

JD 209: Consumer Law—Online
The John Marshall Law School
Professor David E. Sorkin
Fall 2017

SYLLABUS

Overview

This course examines concerns particular to consumer transactions in formation, substance, and remedies. Topics include advertising; consumer sales practices and contracts; consumer credit practices; fraud; warranties; and product standards and safety. Regulatory, statutory, and common-law obligations and remedies (both state and federal) will be addressed, with an emphasis on federal consumer protection statutes.

Instructor

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Textbook

Douglas J. Whaley, *Problems and Materials on Consumer Law* (8th ed., Wolters Kluwer 2017) (ISBN 978-1-4548-8123-0, list price \$236)

Learning Outcomes

Students will gain an understanding of state and federal consumer protection concepts, statutes, and regulations. Students will recognize common problems involving consumer transactions; identify relevant statutes and regulations; and apply them to specific problems. Students will critically evaluate policy justifications for consumer law rules and predict likely effects of changes in the law. More generally, students will develop skills in locating, interpreting, and applying statutes and regulations.

Course Requirements and Grading

1. Overall Workload

The amount of instructional time and out-of-class work that corresponds to each hour of academic credit is governed by accreditation standards and federal regulations, and the law school has implemented policies consistent with these rules. The total amount of work expected for an online class should be comparable to the amount required for a traditional class. This is a 3-credit online course, and the semester is 16 weeks long including the reading and exam periods. Including both the interactive components of the class and work that you do on your own, you should expect to spend about 128 or more hours over the course of the semester, or an average of about 8 hours per week.

2. Readings, Problems, and Participation

Students are expected to complete the assigned reading material, including statutes and regulations referenced in the readings. The casebook is a problem-based text, and completion of the problems is essential to gaining an understanding of the material. Students will be asked to submit responses to many of the problems and to participate actively in online discussions of the problems and other aspects of the assigned readings. The extent and quality of such participation will be evaluated by the instructor, and will account for 30% of the course grade.

3. Topical Reports

Each student will be assigned to submit two brief reports to supplement the assigned readings. The content and length of these reports will vary depending upon the topic. The report may take the form of a traditional written report, or a PowerPoint or similar presentation, or (with the instructor's advance approval) some other format.

You may choose to present an overview of the topic, or you may prefer to focus on a particular aspect of the topic that is of interest to you. In either case, the report should *not* be a mere summary of the assigned readings. If you find that there are significant state statutes or regulations that are not adequately covered in the assigned readings, you may address them in the report. You may also choose to report on recent legal developments related to your topic, such as new federal legislation, U.S. Supreme Court or other major court decisions, etc.

The reports will account for 20% of the course grade.

4. Examinations

There will be a midterm examination and a final examination, accounting for 1% and 49% of the course grade respectively. Both will be open-book exams comprised of essay questions. They will be administered online, at a time and date of the student's choosing (within the date ranges stated below). The midterm will cover the first half of the course; the final will be comprehensive.

Outline of Topics and Reading Assignments

In addition to the casebook readings listed below, you will need to consult relevant statutes and regulations, most of which will be referenced in the casebook. You should also attempt to find relevant Illinois statutes, especially when considering problems that refer generally to applicable state law.

Module 1	Aug. 21–27	Introduction and Fraud	pp. 1–60
Module 2	Aug. 28–Sept. 3	Deceptive Practices	pp. 88–98, 110–160
Module 3	Sept. 4–10	Product Quality	pp. 219–247, 259–297
Module 4	Sept. 11–24	Payment and Consumers	pp. 299–384
Module 5	Sept. 25–Oct. 1	Qualifying for Credit	pp. 385–484
	Oct. 4–6	Midterm Examination	
Module 6	Oct. 9–Oct. 22	Truth in Lending Disclosure	pp. 485–613
Module 7	Oct. 23–29	Truth in Lending Remedies	pp. 615–661
Module 8	Oct. 30–Nov. 5	Mortgages	pp. 663–720
Module 9	Nov. 6–12	Leasing, Installment Sales, and Debt Collection	pp. 721–737, 745–814
Module 10	Nov. 13–19	Cyberspace	pp. 815–861
	Nov. 20–30	Review	
	Dec. 1–14	Final Examination	