

A Brief Introduction to American Legal Institutions

This text is designed to provide nonnative English speaking lawyers and businessmen with an introduction into the vocabulary and usage associated with the conduct of business and law in an American setting. While a comprehensive examination of the American legal system would be beyond the scope of this book, it **also** briefly introduces the reader to many traditional common law words expressions and American legal documents.

In fine with **the** increasing globalization of the world economy, attaining an adequate grasp of **legal** and business English is necessary for the conduct of business and law in the world today. Even if one never leaves his home country he is still constantly exposed to the **influence** of foreign contacts, primarily of a business nature (i.e. the numerous foreign firms doing business in Thailand, whether they be Japanese, American, European or from other parts of the world). These foreign influences are highlighting (exposing) the need to acquire proficiency in legal and business English. It is the author's own experience, that in the conduct of business and law on four different continents, the: English language was almost *always* the language of international business, regardless **of** the nationalities of the parties involved.

Furthermore, in light of the continuing importance of the American Economy (**currently** the largest in the world) it is important that the reader attain a basic understanding of the basic legal processes and precepts upon which the American system is based. This is not however meant to denigrate the **contributions** of other countries and legal systems, but merely meant to help broaden the readers understanding of the **functioning** of the American **legal** system.

Subsequently, the reader will also be introduced to the case law method of **legal** research (i.e. the search for previous legal decisions of controlling or **precedential** value). This text **will** also attempt to define and explain the meaning and importance of the various elements of the common law case.

Therefore, it is with much vigor that I encourage you, the reader, to dedicate yourself to the acquisition of a proficiency over the technical **vocabulary** contained herein. This book will provide numerous exercises and activities to assist **you** in this endeavor, as well as some sample documents to **improve** your knowledge of **legal** and business English.

Welcome to American Legal Institutions!

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If you have any questions, I can be reached in room 507 during the abovementioned time periods.

It is my Policy, that any student **who** attends class regularly and attempts to participate in class discussions will at a minimum pass the course. Those who do not attend regularly may be excused with good excuses. I am **fully** aware that some of you work, and business necessity is an excuse that is acceptable. None the less, I encourage you to attend if possible, as important information will be given out in each class.

Basic English

I am also aware that many of my students have only a **very** basic knowledge of spoken and written English, so therefore I will attempt to gear my lectures to the appropriate class level. Those students who need additional assistance are free to contact me during my office hours.

Tests (Exams)

Each week we shall discuss **between** 5 to 10 new vocabulary words in class. These words are to be considered testable information.

In addition, we shall discuss general legal concepts in the American common law legal systems, as well as some common features in international business **law** (to include some basic contracts). I may ask questions about this information on the final exam.

Grading:

Final Exam:

Class Participation
attendance
preparation

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity **to wish** each and every one of you good luck!

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