

Teaching Fitness Law

With lawsuits on the rise, it is time to prepare your students to meet the many legal duties and risk management responsibilities they will have as exercise and fitness/wellness professionals.

Faculty Training Course

This legal and risk management faculty training course, offered by the **Fitness Law Academy, LLC**, was taught via live Zoom classes in the summers of 2021, 2022 and 2023. Beginning in 2024, the course is offered as an independent study only. Faculty members who have completed this course are now including legal/risk management content in existing courses or have developed entire legal/risk management courses for their students. The feedback from professors who participated in this course in 2021 and 2022 was very positive. A summary of these course evaluations is available at: [Educational Courses \(fitnesslawacademy.com\)](https://fitnesslawacademy.com/Educational-Courses).

Course Materials Include:

***Comprehensive Textbook/Resource:** *Law for Fitness Managers and Exercise Professionals*

Authors: JoAnn M. Eickhoff-Shemek, PhD, Barbara J. Zabawa, JD, and Paul R. Fenaroli, JD.

***Ancillaries** to make teaching legal/risk management topics convenient and time-efficient:



- 1) Study questions covering each chapter in the textbook
- 2) Answers to study questions for each chapter
- 3) PowerPoint slides for each chapter
- 4) Ideas for class assignments/activities for each chapter
- 5) List of CAAHEP legal/risk management competencies covered in the textbook
- 6) Guidelines for a community fitness center risk management audit
- 7) Basic legal research/databases
- 8) Teaching legal issues as a non-lawyer educator

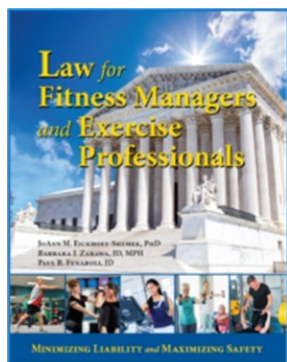
Description of the Textbook — page 2

Description of the Ancillaries — page 3

FAQs, Registration Fee, and Bio of Course Professor — page 4

Description of Textbook

This groundbreaking, comprehensive, 538-page textbook is the exercise professional's "go to" resource. Specifically written for a "lay" audience, this textbook describes:



Textbook Contents

A brief description of each chapter is available at: [Textbook Description \(fitnesslawacademy.com\)](http://fitnesslawacademy.com)

PREFACE

Part I The Need for Legal and Risk Management Education

Part II Textbook Organization, Special Features, Definitions, and Website

PART I OVERVIEW OF THE LAW, LEGAL LIABILITY, AND RISK MANAGEMENT

CHAPTER 1 U.S. Law and Legal System

CHAPTER 2 Creating a Safety Culture: Building a Comprehensive Risk Management Plan

CHAPTER 3 Complying with Federal Laws: Honoring Legal Rights

CHAPTER 4 Negligence and Common Defenses to Negligence

PART II LEGAL LIABILITY EXPOSURES AND RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

CHAPTER 5 Hiring Credentialed and Competent Personnel

CHAPTER 6 Pre-Activity Health Screening and Fitness Testing

CHAPTER 7 Exercise Prescription and Scope of Practice

CHAPTER 8 Instruction and Supervision

CHAPTER 9 Exercise Equipment Safety

CHAPTER 10 Managing Facility Risks

CHAPTER 11 Emergency Planning and Response

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GLOSSARY

CASE INDEX

INDEX

Special Features:

- *Descriptions of over 110 lawsuits that occurred in fitness facilities/programs including 30 "spotlight" cases.
- *Descriptions of effective risk management strategies to help protect professionals and their employers from legal liability.
- *Key Points in every chapter that highlight and emphasize important legal and risk management principles and concepts.
- *Over 100 tables, figures, exhibits, and photos to provide additional, relevant information, and illustrate textual content.
- *Numerous sample forms, documents, and resources.

Description of Ancillaries

Faculty members teaching in exercise science academic programs likely received little or no legal/risk management education in their graduate coursework. This textbook and the following ancillaries provide this education as well as a plethora of resources to help make teaching these “must know” legal and risk management topics convenient and time-efficient.



Study questions for each chapter: This document includes between 20-25 questions per chapter -- short answer, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, matching, and case studies. Note: Professors can use/adapt these questions for quizzes and/or examinations (i.e. a test bank of sorts).

Answers to study questions for each chapter: This document includes prepared answers for each question as well as various additional resources (e.g., websites) to provide supplemental information to support (or add to) the answers to some of the questions.

PowerPoint slides for each chapter: Each chapter contains an average of 50-55 slides. The slides are comprehensive describing the major topics covered in each chapter including many of the tables, figures, exhibits, key points, etc. with the idea that it is easier and more time efficient for professors to delete slides for a class presentation than to add slides.

Ideas for class assignments/activities for each chapter: Along with general ideas (e.g., having students give oral presentations describing the spotlight cases, how to utilize the study questions/answers within an LMS), these documents describe several ideas/suggestions related to each chapter’s content with the goal to actively engage students in their learning. Many resources/websites are also included to expand on the content presented in the textbook.

CAAHEP legal/risk management competencies covered in the textbook: This document provides a list of the legal/risk management CAAHEP competencies at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Below each competency, the location of where that competency is covered in the textbook is provided along with a brief description. Academic programs must be CAAHEP accredited by August 2027 in order for their students to be eligible for ACSM professional certifications that require a degree (EP-C and CEP).

Guidelines for a community fitness center risk management audit: Having students conduct a risk management audit of a community fitness center as a class “service-learning project” can be a valuable learning experience. This document describes important factors that professors need to consider to help ensure the audit is carried out in a professional manner. Three published articles are also included that describe actual audits conducted by graduate students including evaluations (perspectives from students and community fitness center managers).

Basic legal research/databases: This document is primarily helpful/useful for those professors who have access to legal databases (e.g., Westlaw, Nexis). Using specific “search” examples with both Westlaw and Nexis, this document provides step-by step instructions on how to conduct basic legal research (e.g., locating primary sources of law such as case law and statutory law). How to properly cite legal resources also is provided along with a description of the various sections included in a published case.

Teaching legal issues as a non-lawyer educator: This document provides recommendations for professors to help ensure they are not practicing law while teaching legal/risk management content, e.g., a statement to include in the course syllabus, how to properly address student inquiries (in class and outside of class), placing disclaimers on class handouts, PowerPoint slides, etc., and informing students that they must seek legal counsel on a variety of legal issues as recommended throughout the textbook.

FAQs

- 1. Do I have to be a lawyer to teach a Legal/Risk Management course?** It is ideal, but not necessary. There are many professors who teach Sport Law courses who are not lawyers. However, a basic knowledge of the law is needed, which this textbook and training course cover. The legal content presented in this textbook is very basic – no complex legal theories. The focus of the textbook (written for a “lay” audience”) and faculty training course is on “risk management” strategies that help minimize legal liability. Throughout the text, it is emphasized that fitness managers and exercise professionals must consult with competent legal counsel regarding many “daily operational” issues.
- 2. What are the eligibility requirements to take this training course?** Individuals need to be full-time or part-time faculty members who teach in an exercise science (or related) academic program.
- 3. Have professors adopted the textbook for a course?** Several professors have adopted our text for a course they are teaching at their colleges/universities — and more are in the process to do the same. Suzanne Wambold was the first professor to adopt this text for a required course she taught in the fall of 2020 for exercise science majors at the University of Toledo. She stated: *The text is an outstanding compilation of legal cases to discuss with students as well as facts and risk management strategies to discuss and use as a basis for creating risk management plans. The legal cases presented have opened the eyes of many of my students. I encourage others to review this text and implement it in their programs. The knowledge the students obtain from this text will help them become responsible health/fitness professionals. It is my hope that they will keep this text and refer to it often as a helpful resource.*
- 4. What is the feedback from students after they complete a Legal/Risk Management course?** Dr. Eickhoff-Shemek taught a graduate level Legal/Risk Management course for 20 years. The following is an example of a typical student comment provided on the anonymous course evaluations in her last class at the University of South Florida prior to retirement in 2017: *I am very glad I took this class as it has taught me a lot of legal situations that can arise within the Exercise Science field. I believe this class is really important and should be a requirement for all students...It is important that as professionals entering the field we are aware of different legal scenarios that can occur, how to avoid them and handle them if they arise.*
- 5. Who do I contact if I have questions about the Faculty Training course?** Dr. JoAnn Eickhoff-Shemek at: drjes2014@gmail.com.

Registration Fee

The registration fee includes:

- 1) Textbook, described on page 2 (sells for \$89 on Amazon)
- 2) Ancillaries, described on page 3



Fee is \$189 - includes the textbook and all of the ancillaries.

Bio of Course Professor: JoAnn M. Eickhoff-Shemek, PhD, FACSM

- *20 years experience teaching graduate legal/risk management courses and a unit on legal/risk management in undergraduate management courses in the Exercise Science programs at the University of South Florida & University of Nebraska at Omaha.
- * Lead author or co-author of five legal/risk management textbooks, several book chapters, and more than 100 journal articles.
- * Former “legal columnist” (10 years from 2000-2010) and current “fitness safety columnist” for *ACSM’s Health & Fitness Journal*.
- * Expert witness experience involving negligence cases. More information at: [About Dr. JES](#)