

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
SYLLABUS
BLAW 2000 – PERSONAL LAW
Spring 2023

Wednesday
6:30 – 9:20 p.m.

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Class: Class meets Wednesday from 6:30 pm – 9:20 pm in room BLB 245.

Office Hours: Remote office hours are Tuesday from 6:00 pm – 6:30 pm or by appointment. For an appointment, please email me or call 940-565-2717, and I will do what I can to arrange a time that is convenient for you.

Course Communication: Course communication to students will be through email and/or Canvas. To ensure that you receive course communications, please check that your email is listed correctly in Canvas. The best way to contact me is via email; do not message me through Canvas.

Course Objectives: The objectives of BLAW 2000 are:

1. Present a summary overview of the legal environment in which decisions – both personal and professional – are made;
2. Present material to provide a basic understanding of the legal system and laws which may affect your personal and professional life and career;
3. Present a basic understanding of law that will provide a basis for further research and learning; and
4. Improve reading comprehension and oral and written communication skills, with particular emphasis on the legal environment.

Text Book: Understanding the Law, 7th edition, John A. McKinsey and Debra D. Burke. ISBN-13: 978-1-285-42842-0; ISBN-10: 1-285-42842-0.

Class Attendance: Class attendance is your choice and responsibility. Class attendance will be noted for the first 2 classes; after that, no specific records will be kept regarding class attendance. Please note that this is subject to change if too many people misuse this privilege. If this occurs, you will receive an email and a class attendance requirement will take effect. It is almost guaranteed that attendance (or lack of attendance) will affect your course grade because lecture/discussion material in class will elaborate and range beyond text materials and is primary material for exams.

Course Materials for Remote Instruction: Remote instruction may be necessary if community health conditions change or if you need to self-isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19. If this occurs, you will need access to Canvas and Zoom, computer, speakers, webcam, microphone, and reliable internet to participate in fully remote portions of the class. Information on how to be successful in a remote learning environment can be found at <https://online.unt.edu/learn>.

Taking Notes: It is important that you attend class and take notes. The text and handouts alone will not cover all the material that is discussed in class. You will not be given a review outline to summarize material for any test. Your notes are your review.

Handouts: During the semester, handouts may be posted on Canvas. These are intended to supplement material in the text. Handouts may also include material for assignments. It is your responsibility to get these materials.

Minimum Technology Requirements (generally): Access to reliable internet, computer, speakers, Canvas, Zoom, and possibly webcam/microphone.

Technical Assistance: UNT has a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: [UIT Student Help Desk site \(http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm\)](http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

Exams: Three exams will be given during the semester as specified on the exam schedule in this syllabus. On occasion the class may fall behind on topics scheduled to be covered on an exam. If this occurs, only topics actually covered in class prior to the exam will appear on the exam. Exam dates will be changed only in rare cases such as unscheduled breaks due to weather or other extraordinary event recognized by the UNT Administration.

Exams will begin promptly at the scheduled time and class period. Students who arrive after the exam has been distributed will be allowed to take the exam; provided, however, that after a student has completed and turned in their exam, the exam will be considered to have been completely administered, and students who arrive after that time will not be allowed to take the exam and will be deemed to have missed the exam.

First Exam	33⅓%
Second Exam.....	33⅓%
Third Exam.....	33⅓%
Total:	100%

Grading Scale:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F.....	0-59%

Exam Review: The last portion of the class period immediately following an exam (or first portion of class in a following week) will be used to review the exam and argue questions/answers.

Make-up Exams: In exceptional circumstances a student who must miss an exam will be allowed to take the exam early. Make-up exams after the class has taken the exam may be given only with instructor approval.

Extra-Credit Assignment(s): Extra-credit assignment(s) may or may not be given. No extra credit assignments will be given on an individual basis (every class member receives the same opportunities). No late extra credit work will be accepted. Any extra credit assignment will be scored by awarding percentage points which will be added to your total weighted-average exam scores. Total possible percentage points will be given with the assignment (e.g. up to 2 percentage points).

Disability Accommodation: UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information refer to the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

Academic Integrity: According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

Classroom Behavior: I will endeavor to begin on time, end on time, and to use the class period productively. Toward that goal, everyone involved should treat everyone else with respect.

- Questions, comments, and discussion are not only welcome, they are expected;
- Please be respectful of your peers during class;
- Please attend class regularly and punctually;
- Please read the assigned reading material in advance of the scheduled class;
- Please turn to silent/vibrate all cell phones, etc.

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in an instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation: UNT prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

Teaching Evaluations: Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey is made available during weeks 13, 14, and 15 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" ([no-reply@iasystem.org](mailto:reply@iasystem.org)) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website at ypaa.unt.edu/spot/students or email spot@unt.edu.

Emergency Notification & Procedures: UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Student Support Services

Mental Health: UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need. Listed below are several resources on campus:

- [Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [UNT Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)
- [UNT Psychiatric Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)
- [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>)

Chosen Names: A chosen name is a name that a person goes by that may or may not match their legal name. If you have a chosen name that is different from your legal name and would like that to be used in class, please let the instructor know. Below is a list of resources for updating your chosen name at UNT.

- [UNT Records](#)
- [UNT ID Card](#)
- [UNT Email Address](#)
- [Legal Name](#)

**UNT EUIDs cannot be changed at this time. The collaborating offices are working on a process to make this option accessible to UNT community members.*

Pronouns: Pronouns (she/her, they/them, he/him, etc.) are a public way for people to address you, much like your name, and can be shared with a name when making an introduction, both virtually and in-person. Just as we ask and don't assume someone's name, we should also ask and not assume someone's pronouns.

You can [add your pronouns to your Canvas account](#) so that they follow your name when posting to discussion boards, submitting assignments, etc.

Additional Student Support Services

- [Registrar](https://registrar.unt.edu/registration) (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)
- [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)
- [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)
- [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)
- [Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (<https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)
- [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

Academic Support Services

- [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)
- [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (<https://library.unt.edu/>)
- [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)

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CLASS LECTURE AND EXAM SCHEDULE

The following schedule reflects the approximate schedule for reading text materials. Exams will take place at the scheduled time and day, unless delayed due to weather or other extraordinary event.

January 18	Syllabus Chapter 8	Intro to Class Contracts: Enforceable Agreements
January 25	Chapter 8	Contracts: Enforceable Agreements continued
February 1	---	<i>No Class</i>
February 8	---	<i>No Class</i>
February 15	Chapter 9	Real Property and Home Ownership
February 22	Chapter 9 Chapter 11	Real Property continued Landlord/Tenant
March 1	---	Review Class
March 8	6:30 – 8:00 8:10 – 9:20	First Exam <i>First Exam Review and Argument</i>
March 15	---	<i>No Class</i>
March 22	Chapter 7	Torts: Private Wrongs
March 29	Chapter 7	Torts: Private Wrongs continued
April 5	Chapter 7 Chapter 6	Torts: Private Wrongs continued Crimes: Public Wrongs
April 12	Chapter 6	Crimes: Public Wrongs continued
April 19	6:30 – 8:00 8:10 – 9:20	Second Exam <i>Second Exam Review and Argument</i>
April 26	---	*Texas Family Property (no textbook assignment; all class material)
May 3	---	Texas Family Law
	Chapter 15	Estate Planning and Probate
May 10	6:30 – 8:00 8:10 – 9:20	Third Exam <i>Third Exam Review and Argument</i>