



BLAW 520, REAL ESTATE LAW

COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor	Ralph W. Flick, JD, MBA
Office Hours	By appointment only through Zoom. Please email me directly to schedule.
Contact Email	ralph.flick@etamu.edu

Please feel free to contact me anytime if you have questions about the class. It is never a bother as I log in to check emails when I am available and I check them as frequently as I can although I generally respond to emails from the evening the next morning.

TEXTBOOK

I have opted to use all open sources resources for this class which are available for free. If you encounter a pay wall on any course link, please let me know.

Primary Textbook

Legal Aspects of Property, Estate Planning, and Insurance (LibreTexts), CC BY-NC-SA.
Free HTML at:

https://biz.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Civil_Law/Introduction_to_the_Law_of_Property_Estate_Planning_and_Insurance

Additional Readings

In some cases, there are additional readings which are assigned as a supplement to the main text.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

BLAW 520 – Real Estate Law. Hours: 3. This course examines legal principles governing real estate transactions and property ownership. Topics include contracts, conveyancing, leases, financing, zoning, and land use regulations. Emphasis is placed on identifying legal risks and understanding how real estate law applies in both commercial and residential contexts.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this course will be knowledgeable of business law concepts needed for the practice of accounting and to prepare for the common certification exams. More specifically, students will be able to:

- Explain the legal principles governing the formation, interpretation, and enforcement of real estate contracts, including required disclosures.
- Describe the requirements and procedures for conveying real property, including deed types, recording, and title priority.
- Analyze the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants in residential and commercial lease arrangements.
- Explain the legal structures used to finance real estate transactions, including mortgages, deeds of trust, and lien priority in foreclosure.
- Evaluate zoning ordinances, land use regulations, and environmental/eminent domain constraints affecting the use and development of real property.
- Identify legal risks inherent in real estate transactions and recommend strategies to mitigate those risks.
- Compare how real estate law applies differently in commercial versus residential contexts.
- Apply real estate legal principles to analyze a complete transaction, integrating contract, conveyancing, financing, and land-use issues.

COURSE INTRODUCTION

This course is delivered fully online. All of the course materials are included in the D2L learning management system including any lectures, resources, slides, videos, quizzes, and tests.

We will cover a new topics each week (see below). Each “Class Week” opens on Thursday morning and all assignments for that Class Week must be completed and/or submitted on D2L by 11:55 p.m. Central Time the following Wednesday.

Like any online course, this course requires time management and self-discipline. We will be covering the same volume of content as if we were in a traditional in-person class which means that the schedule is compressed. It is strongly suggested that students review the schedule and requirements in this Syllabus and plan time accordingly including holidays and weekends.

It is your responsibility to manage the reading and course participation and to submit work in a timely fashion. If you begin an assignment at the last minute and experience technical difficulties or do not have enough time to complete the assignment, you will not be excused.

We will make use of what is known as asynchronous learning, which means that the class will not meet live. Therefore, online interactions will not be in real-time, but instead will make extensive use of forums and other devices, permitting you to interact with others asynchronously.

The most common mistake I see is when students try to complete an entire module, and all its assignments, on the last day of the week. This course cannot be completed in one day a week. You should engage with the material early in the week and throughout the week. The assignments should be the culminating point of a thorough review of the material.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following 1,000 point scale:

Grade	Range
A	90% - 100% (900 – 1,000 points)
B	80% - 89.99% (800 - 999 points)
C	70% - 79.99% (700 – 799 points)
D	60% - 69.99% (600 - 699 points)
F	< 60% (< 600 points)

Grade Components

Your weekly assignment requirements and final grade will be distributed as follows:

Assignment	Week Due	Quantity	Points Each	Total Points
Weekly Graded Requirements				
Weekly Discussions	All	8	40	320
Weekly Knowledge Checks	All	8	10	80
Applied Project				
Milestone 1: Risk-Spotting Memo	02	1	100	100
Milestone 2: Case Brief	04	1	100	100
Milestone 3: Lease Clause Risk-Spotting	06	1	100	100
Final Comprehensive Risk Analysis Summary	08	1	300	300
Total Points Possible				1,000

Weekly Discussions. Given that this is an online and asynchronous course, class discussions are an important way for us to engage in the topic as a community. These discussions will involve a hypothetical client fact pattern that we will discuss together during the week. You will be required to post ***regularly during the week*** at least once and reply to at least two other posts during the week. For full credit, you will be required to be active during the week (i.e., if all of your posts are at the end of the week at the deadline, they do not contribute to the class discussion and will not receive full credit) and participate in a meaningful manner that indicates engagement with the topic and with the class.

Weekly Knowledge Checks. One of the objectives of this course is to help to prepare you for the CPA exam (and related exams). Each week, you will have some sample test questions that will allow you to test your knowledge. You can take these tests as often as you like until the end of the Class Week.

Applied Project. You will be working on a term-long class project that will have three milestones which culminate in your final Applied Project. The details of the Applied Project will be posted on D2L.

Week	Topic	Reading
Week 01 (8/20 – 8/26)	Foundations: Property Concepts & the Legal System	• LibreTexts, Ch. 1 (Introduction to Law and Legal Systems), selected sections • LibreTexts, Ch. 9 (Introduction to Property: Personal Property and Fixtures) • Texas Property Code, Title 1 (General Provisions) — overview (statutes.capitol.texas.gov)
Week 02 (8/27 – 9/2)	Real Estate Contracts I: Formation & Essential Terms	• LibreTexts, Ch. 8 (Contracts), sections on formation, capacity, and the Statute of Frauds
Week 03 (9/3 – 9/9)	Real Estate Contracts II: Disclosure, Risk & Remedies	• LibreTexts, Ch. 8 (Contracts), sections on breach, remedies, and misrepresentation • TREC Seller's Disclosure Notice (free public form, trec.texas.gov) — applied example
Week 04 (9/10 – 9/16)	Conveyancing: Deeds, Title & Recording	• LibreTexts, Ch. 12 (The Transfer of Real Estate by Sale) • Texas Property Code, Title 2, Ch. 12–13 (Recording of Instruments) (statutes.capitol.texas.gov)
Week 05 (9/17 – 9/23)	Financing Real Estate: Mortgages and Secured Transactions	• LibreTexts, Ch. 16 (Secured Transactions and Suretyship) • LibreTexts, Ch. 17 (Mortgages and Nonconsensual Liens)
Week 06 (9/24 – 9/30)	Landlord–Tenant Law and Leases	• LibreTexts, Ch. 13 (Landlord and Tenant Law) • Texas Property Code, Title 8 (Landlord and Tenant) (statutes.capitol.texas.gov)
Week 07 (10/1 – 10/7)	Zoning, Land Use and Environmental Regulation	• LibreTexts, Ch. 11 (The Nature and Regulation of Real Estate and the Environment) — zoning, environmental, and eminent domain sections • Optional supplement: Land Use (Open Textbook Library) — instructor-selected excerpts
Week 08 (10/8 – 10/14)	Synthesis: Commercial & Residential Risk Analysis; Course Wrap-Up	• Instructor-selected current-events real estate law article • Review of assigned OER chapters

CLASS POLICIES

Syllabus Change Policy. The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

Travel. Since this course is delivered fully online, you are free to travel during the term. However, if you are traveling during the term, all of the requirements of the class, including due dates, remain the same. If you travel to, or live in, a different time zone, you take the responsibility to ensure all your work is submitted on time as expressed in Central Time.

Communication. Group e-mails will be sent to your university e-mail accounts on the roster. It is your responsibility to regularly check your e-mail account. When you email your instructor, please insert "ACCT 568" in the subject line and always sign your emails with your first and last name. I teach multiple courses and, in order to be as efficient as possible, please make sure to identify yourself. I will make every effort possible to respond to your emails within twenty-four hours; however, in some cases my response times may vary on weekends.

Late Assignments. Late work is not accepted in this class. Of course, in extenuating and exceptional circumstances, such as proven death of family members or natural calamities, I will work with you; however, if advance notice is possible, it is required for any accommodations. Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner.

Grade Rounding. There are 1,000 total possible points in the class and there is no rounding. For example, 899 points of 1,000 total points will result in a B. Note that, in some cases where assignments are excluded, the total possible points may be lower than 1,000.

Extra Credit Policy. There is no extra credit in this class. Please focus your efforts on completing the assigned work on time.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Learning Management System. All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements:

- [LMS Requirements](#)
- [LMS Browser Support](#)
- [Zoom Video Conferencing Tool](#)

Access and Navigation. You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Technology Policy. This course will be delivered fully online. To succeed in this course, you will need the access to reliable and constant Internet service and the ability to read, open, edit, and create PDF, DOCX, XLSX, and PPTX files.

Technical Support. As this is an online course, you must have access to the Internet during the entire session and you must possess properly functioning computer equipment. Use of a desktop computer with a backup power supply or use of a notebook computer is strongly encouraged, as a means of protecting you against power failures at inopportune times. Computer, power, or related failures not directly caused by D2L will not be accepted as excuses for late or incomplete work. If you experience a technical issue, such as inability to enter the course or access the internet, please do not email the instructor until you have taken every step possible to resolve the issue on your own. If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Student Conduct. All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Netiquette. Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Attendance. For more information about the [attendance policy](#) please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedures 13.99.99.R0.01](#)

Academic Integrity. Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

- [Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)
- [Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)
- [Graduate Students Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)
- [Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Students with Disabilities and ADA 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 an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

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

Fax: (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Student Disability Services](#)

Nondiscrimination Notice. Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement. Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer. Also, please see the [applicable policies regarding student safety](#). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Mental Health Support. The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Mental Health and Well-Being. The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it. <http://telusproduction.com/app/5108.html>

AI Use Policy. The University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course. Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism). Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed. In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

- 13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty
- 13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty