

## **The Business of Law**

**(5297 Law Practice Management)**

**University of Houston–Law Center (UHCL)**

**Spring 2026**

**Tuesdays, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

**Room: TBA**

**Professor:** Ruby L. Powers

**Email:** TBA (UHCL email)

**Office hours:** By appointment (in person, Zoom, or phone)

### **Course Description**

Welcome to *The Business of Law (Law Practice Management)*, which offers guidance and practical advice on how to start, manage, and grow a successful law practice. I am a Board Certified immigration attorney and founder of Powers Law Group, P.C., with over 15 years of experience in law practice management. I am the author of *Power Up Your Practice: Create the Law Firm and the Life You Deserve* and provide strategic consulting services through Powers Strategy Group, as well as hosting the *Power Up Your Practice* podcast.

In this course, you will learn about different roles of a law firm manager, finances and accounting (including setting legal fees), establishing policies and procedures, and client management. We will also explore branding and marketing, including social media and video, staffing and hiring, leadership, time management, technology and automation, ethics and professional responsibility, and self-care for lawyers.

By the end of the semester, you will have designed and prepared your own law firm business plan, demonstrating your understanding and retention of the course material. This course is designed to help you work **on** the business—not just **in** the business—as you prepare to manage a successful law practice.

### **Required Text**

Ruby L. Powers, *Power Up Your Practice: Create the Law Firm and the Life You Deserve*  
ISBN: 979-8-9907150-0-4

## Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the business practice of law in the context of defining business goals, delivering legal services, and managing both.
2. Identify the steps to start and structure a law firm.
3. Apply marketing and business development strategies to support a law firm's growth.
4. Apply standards for legal fees, budgeting, and financial planning in a law practice.
5. Communicate effectively with a variety of audiences in both written and oral forms.
6. Provide advice and make strategic decisions based on applicable law, facts, policies, and procedures.
7. Identify legal management issues and develop proactive plans for staffing and operations.
8. Demonstrate professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession.

## Grading

Your grade in this course will be based on the following:

- **Final Presentation** (video or live firm presentation/pitch) – 25%
- **Business Plan** – 50%
- **Book Report** – 15%
- **Networking Project** – 10%

**Final presentation and business plan are due on our last class day:  
Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.**

This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be communicated in class and/or via UHCL email and/or the learning management system (e.g., Canvas). Please check your UHCL email regularly.

## **Classroom Method**

The class will be taught through a mix of lecture, guest speakers, and discussion. You will be expected to have read and thought about the assigned materials **before** each class. Everything within the assigned text is fair game for class discussion and should be used as a guide for your final presentation and business plan.

You should be prepared to discuss the topics and relate them to your own law firm concept each week.

## **Class Conduct and Attendance**

- Professionalism and punctuality are expected at all times.
- Please arrive on time and be prepared to participate.
- Excessive unexcused lateness or lack of preparation may impact your final grade.

Attendance will be taken each class. UHCL attendance policies apply. More than **6** absences may result in academic consequences up to and including being dropped or failing the course, in line with UHCL policies.

Use of laptops or devices in class should be limited to course-related purposes only (notes, reading the textbook, class materials). Misuse of devices may result in loss of that privilege.

Recording of class sessions (audio or video) is not permitted unless approved as an accommodation under UHCL policy.

## **Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids**

The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are accessible for its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (Dart Center) to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the website: <https://uh.edu/accessibility/> calling (713) 743-5400, or emailing [jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU](mailto:jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU).

The Student Health Center offers a Psychiatry Clinic for enrolled UH students. Call 713-743-5149 during clinic hours, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment.

The A.D. Bruce Religion Center offers spiritual support and a variety of programs centered on well-being.

The Center for Student Advocacy and Community (CSAC) is where you can go if you need help but don't know where to start. CSAC is a "home away from home" and serves as a resource hub to help you get the resources needed to support academic and personal success. Through our Cougar Cupboard, all students can get up to 30 lbs of FREE groceries a week. Additionally, we provide 1:1 appointments to get you connected to on- and off-campus resources related to essential needs, safety and advocacy, and more. The Cougar Closet is a registered student organization advised by our office and offers free clothes to students so that all Coogs can feel good in their fit. We also host a series of cultural and community-based events that fosters social connection and helps the cougar community come closer together. Visit the CSAC homepage or follow us on Instagram: @uh\_CSAC and @uhcupbrd. YOU belong here.

### **Title IX and Sexual Misconduct**

UHCL prohibits sex discrimination and sexual misconduct in its programs and activities. Incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking should be reported according to UHCL's Title IX policies and procedures. Information about reporting options and resources is available through UHCL's Title IX office.

### **Tentative Semester Schedule**

Tuesdays, 5:30–7:30 p.m. • Spring 2026 • UHCL

#### **Class 1 – January 20, 2026 – Chapters 1 & 2**

- Introduction
- The Practice of Law: Past, Present and Future
- Principles, Paradigms, and Mindsets: Shaping the Path to Success

#### **Class 2 – January 27, 2026 – Chapters 3 & 4 – *Guest Speaker: Arvin Saenz***

- Charting the Path: Crafting a Vision, Mission, and Strategic Goals for Success

- Functions, Hats, and Roles: Navigating the Complexity of Responsibilities

**Class 3 – February 3, 2026 – Chapters 5 & 6**

- Taking Control of Your Life: Unlocking the Secrets of Effective Time Management
- Cultivating Leadership: Best Practices for Managing and Delegating

**Class 4 – February 10, 2026 – Chapters 8 & 9**

- Embarking on the Entrepreneurial Journey: Initiating Your Business Venture
- The Journey to Representation: Perfecting Your Client Intake Process

**Class 5 – February 17, 2026 – Chapters 13 & 14**

- Amplify Your Firm's Presence: Innovative Methods for Marketing and Business Development
- Navigating the Digital Landscape: Strategies for Social Media Marketing

**→ NETWORKING PROJECT DUE**

**Class 6 – February 24, 2026 – Chapter 11**

- Revolutionizing the Legal Landscape: The Vital Role of Technology and Automation

**Class 7 – March 3, 2026 – Chapter 11**

- Building a Client-Centered Practice: Elevating Service in the Professional Practice

**Class 8 – March 10, 2026 – Chapters 10**

- Optimizing Workflow: Strategies, Templates, and Checklists for Efficient Operations

**Class 9 – March 17, 2026 Chapter 12**

- Client Management and Customer Service: Keeping the “Service” in Professional Service

→ **BOOK REPORT DUE**

**Class 10 – March 24, 2026 Chapter 15**

- The Path to Business Success: Mastering Your Finances

**Class 11 – March 31, 2026 – Chapter 16**

- From Setting to Collecting: Legal Fees for Sustainable Business Growth

**Class 12 – April 7, 2026 – Chapters 7 & 17**

- Crafting a Winning Team: Talent Acquisition and Retention
- Self-Care

**Class 13 – April 14, 2026 – Chapters 18 & 19**

- The Modern Law Firm: Navigating Virtual Assistants, Remote, and Hybrid Work
- Ethics and Professional Responsibility

**Class 14 – April 21, 2026 Chapters 20 & 21**

- Empowering Your Future: Personal and Professional Growth
- Pursuing and Balancing Strategic Side Hustles and Other Pursuits

**Class 15 – April 28, 2026 Chapter 22**

- Buying Your Own Building
- (Optional) Law Office / Firm Visit or Virtual Tour

**Class 16 – May 5, 2026 Chapters 23 & 24**

- The Partnership Track: Career Growth and Advancement in Law Firms
- Exit Strategies: Strategic Transitions and Succession Planning
- Q&A and Final Presentation Preparation

**Class 17 – May 12, 2026**

**FINAL CLASS – PRESENTATIONS AND BUSINESS PLAN DUE**

- Final promotional video/live presentation of your law firm
- Business plan submission
- Course wrap-up and reflections