Q) WHY DID YOU AGREE TO DO THIS PROGRAM?

My legal education was profoundly transformative. It changed the way I think about the world. I believe strongly in the value of legal training, and was excited to be part of a program that made an introduction to law more widely available.

I also think that the methods of delivering educational content are changing quickly. As degrees become less important in some settings than conferral of knowledge, we have to keep pace with new ways of delivering content. I am excited about the democratizing potential of asynchronous online educational opportunities to make high-quality education more accessible at an affordable cost.

Q) WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU BELIEVE YOU WOULD SOLVE BY EDUCATING NON-LAWYERS IN THIS WAY?

I think non-lawyers both do not consult with lawyers often enough, and then have unreasonable expectations of the kind of advice that lawyers can provide. Often, by the time a client consults with a lawyer, or by the time an employee consults with a general counsel, the horse has already left that stable. If people consult with lawyers to help identify risks earlier in their decision-making, they will have more opportunities to avoid legal problems later on. At the same time, it is important for people to realize that law is not like tax preparation—there are not clear rules or clear answers—and lawyers must provide advice in conditions of uncertainty. It is often a challenge for people to understand when legal advice is going to be important and valuable, and why it then takes the form that it does.

Q) WHAT POTENTIAL OUTCOMES WERE YOU HOPING TO SEE IN THE LIVES OF ENROLLEES?

We were hoping to see enrollees making better decisions in their professional lives. By taking the course, enrollees should be better able to assess when they need legal advice, and then better able to understand that advice and how to act upon it. We also hope the enrollees will become more sophisticated consumers of the legal advice that they get.
Q) **WHO DO YOU THINK THE REAL TARGET AUDIENCE IS?**

The target audience is people who regularly interact with legal issues, and who at least occasionally interact with legal advice, whether from a general counsel’s office or outside counsel. This includes people working in human resources departments, in compliance and risk management, or anyone who encounters and must address legal risks.

Q) **WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO INCOMING STUDENTS ABOUT WHY THESE COURSES WERE IMPORTANT AND HOW THEY WOULD APPLY THIS KNOWLEDGE IN THEIR DAY-TO-DAY LIVES?**

Understanding more about the nature of the legal system and legal reasoning is important for becoming better consumers of legal advice. If a lawyer advises that certain conduct is prohibited by an agency rule, do you know what that means? What force does that rule have, and how much ambiguity is there in that rule? Do you have follow-up questions for the lawyer that might identify alternative options or paths forward? We hope students will become more active partners with lawyers in solving legal problems, instead of being passive recipients of legal advice.

Q) **WHAT MIGHT YOU SAY TO A SKEPTIC WHO THOUGHT THE COURSES WERE TOO GENERIC TO BE HELPFUL IN BUSINESS?**

No 14-hour course can hope or even aspire to provide specific legal advice that addresses the numerous business contexts in which legal issues arise. But importantly, even three years of law school does not try to provide this kind of business-specific training. Law school’s transformative power is to train people to think like lawyers, which means training them to understand how the law works and what questions to ask. This short course is designed to give students some exposure to this way of thinking, and in so doing, it imparts general lessons that students can then apply to their specific situations.

Q) **WHAT MIGHT YOU SAY TO A BUSINESS EXECUTIVE WHO THOUGHT THE COURSES DIDN’T DELVE DEEPLY ENOUGH INTO BUSINESS MATTERS THEY ENGAGE IN WITH THEIR ATTORNEYS?**

This course will never be a substitute for consulting with an attorney. Every business context is different. But every business context involves assessing legal risks and understanding how the law may or may not constrain decision-making. To get the context-specific advice you need, it is important to understand more about how the law works and how lawyers think, and that applies in every business context.