Syllabus
Fall 2023
BLAW 3366-500: Real Estate Law (Online)
Rusche College of Business
Stephen F. Austin State University

Instructor:

Drew Thornley
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Rusche College of Business
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McGee Business Building, Room 229A

Office Hours:

Office:

Tuesdays: 10:50 AM-12:20 PM
Wednesdays: 8:30-11:30 AM
Thursdays: 10:50 AM-12:20 PM
Otherwise, by appointment.

Online (via Zoom):

Wednesdays: 1-5 PM

NOTE: If you desire an online meeting during (and/or outside) this designated time, you must schedule an appointment with me in advance.


Course LMS: Brightspace by D2L

Course Description: Examination of real-estate concepts including estates in land, contracts, real property rights, voluntary and involuntary conveyances, land descriptions, liens, evidence of title, recording procedures, & landlord-tenant law.

Program Learning Outcomes: Program learning outcomes define the knowledge, skills, and abilities students are expected to demonstrate upon completion of an academic program. These learning outcomes are regularly assessed to determine student learning and to evaluate overall program effectiveness. You may
access the program learning outcomes for your major and particular courses at http://www.sfasu.edu/cob/ug-plo.asp.

**Student Learning Outcomes/Course Goals and Objectives:** Upon completion of the course, the student should better understand the following topics:

1. Nature & description of real estate
2. Rights & interests in real estate
3. Forms of real-estate ownership
4. Transfer of title to real estate
5. Public real-estate recording
6. Contract law
7. Real-estate leases
8. Landlord-tenant law
9. Land-use control
10. Fair housing/credit laws

**Course Requirements:**

**Quizzes:** Each of the course’s four module quizzes covers only the material included in the “Content” (Brightspace by D2L) for that module. Each quiz is worth 15% of your overall grade. Thus, in total, quizzes are worth 60% of your overall grade.

**Assignments:** The course includes four assignments, to be submitted via Dropbox (Brightspace by D2L). Each counts 7.5% of your overall grade. Thus, they collectively account for 30% of your overall grade. Using any artificial intelligence (AI) software or tool, such as ChatGPT, to draft an assignment is strictly prohibited, unless expressly authorized by your instructor.

**Discussion:** The course includes four discussion assignments, to be submitted via Discussions (Brightspace by D2L). Each counts 2.5% of your overall grade. Thus, they collectively account for 10% of your overall grade. Using any artificial intelligence (AI) software or tool, such as ChatGPT, to draft a discussion post is strictly prohibited, unless expressly authorized by your instructor.

**Grades:** All grades are calculated by percentage. Decimals are **not rounded up**. For example, 79.99 = 79.

**NOTE:** Any graded item submitted after its deadline (even if late by only one minute) will receive no credit. Thus, I urge you not to wait until just before deadlines to submit graded items. If you wait until the day an assignment is due and are unable to submit it, due to technical issues or any other reason, your assignment will not be given credit. However, if you have a legitimate reason (i.e. sickness, with accompanying doctor’s note) for your inability to submit an assignment at any point during the window of time it is open for submission, contact me as soon as possible. As indicated above, grade weights are as follows:

- Module Quizzes: 60% of overall grade
- Assignments: 30% of overall grade
- Discussions: 10% of overall grade

**Course Calendar:** The course is divided into four modules. Any significant deviation(s) from the following list of unit topics will be announced to students either during class or via email:

*Updated: August 2023*
Module 1: The Nature of Real Estate & Real Estate Interests
Module 2: Types of Real Estate Ownership
Module 3: Transferring Title to Real Estate
Module 4: Real Estate Development & Anti-Discrimination Housing Laws

Assessments Deadlines:

Dates may change at the discretion of the instructor. Should a date change be required, it will be announced on the “Course Home” page. *All times listed are US-Central Time.*

Quizzes

- Module 1: Thursday, September 21, 5 PM
- Module 2: Thursday, October 19, 5 PM
- Module 3: Thursday, November 9, 5 PM
- Module 4: Thursday, November 30, 5 PM

Discussions

- *Private Nuisance:* Thursday, September 7, 5 PM
- *Rent Control:* Thursday, October 5, 5 PM
- *Texas Property Taxes:* Thursday, October 26, 5 PM
- *Houston & Zoning:* Thursday, November 16, 5 PM

Assignments

- *Adverse Possession & “For Sale” Yard Signs:* Thursday, September 14, 5 PM
- *Rent Control:* Thursday, October 12, 5 PM
- *Eminent Domain and Reparations:* Thursday, November 2, 5 PM
- *Lakeway Daycare:* Thursday, November 16, 5 PM

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

All applicable university policies are incorporated herein. For a complete list of university policies, see the following: [https://www.sfasu.edu/policies](https://www.sfasu.edu/policies). In particular, I highlight two of these policies below:

**Academic Integrity (4.1)**

The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (Policy 10.4) outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the
test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (5.5)**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to [https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf](https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf).

**Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats, and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**Student Wellness and Well-Being**

SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic...
pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**

**The Dean of Students Office** (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)
[www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents](http://www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents)
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

**SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic** Human Services, Room 202
[www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp)
936.468.1041

**The Health and Wellness Hub** “The Hub”
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:
- Health Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Outreach and Support
- Food Pantry
- Wellness Coaching
- Alcohol and Other Drug Education

[www.sfasu.edu/thehub](http://www.sfasu.edu/thehub)
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

**Crisis Resources:**

- Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
- National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)