

Employment Law

Elon University School of Law
Winter 2026
Room 107
Mondays & Wednesdays, 10:30 am–12:15 pm
emfink.net/EmploymentLaw

Professor

Eric M. Fink
efink@elon.edu
336.279.9334
Office Hours: calendly.com/emfink/

Description

This course surveys federal and state laws governing employment, in both the individual and organized labor settings. Topics to be covered include establishing an employment relationship; recruitment & hiring; the scope and limits of supervisory control; confidentiality & competition; wages & hours; employee health & safety; and termination of employment.

After completing the course, you should be able to recognize and diagnose legal issues arising in the employment context, analyze those issues under the applicable law, and help clients avoid legal problems or pursue remedies when they arise. Simulation problems, including in-class discussion and take-home assignments, provide an opportunity to develop practical skills for representing clients in employment matters.

Course Materials

Required

Employment Law: An Open-Source Casebook (version 4.1, December 2025). Available on the course website: emfink.net/EmploymentLaw.

Rachel Arnow-Richman & Nantiya Ruan, Developing Professional Skills: Workplace Law (West Academic 2017) (“Workbook”).

Suggested

Richard A. Bales, Jeffrey M. Hirsch, & Paul M. Secunda, Understanding Employment Law (4th. ed. Carolina Academic Press 2025)

Policies

Grading

Your final grade for this course will be based on three take-home problem assignments (25% each) and participation in class discussions (25%). There will be no final exam.

The take-home problem assignments are due before class on the dates indicated in the Schedule & Assignments section of the syllabus. You should submit each assignment to me by email *no later than 10:00am on the due date*. I will provide further information about these assignments in class.

Attendance

Elon Law School has adopted the following attendance policy for all courses:

The Law School administers a policy that a student maintain regular and punctual class attendance in all courses in which the student is registered, including externships, clinical courses, or simulation courses. Faculty members will give students written notice of their attendance policies before or during the first week of class. These policies may include, but are not limited to: treating late arrivals, early departures, and/or lack of preparation as absences imposing grade or point reductions for absences, including assigning a failing grade or involuntarily withdrawing a student from the class and any other policies that a professor deems appropriate to create a rigorous and professional classroom environment.

In case of illness or emergency, students may contact the Office of Student and Professional Life, which will then notify the student's instructors. A student may notify the faculty member directly of a planned absence and should refer to individual faculty members regarding any policy that may apply. In the case of prolonged illness or incapacity, the student should contact the [Office of Student Life](#).

You should let me know (in advance if feasible) if you are unable to attend class, will arrive late, or must leave early. I do not require an explanation of the reason, nor do I require a doctor's note or other documentation.

Disability Accommodations

For disability accommodation requests, contact the [Office of Academic Accommodations and Accessibility](#).

Honor Code

The Law School [honor code](#) applies to all activities related to your law school study, including class meetings, assignments, and examinations.

Schedule & Assignments

(Note: This class will not meet on Monday, January 19th)

I. Foundations of Employment Law

January 5 & 7

- Employment as a Socio-Legal Relationship, *Casebook* Chap. 1

January 12

- Labor Organizing & Collective Bargaining, *Casebook* Chap. 2

2. Establishing an Employment Relationship

January 14

- Identifying Employees, *Casebook* Chap. 3, § 1-3

January 21

- Identifying Employers, *Casebook* Chap. 3, § 4

January 26

- Recruitment & Hiring, *Casebook* Chap. 4
- Problem Assignment 1: Defamation (Workbook, Chap. 3)

3. Scope & Limits of Employer Control

January 28

- Privacy, Autonomy, & Dignity, *Casebook* Chap. 5, § 1

February 2

- Protected Concerted Activity, *Casebook* Chap. 5, § 2

February 4

- Control Outside Work, *Casebook* Chap. 5, § 3

4. Employee Duties to Employers

February 9

- Confidentiality, *Casebook* Chap. 6, § 1

February 11

- Loyalty, *Casebook* Chap. 6, § 2

February 16

- Competition, *Casebook* Chap. 6, § 2

5. Wages & Hours

February 18

- Minimum Wage, Overtime, & Wage Payments, *Casebook* Chap. 7
- Problem Assignment 2: Wage & Hour (Workbook, Chap. 11)

6. Employee Health & Safety

February 23

- Medical Leave & Disability Discrimination, *Casebook* Chap. 8, §§ 1 & 2

February 25

- OSHA & Workers' Compensation, *Casebook* Chap. 8, §§ 3 & 4

7. Terminating Employment

March 2

- Express Contractual Provisions and Statutory Protections, *Casebook* Chap. 9, § 1 & 2

March 4

- Implied Contract and Tort Claims for Wrongful Termination, *Casebook* Chap. 9, §§ 2 & 3
- Problem Assignment 3: Whistleblowers (Workbook, Chap. 4)

March 9

- Unemployment Compensation, *Casebook* Chap. 9, § 4

March 11

- Make-up Class (if needed)