LEGAL AND TRANSACTIONAL ASPECTS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Robert J. Borghese
Wharton Office: Sixth Floor, Jon M. Huntsman Hall
Wharton Office Telephone: (215) 898-7689
Wharton Email: borghese@wharton.upenn.edu
Wharton Office Hours: After class and by appointment

Course Description: Legal and Transactional Aspects of Entrepreneurship is a practical and intensive course that examines the critical legal and transactional issues confronting start-up and emerging growth companies. The course provides perspective on how to use the law strategically to manage risk, deploy resources and maximize shareholder value. Topics include the enforceability of confidentiality, non-competition and other restrictive covenants in employment agreements, choice of business form including the legal, financial and tax advantages and disadvantages of general partnerships, limited partnerships, corporations and limited liability companies, tax and securities law aspects of raising capital, structuring venture capital and private equity transactions, mergers, acquisitions and other entrepreneurial deal structures, employment law, and intellectual property law including trade secrets, copyrights, patents and trademarks.

Course Materials:

Required Materials: Readings available on course Canvas.

Recommended Materials: Start-up & Emerging Companies: Planning, Financing, and Operating the Successful Business by G. Smith (Law Journal Seminars Press), and The Entrepreneur’s Guide to Business Law by Bagley and Dauchy (West) available at the Bookstore.

Exam Dates:

Midterm Exam: Monday, October 26, 2015 3:00 – 5:00 P.M.

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 16, 2015 3:00 – 5:00 P.M.

A Note on the Course: This course is designed to be practical and intensive. Extensive readings are the core of the course. Please do not register for the course unless you intend to be prepared for and actively involved (voluntarily or involuntarily) in each class.

Grading Policy: There will be one mid-term examination, and one final examination. Each examination will be equally weighted and each will be a closed-book, closed-note examination.

TOPICAL ASSIGNMENTS
Class 1  Introduction to Course Themes and Background on the U.S. Legal System
Lawyers, Litigation and Alternative Dispute Resolution
Readings: Background on the U.S. Legal System Materials, and Lawyers and Litigation Materials.

Class 2  Duties to Your Former Employer: Common Law Duties and Restrictive Covenants
Readings: Duties to Your Former Employer Materials.

Class 3  Choice of Business Form I: Sole Proprietorships, General Partnerships and Limited Partnerships
Smith Text, Chapter 1.

Class 4  Choice of Business Form II: Corporations and Limited Liability Companies
Smith Text, Chapter 2, §2.01-2.07.

Class 5  Tax Considerations for Start-ups: IRC Section 351- Tax-Free Organization, IRC Section 83 - The Service Provider Problem
Readings: Taxation I and II Materials.
Smith Text, Chapter 2, §2.08; Chapter 12.

Class 6  MID-TERM EXAMINATION (NO EXCEPTIONS) – DATE TO BE DETERMINED

Class 7  Thoughts on Choice of Business Form for Start-Up Companies
Thoughts on Equity Incentive Structures for Start-Up Companies
Creditors’ Rights and Duties
Smith Text Chapter 4

Class 8  Federal Securities Law; Venture Capital and Private Equity Financing Structures
Smith Text Chapter 4 and Chapter 8.

Class 9  Mergers, Acquisitions and Entrepreneurial Deal Structures
Readings: Mergers and Acquisitions Materials.
Class 10  Employment Law I: Independent Contractors v. Employees, and “At Will” v. Contract Employment

Readings: Employment Law Materials.

Class 11  Employment Law II: Wrongful Termination and Discrimination

Readings: Employment Law Materials.

Class 12 Intellectual Property Law


Smith Text, Chapter 15.

FINAL EXAMINATION: TIME AND LOCATION DETERMINED BY REGISTRAR.
(NO EXCEPTIONS)