

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-COMMERCE
SYLLABUS

Fall 2012

Course: PSCI 323.001 – Real Estate and Property Law

Time & Location: Monday: 7:20 PM- 10:00 PM

Instructor: Donna Perkins

Office and hours: 30 minutes after each class and by appointment

Telephone: (903) 454-7866

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A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on legal principles governing real estate transactions, with particular attention to sales contracts, deeds, mortgages, title insurance, and Texas community property and homestead laws. Emphasis is on the practical skills needed by paralegals to perform all types of real estate transactions, ethical considerations for a paralegal working in this area, and emerging computer applications and resources in real estate practice.

B. TEXTS

Jeffery A. Helewitz, *Basic Real Estate and Property Law for Paralegals*, 4th edition, Aspen Law & Business

ISBN: 978-1-4548-0884-8

C. COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To give students a basic overview of property law issues.
2. To expose students to the role and ethical obligations of the paralegal in real estate transactions.
3. To expose students to document preparation and emerging computer applications in real estate transactions through practical assignments.

D. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Readings as assigned.
2. Chapter quizzes (20% of grade)
3. Three examinations including the final (50% of grade). The final will not be comprehensive. Normally there will be no make-up exams. Exams will be graded on the following scale. 90-100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; Below 60=F.
4. A practical written assignment will be given. This written assignment should be neatly typed (20% of grade).
1. Class participation is required (10% of grade). Plan to participate throughout the course. Attendance is part of this grade. 0-3 absences=A; 4-6=B; 7-9 =C; 10-12 =D; 13 on up =F.

E. OUTLINE OF COURSE. This outline as to dates and assignments is tentative. It assumes the material will be covered at maximum speed. Exams, however, will be given as scheduled, but will cover only material that has been covered in class before the exam.

<u>Week of</u> <u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Assigned Reading</u>
Aug 27	Introduction to law and the course Estates in Land and Future Interests	Chapter 1
Sept 3	NO CLASS – Labor Day	
Sept 10	Estates in Land and Future Interests	Chapter 1 (Continued)
Sept 17	Rights Incident to Titles in Realty	Chapter 2
Sept 24	Land Use—Test Review	Chapter 3
Oct 1	Exam I	
Oct 8	Conveyancing	Chapter 4
Oct 15	Real Estate Closing Procedures	Chapter 5
Oct 22	Real Estate Closing Procedures	Chapter 5 (Continued)

Oct 29	Condominiums, Cooperatives, and Commercial Property—Test Review	Chapter 6
Nov 5	Exam II	
Nov 12	Written Assignment Due	
Nov 19	Landlord-Tenant Law	Chapter 7
Nov 26	Personal Property	Chapter 8
Dec 3	Last Class Day—Test Review	
Dec 12	Exam III	

Classroom Etiquette

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student’s Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct) You are expected to exhibit respect for the instructor and fellow students at all times. All electronic devices (except laptops) must be turned off during class. Laptop use is limited to reading notes made for class and taking notes during class. In the event you choose to use a laptop, sound features must be disabled. Surfing the internet and playing games on your laptop during class time are strictly prohibited. Failure to adhere to these policies may result in removal from class.

Disability Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University – Commerce

Gee Library

Room 132

Phone: (903)886-5150 or (903)886-5835

Fax: (903)468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

“What is Plagiarism

Many people think of plagiarism as copying another's work, or borrowing someone else's original ideas. But terms like "copying" and "borrowing" can disguise the seriousness of the offense:

According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, to "plagiarize" means

2. to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
3. to use (another's production) without crediting the source
4. to commit literary theft
5. to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward.

But can words and ideas really be stolen?

According to U.S. law, the answer is yes. The expression of original ideas is considered intellectual property, and is protected by copyright laws, just like original inventions. Almost all forms of expression fall under copyright protection as long as they are recorded in some way (such as a book or a computer file).

All of the following are considered plagiarism:

- .turning in someone else's work as your own
- .copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- .failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- .giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- .changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- .copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not (see our section on "fair use" rules)

Most cases of plagiarism can be avoided, however, by citing sources. Simply acknowledging that certain material has been borrowed, and providing your audience with the information necessary to find that source, is usually enough to prevent plagiarism. If you have retained the essential idea of an original source, and have not cited it, then no matter how drastically you may have altered its context or presentation, you have still plagiarized."

(www.plagiarism.org)

If you plagiarize, you will receive an F for the assignment in question and the matter will be referred to the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

