A+
 - 94 to 97 percent: A
 - 90 to 93 percent: A-
 - 87 to 89 percent: B+
 - 84 to 86 percent: B
 - 80 to 83 percent: B-
 - 70 to 79 percent: C
 - 69 percent and below: F

Online Course Blackboard Site

I will maintain a comprehensive Canvas site for this course. It is recommended that the student become familiar early with the following key places of the HAP 750 Blackboard site:

Home Page. Check here regularly throughout the semester for new announcements and notices of due dates regarding the course.

Announcements. I will post announcements here and well as email them to you directly.

Getting Started. This section contains overarching information, including videos, about the course, the professor and some kick starter exercises that will be discussed in Module One.

Syllabus & Grading. This is the best source for a description of guidelines, assessments and general expectations for the course.

Course Schedule. This section lays out the content and assignments and associated due dates.

Discussion Boards. You can access the Discussion Boards here (not every module will have a Discussion Board).

	<p><u>Learning Competencies</u>. This area provides detail on the competencies you are expected to master at targeted proficiency levels.</p> <p><u>Synchronous Session Access</u>. This area provides access to the Synchronous Sessions that will occur on certain Modules in the course.</p> <p><u>IRAC 101</u>. A foundational concept for the course, this area provides resources for students that explain the way to approach a set of facts that presents an opportunity to relate them in the legal context - IRAC (Issue, Rule, Analysis and Conclusion).</p> <p><u>Module Content (Modules 1-8)</u>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>General Content</u>. Each Module will contain items that will help you in this course, including descriptions of the Practice Exercises, Discussion Boards, Assignments, content videos and required readings. • <u>Business Memo</u>. Submit your Business Memo Proposal in Module 5 and final Business Memo in Module 8. Details for the proposal and the business memo can be found in their respective modules. • <u>Course Examinations</u>. Both the midterm and final exams can be found in their respective modules; the midterm exam in Module 4 and the final exam in Module 8. The links to access the exams and any relevant passwords will be made available during the respective exam time periods. <p><u>My Grades</u>. You guessed it, your grades will be displayed here.</p>
<p>Midterm and Final Exams</p>	<p>The midterm and final exams will consist of a combination of multiple-choice, short answer and/or essay questions designed to test whether you have digested the material covered in class and have accomplished the course objectives. Both exams will be open book. The final exam will be cumulative in nature, testing material covered over the entire semester, with focus on material covered in the second half of the course.</p> <p>I will not give you any "got you" questions but will design the questions to ensure that you are reading closely, paying attention in class, and thinking analytically about the covered material. Note that I may add concepts to the class lectures that may not be covered in the readings. You will be responsible for these. The course Blackboard site will contain sample multiple choice and essay questions indicative of those you will encounter on the midterm and final exams.</p> <p>As a graduate level course, make up exams will not be accepted absent extreme circumstances. Students with valid excuses who are unable to complete the scheduled exams at the appointed times must make arrangements with the instructor before the scheduled exam date to obtain an alternative testing date or time.</p>
<p>Business Memo</p>	<p>Each student is asked to prepare a business memo for this course. Students should refer to Attachment B of this syllabus for detailed instructions for the assignment and the grading rubric, also available on the Blackboard site under Syllabus & Grading.</p>
<p>Canvas Information</p>	<p>If Canvas shuts down while you are taking the test or doing an assignment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Email courses@gmu.edu (Canvas Help) immediately and cc the instructor, and ask the Support Center/Canvas Administrator to use "reply all" when answering your query. 2. Take a screen shot of Canvas with a time stamp. Send this screenshot via email to the instructor.

	<p>3. Based on the exam settings, you should be able to reenter and continue with the exam.</p> <p>Given the online design of this course, having a working computer is critical to completing all assignments in a timely fashion. During this course, if you experience a major technical problem with your personal computer, it is your responsibility to find other computers on campus or at a public library to complete any required assignments. A malfunctioning personal computer will NOT be accepted as an excuse for late assignments or missed work.</p>
Mason Honor Code	<p>The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.</p> <p>Please see the link below to the full read of the current Honor Code: https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/</p>
Individuals with Disabilities	<p>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 http://ds.gmu.edu/ for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process.</p> <p>Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu / Phone: (703) 993-2474</p>
Statement on Equity and Diversity	<p>This classroom is an inclusive learning environment that fosters respect for people across identities. We welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and ability. We encourage all members of the learning environment to engage with the material personally, but to also be open to exploring and learning from experiences different than their own.</p>
Student Rights & Responsibilities / Communication Policy	<p>Student rights and responsibilities may be found in the University Catalog here: https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/student-rights-responsibilities/.</p> <p>Web: masonlive.gmu.edu</p> <p>Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly. Students are also expected to maintain an active and accurate mailing address to receive communications sent through the United States Postal Service.</p>

	<i>(From the 2021-2022 Catalog – catalog.gmu.edu)</i>
Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence	<p>George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students and employees who believe that they have been sexually harassed, sexually assaulted or subjected to sexual or interpersonal misconduct to seek assistance and support. University Policy 1202: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct speaks to the specifics of Mason’s process, the resources, and the options available to students and employees.</p> <p>As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, complicity, and retaliation to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-993-3686 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.</p>
Additional Information	<p>While not a law school class, we will spend time discerning what the rules are and then discussing whether, as a matter of policy, those rules make sense. At other times, we may take the rules as given, and see if a difficult fact pattern fits the rules or not. Essentially, I will be trying to train you on what it will be like on the job.</p> <p>Finally, I am all about transparency. I will provide you with the key points from lessons, exam expectations, etc. This course will cover the key legal and ethical issues you will face in your careers. It is my hope that it will ultimately provide you with the knowledge and skills to succeed.</p>

Course Schedule

Session/Date	Subjects	Assigned Readings
Module 1: 1/12 - 1/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Overview • Introduction to the Legal System • Healthcare Ethics • Tort Law: Negligence & Patient Consent 	<p>Textbook: About the Book (xii – xiii), Chapter 1 (15 – 20), Chapter 2 (24 – 33), Chapter 3 (45 – 63), Chapter 14 (388 - 407)</p> <p>Additional Readings: Course Syllabus, American College of Healthcare Executives Code of Ethics (https://www.ache.org/abt_ache/code.cfm), U.S. Constitution 101, Key Differences – Civil vs. Criminal</p> <p>Activities: Refer to the Module Content for detail and due dates for Practice Exercises, Discussions and Assignments, as applicable.</p> <p style="color: red;">Synchronous session on Thursday (1/15) from 6-7:30pm EST. Will be recorded and available under Synchronous Session Access on the left-hand navigation.</p>
Module 2: 1/19 - 1/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tort Law: Intentional Torts • Corporate Structure and Legal Issues • Contracts and Antitrust 	<p>Textbook: Chapter 4 (64 - 82), Chapter 9 (185 – 231), Chapter 7 (124 – 145)</p> <p>Additional Readings: None</p> <p>Activities: Refer to the Module Content for detail and due dates for Practice Exercises, Discussions and Assignments, as applicable.</p>
Module 3: 1/26 - 2/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal Aspects of Health Care • Civil Procedure and Trial Practice • Medical Staff Organization and Liability 	<p>Textbook: Chapter 6 (93 – 123), Chapter 8 (146 – 184), Chapter 10 (232 – 274)</p> <p>Additional Readings: Stark and AKS chart</p> <p>Activities: Refer to the Module Content for detail and due dates for Practice Exercises, Discussions and Assignments, as applicable.</p>
Module 4: 2/2 - 2/8	MID TERM EXAM	<p>Textbook: None</p> <p>Additional Readings: Sample Mid Term Exam Questions</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice Exercises: None • Assignments: Students must access and take the Midterm Exam between Friday at noon and Sunday at 11:55pm EST. <p style="color: red;">Optional half-hour synchronous session on Friday (2/6) from 12-12:30pm EST. Will be recorded and available under Synchronous Session Access on the left-hand navigation.</p>

<p>Module 5: 2/9 - 2/15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital Departments and Allied Professionals • Human Resources 	<p>Textbook: Chapter 12 (310 – 357), Chapter 20 (544 – 593)</p> <p>Additional Readings: Labor Unions 101</p> <p>Activities: Refer to the Module Content for detail and due dates for Practice Exercises, Discussions and Assignments, as applicable. / Submit Business Memo Proposal by Sunday at 11:55pm EST.</p> <p>Synchronous session on Thursday (2/12) from 6-7:30pm EST. Will be recorded and available under Synchronous Session Access on the left-hand navigation.</p>
<p>Module 6: 2/16 - 2/22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Reporting Requirements • Information Management and Patient Records • Procreation and Ethical Dilemmas 	<p>Textbook: Chapter 19 (528 – 543), Chapter 13 (358 – 387), Chapter 17 (462 - 485)</p> <p>Additional Readings: What is the HITECH Act?</p> <p>Activities: Refer to the Module Content for detail and due dates for Practice Exercises, Discussions and Assignments, as applicable.</p>
<p>Module 7: 2/23 = 3/1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursing and the Law • End-of-Life Issues • National Health Insurance / Managed Care • Professional Liability Insurance • Tort Reform and Risk Reduction 	<p>Textbook: Chapter 11 (275 – 309), Chapter 18 (486 - 527), Chapter 21 (594 – 611), Chapter 22 (612 – 622), Chapter 5 (83 – 92)</p> <p>Additional Readings: King v. Burwell Summary</p> <p>Activities: Refer to the Module Content for detail and due dates for Practice Exercises, Discussions and Assignments, as applicable.</p>
<p>Module 8: 3/2 - 3/8</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FINAL EXAM</p>	<p>Textbook: None</p> <p>Additional Readings: Sample Final Exam Questions</p> <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice Exercise: None • Assignments: Submit Business Memo by Sunday at 11:55pm EST. / Students must access and take the Final Exam between Friday at noon and Sunday at 11:55pm EST. <p>Optional one-hour synchronous session on Friday (3/6) from 12-12:30pm EST. Will be recorded and available under Synchronous Session Access on the left-hand navigation.</p>

Attachment A
Proficiency Level Definitions

Proficiency Levels	Definitions
Beginner	Student demonstrates an understanding of common knowledge and terminology, as well as a limited ability to apply basic techniques, concepts, and skills.
Intermediate	Student applies and builds upon common knowledge gained, to include applying techniques, concepts, and skills to common and complex situations found in the health industry. Student articulates the implications of changes to processes, policies, and procedures.
Advanced	Student demonstrates mastery of techniques, concepts, and skills in various complex scenarios. Student consistently provides practical/relevant ideas and perspectives on policy, process or practice improvements.

Attachment B
Business Memo Instructions

You are responsible for submitting a **2.5 to 3-page business memo and a required, associated Appendix** analyzing a legal or compliance issue that impacts your hypothetical employer, Careless University Medical Center (CUMC). You must select from one of the following scenarios:

1. **More Money, More Problems** – CUMC has just hired you as their Compliance Manager. The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) evaluated the local population and believes it necessary to increase their Medicare patients and associated Medicare billing to bring in more revenue. He suggests that one way to encourage business is to make CUMC a research center on health issues for elderly adults. The CMO plans to team with a local physical therapy practice, Geriatric Gold, which his wife works as Chief Financial Officer for. For every patient that he refers to Geriatric Gold, CUMC will receive \$250 as they deem fit. The CMO asks you to write a memo on if his proposed plan is ok and in compliance with federal laws; and if not, which ones are implicated, why and what potential penalties could apply. He also asks you to draft a one-page appendix to the memo with a draft training module outline that could be disseminated to relevant employees.
2. **To Transfer or Not to Transfer, that is the Question** – CUMC has just hired you as their Emergency Department Manager. The Chief Operating Officer (COO) has recently evaluated the operating budget, and has noticed a good amount of uncompensated care being provided out of the Emergency Department. She devises a plan for all CUMC ambulance Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) to check each patient’s health insurance while in route to CUMC, and if it seems they will be unlikely to pay, to transfer them to one of three nearby Emergency Departments for care. Your Chief Compliance Officer catches wind of the plan and asks you to draft a memo to the CUMC Leadership Team informing them of any legal concerns this plan raises, including discussion of relevant law and associated penalties. She also asks you to draft a one-page appendix to the memo with a draft company policy on the matter that could be disseminated to relevant employees.

You must use the following section headers to organize your memo:

Background – lay out the context, purpose and issue to be resolved as if he or she just learned of the situation

State of the Law – discuss the specific provisions of the law or regulation that are applicable to the issue

Impact – discuss the impact on relevant stakeholders (*your organization, employees, patients, etc.*), including plausible repercussions under the law or regulation and otherwise

Recommendation – provide recommendation(s) for resolution (*how to address the issue and any remediation activities – policies, training, etc.*).

Conclusion – provide a brief summary and next steps

Appendix – include an Appendix as described in your selected scenario (*the Appendix does not count towards the page limit*)

IMPORTANT: Write the memo “in the shoes” of the position you hold and to the audience to whom you are writing. For example, you do not need to tell the Chief Medical Officer who your hospital is, or a Chief Information Officer what HIPAA generally is – they already know this. Be thoughtful and logical. I look for well-written, well thought out documents. Good spelling and grammar are like good manners - they make it easier to like what follows. Length is not the most important factor in judging your submission. A concise and well-written paper is far preferable to a longer one which rambles and repeats itself.

Format:

- Submit your assignment in Canvas in Microsoft Word. Save files in the following format:

“Last Name_First Name_HAP750_Assignment Name_Date”

- Utilize a memo format – no title page.
- Single space all your text, using 1” margins all round, and 12-point, Times New Roman font.
- Number your pages in the bottom right footer.
- Use the bolded headers as described above.
- Use **in text citations** and **footnotes** in APA format.

APA Citation Examples:

In text citation: (Ernst & Young, 2000, p. 14).

Example of source cited on reference page:

Healthcare Financial Management Association (U.S.), Ernst & Young. (2000). *Health care system reform: A provider perspective: survey results*. Healthcare Financial Management Association.

Grading Rubric:

Grading Area	Points
Format and Adherence to Instructions	10
Background	15
State of the Law	30
Impact	30
Recommendation	30
Conclusion	15
Appendix	20
Total	150