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METHODS BEING USED CURRENTLY IN TEACHING BUSINESS LAW

A Project

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Business Education

Old Dominion University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Education

by

Timothy L. Coffey

August 1980

APPROVAL PAGE FOR GRADUATE PROJECT

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR DEGREE OF MASTER OF
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Timothy L. Coffey

Candidate

Business Education

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TITLE: Methods Being Used Currently in Teaching Business Law

APPROVED

Advisor


Professor of ECI 636

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Business law is a course dealing primarily with the application of legal principles and procedures to the personal business problems of the individual. Beyond his need for understanding legal rights and responsibilities as an individual, the citizen needs to understand legislation that affects him as a member of society at large. Every citizen has a need for a knowledge of business law in conducting his personal affairs. Indeed, it is seldom that a day passes that he does not make a personal contract.

Every time a person buys a newspaper, rides a bus, attends a movie, eats in a restaurant, buys a home, buys an article of clothing, or sends his wash to the laundry, he makes a contract which is governed by rules and regulations.¹

It also promotes the understanding of laws regulating the total economy which affect the individual as a producer-consumer in that economy. Business could not continue without the certainty that law will guarantee the contract, protect property rights, and regulate the conduct of the people. As law is an indispensable part of our economic system, so law must be a part of our economic education. Furthermore, the rules and regulations are designed for the protection of all citizens.

¹Hayden, Malsbary & Nolan, Principles and Problems of Business Education, 3rd. Edition, (Cincinnati, 1967), p. 181.

Doctor Daughtrey, of Old Dominion University of Norfolk, Virginia states that:

In the long run, our business law course should (1) teach respect for law, (2) enable the student to understand fully his obligations to deal fairly with individuals and organizations, (3) give the student in readily understood language the legal information necessary to conduct his daily affairs, (4) help the student adjust himself to his environment, (5) aid the student to protect his own interests, and (6) show the student that he will be held responsible for acts and that ignorance of the law protects no one.²

The course was originally included in the course curriculum as a means of acquainting young people with the principles of business management so that they could enter and succeed in the family business when they left school. Even today one of the purposes is to enable the students to develop knowledges and understandings to assist them in initiating, operating, and managing successfully small business enterprise. However, another important objective was added which suggested that the course should also serve, for those who intended to go on in a field of business. The specific objectives and aims of the course set forth by Fisk and McKee are:

1. To enable the student to acquire the technical vocabulary necessary to understand and use the law in his personal, civic, and business affairs.
2. To the extent of the student's ability, to enable him to acquire a knowledge of the legal principles, rules, and other content included in the course, and to relate them to his own affairs.
3. To enable the student to develop habits of thinking in legal terms and of recognizing the legal implications of situations as they arise.

²Daughtrey, A. S., Methods of Basic Business and Economic Education, Southwestern Publishing Company (Cincinnati, 1965), p. 588.

4. To enable the student to learn how to analyze legal problems and cases.
5. To enable the student to protect his own interests and those of his employer, to know what his legal rights are, and to enforce them to the extent possible.
6. To enable the student to observe the relation of law to other subjects and to apply the knowledge as needed.
7. To enable the student to realize and understand the complexity of the law and to know when professional legal aid is needed.
8. To enable the student to understand and appreciate the stabilizing effect of law in our society and especially in the world of business.
9. For a limited number of students, to provide guidance and some limited exploration into the law as a possible career.³

The content of business law is a part of that broad body of knowledge needed by the educated man. It is general education, because like other business subjects, it lived under the vocational banner so long that it has not yet made a place for itself in the liberal arts camp.

Business law, dealing as it does with the application of legal principles and procedures to each individual's personal business problems, make a definite contribution to general education. Thus, only teachers well trained in the basic business subjects and in the teaching of those subjects should be asked to teach the course. Business law is peculiar in that state laws vary considerably, and a principle may apply to one state or local community and not to another. This means that the teacher should have a thorough knowledge of the business law as it applies to the state in which he teaches. Business teacher

³McKee Fisk, "Outcomes in Developing General Education Values in Business Law," New Perspectives in Education for Business, National Business Education Yearbook (Washington, D.C.: National Business Education Association, 1963), pp. 335-337.

education institutions should make sure that prospective teachers understand the legal peculiarities of the states in which the institutions are located.

Law must be skillfully taught to be meaningful and rewarding to the students. Various methods are used in teaching the course and which ever procedure that the teacher desires to use should be determined by the make up of the student learners. An emmeration of procedures that may be used in the teaching-learning process follows;

1. Lecture - demonstration basis
2. Discussion - question basis
3. Vocabulary - concept, principle workbook drills
4. Problems - study basis
5. Case study basis
6. Debating routines
7. Committee study approach
8. Role playing
9. Mock-trial basis
10. Written assignment - research paper
11. Oral assignments
12. Displays, bulletin board, etc..
13. Community resources - guest speakers, media from various agencies
14. Simulations
15. Dramatizations from written script

As we can see from the above emmeration, many methods of presenting the material involving the course, business law, is present. The

methods of presentation will naturally differ among teachers; but the outcome should be one of common concern, and that is to ensure that students are exposed to a wealth of learning about business law.

Business law is required in many specialized business education curricula, particularly in the large schools. In others, it is an elective for business students. Most schools permit any student to elect the course, if his program allows time for it, but the growing demands on the college-preparatory student's time frequently rule out his electing a business subject. For this reason, the majority of students who take the course still come from the business education or general curricula. However, recent professional literature indicates a trend toward the promotion of business law for the academically talented student.

Business law, in the American high school, is generally offered on a one-semester basis. Some public high schools, however, do offer the course on an annual basis. Business law is offered in the public schools of Norfolk as an elective subject.

To justify the the offering of business law at the secondary level, several educational guidelines must be followed to assure the enrollees that a quality course will be taught. First, is the selection of instructional personnel for the courses offered. Public high schools seldom engage qualified lawyers to teach the business law course. In general, high school administrators select their business law teachers from those who are endorsed to teach the secondary basic business core in the vocational business education. These business teachers usually have no more than 3-6 semester hours. To compensate for this shallowness

of background training, every effort should be made to select teachers who have had several years of teaching experience in the basic business core area, who hold a fascination for teaching the subject content incorporated in high school law, and individual who has an established record for being skilled in handling a wide assortment of instructional media.

Statement of Problem

The purpose of this study was to gather information on the educational procedures and practices used by the Norfolk Public School System in developing, organizing, initiating, and administering its business law program. Specifically, answers were sought to the 25 questions included on the Information Form used for gathering the data needed for completing this research effort. (See Information Form in the Appendix).

A review of the Information Form will show that information was gathered, compiled and analyzed on the following broad general areas of concern:

1. The identification of the public high schools offering business law in the Norfolk System, grade placement, enrollments, and the justification of the placement patterns in the entire business education study curriculum.
2. A determination of how the decision is made to offer the course, who decides the grade placement, whether the course is offered as an independent study course, and if business law should be a part of the school's basic business study program.

3. A determination of the effort that is made to determine the extent of interest in the course, whether an effort is made to gain information on the student population that might wish to enroll in the course, whether the course is offered as a part of the basic business study program or as an independent course and if there are course prerequisites and other selection factors taken into consideration before one is permitted to take the course.

4. The factors that govern the selection of business law teachers in each of Norfolk's public schools, position taken concerning course relevancy, whether it is a general feeling that the course should be offered to everyone that desires to take the course, and the difficulty of mastering vocabulary terms by low ability students.

Assumptions

The course, secondary business law, has wide appeal among high school students, and a fairly large number of students take business law from each grade level for various reasons.

Many secondary business educators regard the study of business law as a major course for inclusion in the basic business study curriculums of our Tidewater, Virginia high schools. The following is an enumeration of some viewpoints held by teachers of business law that warrants its inclusion in the high schools of Norfolk:

1. The study of business law will give the student a better understanding of the need for rules or control in our economic society presently.

2. It will show the student that law is something that relates to everything he does or will do as a member of our economic society.

3. It will help to destroy some misconceptions the student may have harbored concerning the extent to which law affects his everyday life and the injustice or inapplicability of law as it relates to him.

4. It will give him an opportunity to learn certain law principles that he might not otherwise be exposed to in high school.

5. It will lead to the acquisition of extra-subject matter benefits such as personality growth, respect for law enforcement officials, and to the development of a code of ethics.

6. It will aid the student in overcoming his feelings of helplessness as to the enforcement of his legal rights.

As a result of these viewpoints, all schools in the area offer business law and plan to continue offering the course in the future.

The business law teacher's endorsement and support for the study is sufficiently great that they consider it worthy for inclusion as a required basic business course for our average and above average high school enrollees. Tidewater business law teachers further believe that the course lends to a student becoming more proficient in dealing with personal problems and business matters involving legal relationships.

The business law teachers provide for the inclusion of economic principles in the business law course. Since the high school business study program is the vehicle through which most of the legal training needs are satisfied, and since the complexity of our economic system demands a legal framework within which to operate, it seems very logical that an understanding of the economic system should undergird the study of business law. Furthermore, for one to be an economically

literate citizen one should understand the implications of various basic legal enactments regarding and governing the rights of all citizens.

The main purpose of business law on the secondary level is to lead the student to an understanding of the pervasiveness of law in the economic society of which he is already a part. The intent of our local secondary business law courses is to make the trainee conscious of his legal rights and the legal environment in which he lives. He must be led to know that the American economy must operate with, and could not operate without, two sets of rules: one setting forth how the system is to work, and the other prescribing what is to happen if, and when disputes should arise between members of the economy as to how the system is actually working.

Justification for the Study

1. Many critics of vocational business education question the validity of offering the subject, business law, at the secondary level. In secondary schools, law is usually an elective, often recommended in particular curriculums. It is open to any student who wishes to enroll in it. Because of the current interest in law and legal matters generally, many nonbusiness students take the course with other objectives in mind. Inasmuch as everyone has contact with and is affected by both business and the law, it can be argued that everyone would and should take business law.

2. To produce evidence which will show that business law is needed in Norfolk's public schools and that the enrollment in business law classes are relatively high.

3. To produce evidence which will show that the study of business law at the high school level generates knowledge that is of general value to all. The study of business law will give the student a better understanding of the need for rules and controls in our present day economic society. It will also help destroy some misconceptions and give him an opportunity to learn certain economic concepts to which he might not otherwise be exposed in high school.

4. To cite evidence that high school trainees, including the early school leavers and the graduates will benefit from the knowledge gained throughout the study of high school business law. The student will perhaps develop a code of ethics which will pervade throughout his lifetime, business and personal.

5. To seek data from the business law teachers that will justify the offering of business law in the five high schools of Norfolk's public school system.

6. To show the procedures which are used in the selection of business law teachers within individual departmental school organizations. This fact will show the necessity of being very selective for schools to have a successful business law program.

Definition of Terms

Terms which appear in this paper which may be unfamiliar or confusing to the reader will now be briefly defined.

- 1) High school business law--a course dealing primarily with the application of legal principles and procedures to the personal business problems of the individual. It also promotes the understanding of laws regulating the total economy which affect the individual as a producer-consumer in that economy.
- 2) Basic business study track--that part of the total educational program that every student should be made aware of at one time or another during the high school years. We may further define basic business as a program of common needs learning.
- 3) Elective courses--those courses which are available for any student to select randomly. A certain number of hours of participation are required in elective courses, but the student is not required to take a particular course for graduation.
- 4) Prescribed courses of study--those courses which lead to a specific type of diploma such as a general or vocational. Students are assisted in the selection of these courses by guidance counselors and the classroom teacher.
- 5) Secondary school--a school where students ranging from grades nine through twelve attend for training purposes.
- 6) Pre-vocational--that is, it leads certain students to pursue a business course sequence in college because of the interest which has been aroused in the high school.
- 7) Concept--an abstraction from observed events; it is a word that represents the similarities or common aspects of objectives or events that are otherwise quite different from one another. Concepts are vital in the understanding of business law.
- 8) Mean value--the sum of the evaluative ratings assigned to selected answers from respondents to provide a basis for determining the true results of the survey questionnaire form.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

The remainder of this study will consist of four additional chapters, A Review of the Literature, Procedures and Applications for Completing Study, Presentation and Analysis of Data and Summary and Recommendations.

Several tables will be presented in this paper in an effort to clarify and interpret the data produced by the investigation. In addition, a copy of the cover letter, the research request letter to Norfolk public school's research analyst, the letter of response from the analyst and the Information Form Pertaining to High School Business Law used in gathering data for this research effort.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Textbook authors, writers of journal articles and classroom teachers agree that business law is a vital and necessary part of the total secondary school educational program and that an organized business education program contributes to and expands the scope of the school curriculum. Business law enhances the unique characteristics of the individual student, assists the student in developing a realistic concept of himself and in understanding the rules and regulations that govern our society today.

Even though the importance of business law is wholeheartedly endorsed by concerned persons, there are differences in the methods of selecting business law teachers, determining grade placement, teaching patterns and whether business law should be a part of the school's basic business program or, offered as an independent special interest course...for all interested persons.

In reviewing the literature for this chapter, much general information relating to business law was found. It was noted that four areas of concern were discussed most frequently. These were purpose of business law, methods of teaching business law, what law does for the individual and who should teach business law. Information pertaining to these four areas of concern will now be discussed.

Purpose of Business Law

As stated earlier, business law is a course dealing with the application of legal principles and procedures to the personal business problems of the individual and its purpose is to ensure that each student understands what his rights and responsibilities are in the economic society which he lives. Law has to do with democracy. The existence of rule by law provides the assurance of expectation upon which our economy is based. No one, including the government, can encroach upon the weakest of our citizens who has access to the courts and an advocate to press his case. It is the law's protection that prevents democracy from degenerating into a dictatorship of the majorities.¹

The consumer must know not only his privileges in exercising freedom of contract; he must also know that the legal framework of the society that guarantees his freedom at the same time imposes an obligation upon the parties to the contract. Furthermore, the parties can be forced through courts of law, if necessary, to discharge their obligations.²

For better or for worse, we have become a law-oriented and litigation prone society. People are more conscious than ever of their rights. Individuals may grumble about high taxes and big government but, they are quick to seek new legislation to correct wrongs and maladjustments of modern life. Increasingly, individuals are quick to sue to secure redress of wrongs or the protection of their rights.³

¹Ethel Thayer, "Inspiring Business Law", Business Education Forum, May, 1970, p. 2.

²Daughtrey, A. S., Methods of Basic Business and Economic Education, 2nd. ed., (Cincinnati: Southwestern Publishing Company, 1974), p. 519.

³Fisk and Metus, Applied Business Law, (Cincinnati: Southwestern Publishing Company, 1977), p. iv.

Methods of Teaching Business Law

In all basic business classes there will necessarily be some use of the lecture method. But, this method has severe limitations, particularly for high school classes. The business law teacher, of course, must describe and explain; but this should be accompanied by visual aids, demonstrations, or chalkboard illustrations whenever possible. The students should be shown the relationship between our free-enterprise system and our legal system. Our laws support and reinforce the freedoms we enjoy, and developing an understanding of this positive side of the law will increase the student's respect for the entire legal structure.⁴

Business law on the high school level has always presented a number of problems to the teacher of that subject, regardless of whether the course is one or two semesters in length. One such problem is how to combat the student's fear that Business Law is an extremely difficult course—a fear which, unfortunately, is quite often produced, or at least compounded, by the course description contained in the handbook used for student counseling.⁵

No doubt the most obvious, most important, but least considered device is the teacher himself. It is his vigor and intelligence, his intense interest in and enthusiasm for his subject which is transmitted to the students and which creates the most lasting impression on them. Nor should we overlook his justice, humor, and fairplay in impartially

⁴Daughtrey, A. S., Methods of Basic Business and Economic Education, 2nd. ed., (Cincinnati: Southwestern Publishing Company, 1974), p. 524.

⁵Fiala, Ralph J., How to Teach Business Law, (Maine: J. Weston Walch, Publisher), 1965, p. 9.

dealing with the students. These things, in addition to being stimulators of student interest, are often emulated by the students to the benefit of themselves and the society in which they interact.⁵

What Law Does for the Individual

As stated earlier, the main purpose of business law is to lead the student to an understanding of the pervasiveness of law in the economic society of which he is already a part. He must be led to know that the American economy must operate with, and could not operate without two sets of rules; one setting forth how the system is to work, and the other prescribing what is to happen if and when a dispute should arise between members of the economy as to how the system is actually working. The rules say that a person must live up to his business agreements, provided they contain the required elements of contract essentials. When he does not do so, a dispute will ensue; this dispute will have to be resolved and in order to understand the best course of action to take the student needs to be aware of legal misconceptions, principles vs. enforcement, economic concepts and other student benefits. Of course, within each of these four areas lie additional and more specific individual needs than those now to be briefly discussed.

Legal Misconceptions. The student might conceive of business law as relating only to the operation of business enterprises, the purchase of a home, the making of a will, or other large and important events. This conception should be altered to one that recognizes how vital and omnipresent a force is in modern life--no one is beyond its influence and effect.

⁵Ibid., p. 11.

The student should be led to see that he is involved with essential legal principles every time he buys a paperback or a candy bar, has a car greased, rides on a bus, leaves his coat with a checkroom clerk, or eats a meal in a restaurant; that the same rules which apply to the purchase of a \$6,000 automobile apply equally to the purchase of a one-cent piece of bubble gum.⁶

Principles vs. Enforcement. A further student difficulty which must be overcome is the seemingly unbridgeable gulf in his mind between legal principles and their enforcement. One often hears a student complain, "How can you sue for a breach of contract when you can't even prove that you made one?" Or, "How can I take back this radio just because I'm a minor? They'll never give my money back, and I don't see how I could make them.

The first of these questions will give the teacher an opportunity to discuss various aspects of evidence: witnesses, cancelled checks, sales slips, a series of letters and other communications. The second question leads to an explanation of the function of the small claims courts. Both questions together make for a bridging of the gulf mentioned above⁷

Economic Concepts. Law has to do with freedom in our economic society. In the sense that if we did everything right we would not need a law against a nonexistent wrong, however in the sense that a populous society needs order to protect individual rights, law is essential. Perhaps the most vital issue in modern times is the relation of law to liberty. It is not enough that the law should merely confer security upon citizens and their property when it could be used as a means of giving effect to basic freedoms. It

⁶Ibid., pp. 3-4.

⁷Ibid., pp. 4-5.

seems to be the destiny of individual freedom at the present time to be defended mainly by economists rather than by political scientists.... In fact, freedom is not only an economic or political concept, but also, and probably above all, a legal concept, as it necessarily involves a whole complex of legal consequences.⁸

Other Student Benefits. In addition to all of these considerations, relating primarily to the content of Business Law, we would be remiss if we did not mention some more peripheral benefits accruing to the student as a result of his taking the law course. A prime example of such a benefit is the personality growth that can take place as a result of role-playing in skits and trials.

Moreover, the study of law many times creates in the student a new and a reasoned respect for law enforcement agents and officials. In some cases, this new respect leads to a consideration of law enforcement as a possible goal for the student's life work.

In many cases, the business law student comes to business law without any ethics—almost completely amoral; or if he comes with some, they are based on early-childhood, unreasoned set of "thou shalt's" and "thou shalt not's." This is not meant to suggest that religiously motivated ethics are not good and are to be replaced by something secular; rather, they are to be augmented if they are held at all. Thus, a person who believes in Biblical commandments should be able to build on that belief an additional set of legal commandments.⁹

⁸Thayer, Ethel, "Inspiring Business Law", Business Education Forum, May, 1970, p. 2.

⁹Fiala, Ralph J., How to Teach Business Law, (Maine: J. Weston Walch, Publisher, 1965), p. 7.

Who Should Teach Business Law

Business law, dealing as it does with the application of legal principles and procedures to each individual's personal business problems, makes a definite contribution to general education. Thus only teachers well trained in the basic business subjects and in the teaching of those subjects should be asked to teach the course.¹⁰

A person who is a competent instructor can easily learn to teach business law. All good teachers share common professional characteristics and a non-lawyer teacher need only learn the subject matter to do an equally effective job.¹¹

Summary

In summary, business law is a course dealing primarily with principles, rules and regulations designed to help support and meet the needs of every individual in our economic society. The course also is designed to help with individual needs concerning personal matters of all kinds.

The course is also one which requires concentrated effort by all concerned in order to indulge themselves into the content for reaping satisfying results. This in turn leads to the understanding of reasons for having laws and regulations. The concentration also leads to the much needed personality growth by all involved persons.

Business law is wholeheartedly endorsed by concerned persons and the overall goals and objectives are very similar. The course is needed by students to help see and understand the need for a well regulated system of government and governing of the system wherein we all live.

¹⁰ Nolan, Haydn, Malsbary, Principles and Problems of Business Education, (Cincinnati: Southwestern Publishing Company, 1967), p. 184.

¹¹ William Mazel, "Laymen Teaching Business Law", The Journal of Business Education, May, 1975, p. 318.

CHAPTER 3

PROCEDURES AND APPLICATIONS FOR COMPLETING STUDY

The primary purpose of this study is to determine whether the business law teachers in the City of Norfolk, Virginia high schools differ in their opinions related to the justification for teaching business law at the high school level and methods of teaching the course. Business law teachers in the Norfolk Public Schools will be asked to complete the Information Form pertaining to many facets of our high school business law curriculum.

The secondary school business law teachers will indicate their conceptions, beliefs and answers through completing the Information Form Pertaining to High School Business Law. The respondents will use their previous experiences and knowledges gained from teaching in their respective school as resource information for the completion of the information form used in this study.

The information gathered will identify the high schools offering business law in the Norfolk System, grade placements, enrollment, placement patterns in the business education curriculum, determinations of who decides grade placement and if an effort is made to predetermine the extent of student interest in the course before entry. The information will also point out the factors that govern the selection of business law teachers in each of the Norfolk Public Schools and the position taken concerning relevancy of the course.

Information will also show whether there is a general feeling that the course should be offered to everyone that desires to take the course and

whether it is felt that the vocabulary terms found in most state adopted textbooks are too difficult for the low ability student to master.

Selection of the Instrument

To obtain data for completing this research effort an Information Form, or questionnaire, was prepared and mailed to those high school teachers in the Norfolk Public Schools who had teaching assignments in the basic business course, business law, during the Spring semester, 1980.

Since it was not feasible to interview personally all teachers of business law in the Norfolk Public Schools the Information Form, the vehicle which was used, allowed for responses to certain basic questions and was also considered the best instrument to gather data.

The Information Form used for gathering data for completing this study appears in Appendix B. The form was prepared under the supervision of my study directors Dr. H. Q. Webb, Professor of Business Education and Office Administration, School of Business, Old Dominion University and Dr. John Ritz, School of Education, Old Dominion University.

An analysis and review of the Information Form will reveal the nature and kinds of information sought through this research effort. Specifically, the Information Form will yield information relating to the methods being used currently in teaching business law, justifications for teaching the course, its relevancy in the Norfolk Public Schools, procedures used in selecting teachers for the course, whether or not there is a general feeling that the course should be offered to everyone that desires to take it and if the vocabulary terms found in most state adopted textbooks are too difficult for low ability students..

Selection of the Sample

An Information Form with a cover letter was sent to the five business law teachers in Norfolk Virginia's public school system. The Information Form mailed to these teachers contained twenty-five questions. All respondents were asked to record their responses by checking the correct space according to their judgment and writing answers where required on the information form. The form also provided space for comments.

It was the intent of the investigator to permit members of the Norfolk Public School's business law program to express opinions that would be utilized in determining the current methods being used in teaching business law and individual feelings concerning the program. The investigator felt that each individual used in the survey was knowledgeable and concerned with the current status of the program in Norfolk's public schools and would benefit from the results of the survey.

Analysis of Respondents

All five business law teachers employed in the five zoned high schools, Granby, Lake Taylor, Maury, Norview and Washington were requested to complete the Information Form Pertaining to High School Business Law. This represents one hundred percent of the teachers that taught business law in the Norfolk public schools during the Spring semester, 1980.

Conducting the Research

The Information Form prepared under the direction of my advisors, along with a cover letter explaining the purpose of this study was mailed or delivered in June to the business law teachers, after permission was granted to survey the teachers by Dr. Anna G. Dodson, Education Division Director of

Research, Testing and Statistics for Norfolk's public schools. A copy of this letter can be bound in Appendix B. A copy of the Information Form used in conducting the study which was shown on preceding pages can also be found in Appendix B.

From the five requests from the business law teachers, five replies were received. They represented, as previously stated, one hundred percent of the population surveyed.

Treatment of Data

A nominal scale was used for tabulating the results from the information forms. Following receipt of the forms, all data was tabulated by a hand scoring method. The response to the items was not cited as right or wrong, but showed status on prevailing conditions currently. This data was analyzed quantitatively and reported in table form. The comments were presented in summarized form. The question appearing on the form that did not allow for checking answers was also presented in summarized form. The basis of validity for the entire study was dependent upon the judgment of the business law teachers involved.

The following chapter presents the results of the information forms received from the participants. Information pertaining to the purpose of each question can be found in an emmerated listing entitled School and Administrative Policy Governing Course in Appendix A.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The main purpose of this investigation was to determine whether the business law teachers in the City of Norfolk, Virginia high schools differ in their opinions related to to the justification for teaching business law at the high school level and methods of teaching the course. The responses given on information forms received from teachers of the Norfolk public schools indicate differences in some aspects.

This chapter analyzes the data obtained from the business law teachers in Norfolk's public school system. The analysis will include each question that was listed on the information form. The respondents represent one hundred percent of the teachers of business law in Norfolk's public schools during the Spring semester, 1980.

The first two questions were listed to determine if business law was offered in all of Norfolk's public schools during the 1979-1980 school year and the grade levels being offered the course. Table 1 shows the status of these schools during this period.

Table 1

Norfolk High Schools Offering Business Law
and
Grade Levels of Placement

Identification of Schools	Offered	Not Offered	Grade Levels of Placement
Granby	X		11 through 12
Lake Taylor	X		9 through 12
Maury	X		9 through 12
Norview	X		9 through 12
Washington	X		9 through 12

From the respondents of the Norfolk public schools it was determined that 100 percent of the schools offer business law. It was also determined that all schools, with the exception of one, offer the course at grade levels nine through twelve. One school offers the course only at grade levels eleven and twelve.

Questions three and four indicated that all schools offer the course, business law, as a part of the school's basic business study program and that the course is not offered as a special interest course to accommodate interested students. Comments on the information forms indicated that the course is not a required subject for the business program and is not recognized as basic business in the state VERS Reporting System.

Table 2 shows the 1980 yearly enrollments in business law classes in Norfolk's public high schools, how the decision is made to offer the course and who determines the grade placement for the course.

Table 2

Average Enrollment, Course Offering and Grade Placement Determination

Identification of Schools	*Decision to Offer Course Made by	** Grade Placement Determination	Total Enrollments School Year 1980
Granby	1	4	100+
Lake Taylor	1-2-3	5	80
Maury	1-2-3	5	72
Norview	1-2-3	5	100
Washington	1-2-3	5	80

*1 Student Interest

2 Teachers

3 Teachers and Administrators

** 4 Teachers

5 Teachers and Administrators

The table shows that 80 percent of the school's decision to offer the course, Business Law, is made through a concentrated effort of student interest, teachers and teachers and administrators. Grade placement is determined by teachers and administrators at 80 percent of the schools. One school allows student interest only to be the deciding factor in offering the course and in the same school teachers decide the grade placement.

The total enrollment for the schools range from 72 to slightly more than 100 students per year for each class with all schools having multiple sections of business law.

Questions 8 and 9, concerning who or what factors determine whether the course will be offered as a part of the school's basic business study program and whether or not the course is offered as an independent study course, respondents stated that student interest and business educators make this determination and the course is not offered as an independent study course.

Question 10 dealt with whether business law should be a required part of the school's basic business curriculum. Sixty percent of the respondents felt that it should be and forty percent felt that it should not be.

Table 3 shows whether or not an effort is made to predetermine the extent of student interest in high school business law and if an effort is made to predetermine the number of student population that might wish to enroll in the course.

The table shows that 80 percent of the schools put forth no effort to predetermine student interest in the business law course and 80 percent of the schools put forth an effort to predetermine the number of the student population that might wish to enroll in the course.

Table 3
Predetermination of
Student Interest and Student Population

Identification of School	Student Interest	Student Population
Granby	Yes	Yes
Lake Taylor	No	Yes
Maury	No	Yes
Norview	No	No
Washington	No	Yes

Questions number 13 and 14 shows that the communication of information concerning the course, Business Law, is communicated to interested student groups mainly through business education teachers and guidance counselors. One hundred percent of the respondents felt that both were of equal importance in transmitting information to students. Other methods of communication given by the respondents were:

1. Word of mouth of students who have taken a phase of law.
2. Mostly by informal student communications between other students.

The respondents indicated that none of their schools offer business law as an independent study course.

Table 4 shows data concerning prerequisites and other selection factors that govern whether one will be permitted to study business law. The respondents indicated that no prerequisites are required for entry into the class. This table also shows the respondents' feeling concerning general educational values, those knowledges and skills needed by everyone, which should be emphasized in a high school business law course.

Table 4
High School Course Prerequisites
and
General Educational Values

Identification of Schools	Course Prerequisites	Economic Concepts	Legal Misconceptions	Contracts	Control in Business	Torts and Crimes
Granby	None	X	X	X	X	X
Lake Taylor	None	X	X	X	X	X
Maury	None		X	X		X
Norview	None		X	X	X	X
Washington	None	X	X	X	X	X

A breakdown of this information shows that 100 percent of the respondents feel that legal misconceptions, contracts and torts and crimes are very important for general educational values. Sixty percent of the respondents feel that economic concepts are important and 80 percent feel that control in business should be included.

The comments by the respondents on the information forms showed that in addition to the general educational needs shown in table 4 there should be:

1. System of Legal Jurisprudence
2. Law of Sales
3. Ownership - Private and Real Property
4. Negotiable Instruments

An analysis of table 5 shows that teaching assignments are made by department heads at all schools and only one school allows for a variety of factors to govern the selection of the school's business law teacher. The department chairman selected each of the respondents for teaching the course at each school.

The respondents were asked if they would be pleased if selected to teach multiple sections of business law and one hundred percent said yes to the question.

Table 5
Business Law Teacher Selection Factors

Identification of Schools	Background Preparation	Teacher Interest	Teaching Experience	Assigned by Department Head
Granby				X
Lake Taylor	X			X
Maury				X
Norview	X	X	X	X
Washington				X

The respondents were asked to cite reasons for wishing to teach business law and a variety of statements were given. The following statements indicate the respondents' reasons:

1. Students need to know the framework within which the system of law operates.
2. Students need to understand the "fine print" in contracts.
3. Students need to be aware of concepts and differentiation between crimes and torts.
4. Law classes afford an excellent opportunity to reinforce concepts of good citizenship and moral ethics.
5. Students are interested in the course.
6. Very pertinent to student's future.
7. Citizenship training.
8. Consumer protection.
9. General knowledge of Basic Law.
10. "My husband is an attorney".

Table 6 shows that 80 percent of the respondents feel that the relevancy of business law at the high school level is high and 20 percent feel that it is average. The vocabulary contained in most state adopted business law textbooks are felt to be too difficult by 60 percent of the respondents. Eighty percent of the respondents feel that the course, business law should be offered to everyone that desires to take the course and only 60 percent feel that the course should be offered to low ability students.

Table 6

Relevancy of Business Law
Vocabulary Difficulty and Offerings

Identification of School	Relevancy	Vocabulary Too Difficult	Offered to Everyone	Offered to Low Ability Students
Granby	High	Yes	No	No
Lake Taylor	High	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mauzy	Average	No	Yes	Yes
Norview	High	Yes	Yes	No
Washington	High	No	Yes	Yes

Summary

This chapter reported the results of the Information Form circulated to the five Norfolk Public Schools in Norfolk, Virginia. The respondents were the five teachers of the course, Business Law, in the high schools, Granby, Lake Taylor, Mauzy, Norview and Washington. The data extracted from the Information Form was analyzed and presented in paragraph and tabular form.

The respondents indicated that business law is offered at all schools in the Norfolk public school system and is generally offered at grade levels nine through twelve. Decisions to offer the course are generally made by teachers and administrators with the grade placement determination being made by teachers and administrators most often. The total yearly enrollment ranges from 72 to 100 over a four phase frame which is a good average for an elective class.

The Information Form completed by the respondents indicated that the five teachers are in agreement at least fifty percent or better in all cases concerning the varying areas of business law concern.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The problem presented in this study was to determine whether the business law teachers in the City of Norfolk, Virginia high schools differ in their opinions related to the justification for teaching business law at the high school level and methods of teaching the course. The problem also concerned itself with the feelings of the respondents that teach the course, Business Law, and the selection factors that are used in determining who will teach the course. This study was concerned with the methods used to interest the students in taking the course and the number of students actually taking the course over a certain time frame.

A review of the literature suggests the following points. In all basic business classes there will be various methods used to get the message to students concerning the relationships between them and the economic system wherein we all operate. One's competence or incompetence has a direct bearing on other members of the economic society. The literature also revealed that business law is wholeheartedly endorsed by concerned persons and the overall goals and objectives are very similar and that a person who is a competent instructor can easily learn to teach business law because all good teachers share common professional characteristics and can do an equally effective job.

An Information Form was designed under the direction and control of advisors and circulated to the Norfolk, Virginia public high schools in order to ascertain their opinions and feelings about the characteristics

of business law. The study, which was formulated as a descriptive survey, represented the high schools of Norfolk, Virginia, which are, Granby, Lake Taylor, Maury, Norview and Washington.

The Information Forms were hand tabulated and presented in tabular and paragraph form. Chapter 4 gives a presentation of this data.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the study revealed that:

1. All of Norfolk's public high schools offer the course, business law.
2. Four out of the five high schools offer business law at grade levels nine through twelve with the fifth school offering the course at grade levels eleven and twelve.
3. The course is offered as a part of the school's basic business curriculum at all schools and is not offered independently as a special interest course to accommodate interested students.
4. The average yearly enrollment for each class, which consists of four phases, range from 72 to 100+ students for each school.
5. The determination for grade placement is made by teachers and administrators, student interest and business educators determine whether the course will be offered as a part of the school's basic business study program.
6. Sixty percent of the respondents felt that business law should be a required part of the school's curriculum.
7. Very little effort is made to predetermine the extent of student interest in the course, but eighty percent of the schools put forth an effort to determine the number of student population that might wish to enroll in the course.
8. The respondents felt that business law should not be offered to only students that desire to follow the business curriculum.
9. There are no course prerequisites and other selection factors that determine whether one will be permitted to study business law.

10. The respondents felt that economic concepts, legal misconceptions, contracts, torts and crimes, system of legal jurisprudence, law of sales, ownership-personal and real property and negotiable instruments were the most important knowledges and skills to be emphasized in a high school business law course.
11. The business law teaching assignment in all of Norfolk's high schools are made by the department chairman, all teachers were selected by their department chairman and would be pleased with teaching multiple sections of business law.
12. Respondents considered the relevancy of general educational values to be very high to a tone of eighty percent and twenty percent felt it to be average.
13. It is a general feeling that business law should be offered to everyone that desires to take the course.
14. Sixty percent of the respondents felt that business law should be offered to low ability students and sixty percent felt that the vocabulary terms in most of the state adopted textbooks are too difficult for the low ability students to master.

Recommendations

1. All of Norfolk's public schools should continue to offer business law.
2. Some thought should be given concerning the feasibility of offering business law to ninth grade students.
3. Make business law a required part of the school's basic business curriculum.
4. Put forth greater effort to predetermine the extent of student interest in the course.
5. Continue to offer business law to everyone that desires to take the course.
6. Allow teachers to have input in being selected to teach business law.
7. A committee of business law teachers should be formed to determine why the vocabulary terms are too difficult for low ability students to master and develop a plan to rectify this problem.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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A P P E N D I X A

633 West 34th Street
Norfolk, VA 23508
June 26, 1980

Dr. Sam Ray, Deputy Superintendent
Norfolk Public Schools
800 East City Hall Avenue
P.O. Box 1357 Room 1206
Norfolk, VA 23501

Dr. Ray:

I am a teacher at Lake Taylor High School in the Business Education Department and working this summer toward a Masters degree at Old Dominion University.

The purpose of my study is to determine whether the business law teachers in the City of Norfolk, Virginia high schools differ in their opinions related to the justifications for teaching business law at the high school level.

I respectfully request that permission be granted to me for the solicitation of information from the business teachers in the Norfolk city schools. This information will be used to complete my study.

I am enclosing an enumerated listing showing the purpose of this study and the information form that will be used in seeking information pertaining to my study.

Sincerely,

Timothy L. Coffey, Teacher

Enclosures:

Information Form Pertaining to Business Law
An enumerated listing showing the purpose of each question



Norfolk Public Schools

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, POST OFFICE BOX 1357
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA 23501

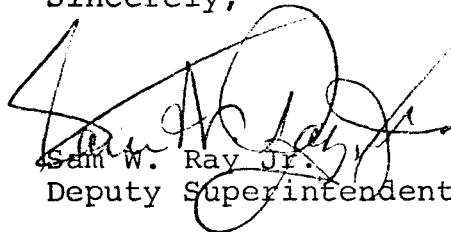
June 27, 1980

Mr. Timothy L. Coffey
633 West 34th Street
Norfolk VA 23508

Dear Mr. Coffey:

I have forwarded your letter of June 26, 1980, to Dr. Anna G. Dodson, Director of Research, Testing and Statistics. She will review your questionnaire and communicate with you further about your request. Dr. Dodson has this responsibility on behalf of the Superintendent, Dr. Albert L. Ayars.

Sincerely,



Sam W. Ray Jr.
Deputy Superintendent

Copy: Dr. Anna G. Dodson

633 West 34th Street
Norfolk, VA 23508
July 9, 1980

Dr. Anna G. Dodson
Norfolk Public Schools
800 East City Hall Avenue
P.O. Box 1357
Norfolk, VA 23501

Dr. Dodson:

A revised copy of the form being used by me for a research study toward obtaining a degree from Old Dominion University, which is entitled "School and Administrative Policy Governing Course" is enclosed.

The only correction made is in the B section, number 10.

Thank you for allowing me to continue work toward a degree in this area.

Sincerely,

Timothy L. Coffey

Enclosure



Norfolk Public Schools

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, POST OFFICE BOX 1357
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA 23501

July 10, 1980

Mr. Timothy L. Coffey
633 West 34th Street
Norfolk, VA 23508

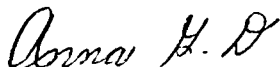
Dear Mr. Coffey:

- Your request to conduct a study to determine whether the business law teachers in Norfolk Public Schools differ in their opinions related to the justification for teaching business law at the high school level is granted.

It is my understanding that you will solicit support from the five teachers who are to be involved in your study. A copy of information that will be mailed to each teacher will be on file in my office.

Please send me a copy of the results for my file. Best wishes to you in this endeavor.

Sincerely,



Anna G. Dodson, Ed. D.
Director
Research, Testing & Statistics

omb

633 West 34th Street
Norfolk, VA 23508
June 26, 1980

I am working toward a Masters degree at Old Dominion University this summer. I need your help!

I will appreciate it very much if you will complete the enclosed information form. This information is needed for the completion of my study.

The purpose of my study is to determine whether the business law teachers in our city differ greatly in our opinions related to the justifications for teaching business law at the high school level.

Have a nice summer and I will be looking forward to seeing you at the beginning of our next tour of duty.

Sincerely,

Timothy L. Coffey

Enclosure

SCHOOL AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY GOVERNING COURSE

A. General Information

1. The identification of the senior high schools in the Norfolk Public School System that offer the business course, Business Law.
2. A determination and identification of the grade level(s) at which the course is offered in Norfolk's public schools.
3. Whether the course is offered as a part of the school's basic business study program.
4. Or, whether the subject is offered independently as a special interest course to accommodate interested student groups.
5. A determination of the average enrollment in business law classes in the Norfolk Public Schools.

B. Curriculum and Placement Within the Schools

6. A determination of how the decision is made to offer the business law course.
7. A determination of the person(s) that decides the grade placement for the course.
8. How a determination is made to offer the course and the factors that contribute to making the decision.
9. Whether the course is offered as an independent study course and how this determination is made.
10. Whether it is a general feeling that business law should be a required part of the school's basic business study program.

C. Students

11. A determination of the effort that is made to predetermine the extent of interest in the study of business law.
12. And, whether an effort is made to gain information on the student population that might wish to enroll in the course.
13. Whether the course, Business Law, is offered as a part of the school's basic business study program, and how this information is communicated to the interested student groups.

14. Whether the course, Business Law, is offered as an independent course and how this information is communicated to the interested student groups.
15. Whether the course should be offered to only those students that desire to follow the business curriculum.
16. A determination of the course prerequisites and other selection factors that are taken into consideration before one is permitted to study business law.
17. A determination of the general educational values that should be emphasized in a high school business law course.

D. Teacher

18. A determination of the factors that govern the selection of the business law teacher(s) at each school.
19. Whether each teacher has been selected by the department chairman.
20. Whether the teacher is satisfied with teaching multiple sections of business law.
21. A determination of the reasons for wishing to teach business law.
22. The position that is taken concerning the relevancy of general educational values that may be received through taking business law.
23. Whether it is a general feeling that business law should be offered in the schools of Norfolk to everyone that desires to take the course.
24. Whether business law should be taken by low ability students.
25. Whether the vocabulary terms found in most of the state adopted textbooks are found to be too difficult for the low ability student to master.

APPENDIX B

INFORMATION FORM PERTAINING TO HIGH SCHOOL
BUSINESS LAW

1. Is Business Law offered in your school?..... Yes _____ No _____
2. At what grade level(s) is the course offered at your school?
 - A. 9th _____
 - B. 10th _____
 - C. 11th _____
 - D. 12th _____
 - E. All of these _____
3. Is the course offered as a part of your school's basic business program?..... Yes _____ No _____
 - A. If no, what is your justification? _____

4. Or, is the course offered independently as a special interest course to accommodate interested students?.....Yes _____ No _____
5. What is the average enrollment in business law classes in your school?
 - A. 10 - 14 _____
 - B. 15 - 19 _____
 - C. 20 - 24 _____
 - D. 25 or more _____
6. How is the decision to offer the course, Business Law, determined?
 - A. By student interest _____
 - B. By teachers _____
 - C. By teachers and administrators _____
 - D. By all of the above _____
 - E. Other combinations or reasons _____

7. Who determines the grade placement for the course?

- A. Teachers _____
- B. Teachers and administrators _____
- C. No one _____
- D. Do not know _____
- E. Other combinations _____

8. Who or what factors determine whether the course will be offered as a part of the school's basic business study program?

- A. Student interest _____
- B. The need for economic literacy _____
- C. Business educators _____
- D. Others _____

9. If the course is offered as an independent study course, who makes this determination?

- A. Teachers _____
- B. Administrators _____
- C. Teachers and administrators _____
- D. Course not offered as an independent study course _____
- E. Others _____

10. Should business law be a required part of the school's curriculum?

..... Yes _____ No _____

11. Is an effort made to predetermine the extent of student interest in the study of high school business law? Yes _____ No _____

12. Is an effort made to predetermine the number of student population that might wish to enroll in the course, business law?.....Yes _____ No _____

13. If the course business law is offered as a part of the school's basic business study program, how is this information communicated to the interested student groups?

- A. Guidance counselors _____
- B. Business education teachers _____
- C. Assembly programs _____
- D. Other methods _____

14. If the course business law is offered as an independent study course, how is this information communicated to the interested student groups?

- A. Guidance counselors _____
- B. Business education teachers _____
- C. Assembly programs _____
- D. Not offered _____
- E. Other methods _____

15. Should business law be offered to only students that desire to follow the business curriculum?.....Yes _____ No _____

16. What course prerequisites and other selection factors determine whether one will be permitted to study business law?

- A. High Academic achievement level _____
- B. Average Academic achievement level _____
- C. No prerequisites _____
- D. Others _____

17. What general educational values, those knowledges and skills needed by everyone, should be emphasized in a high school business law course?

- A. Economic concepts..... _____
- B. Legal misconceptions _____
- C. Contracts _____

- D. Control in business _____
- E. Torts and crimes _____
- F. Other combinations _____
-
18. What selection factors govern the selection of the business law teacher/teachers at your school?
- A. Background preparation _____
- B. Interest teacher has in teaching the course..... _____
- C. Teaching experience of the teacher selected for teaching the course _____
- D. Teaching assignment made by department head..... _____
19. Have you been selected by your department chairman to teach business law?.....Yes _____ No _____
20. If you were selected to teach multiple sections of high school business law would you be pleased with the appointment?...Yes _____ No _____
21. What are some of your reasons for wishing to teach high school business law?
- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
22. Which position do you take concerning the relevancy of general educational values that may be received through taking business law?
- A. High _____
- B. Average _____
- C. Low _____
23. Do you feel that business law should be offered in the schools of Norfolk to everyone that desires to take the course?..... Yes _____ No _____
24. Should business law be taken by low ability students?.....Yes _____ No _____
25. Do you believe that the vocabulary terms found in most of the state adopted business law textbooks are too difficult for the low ability students to master?.....Yes _____ No _____