

Revised Partial Syllabus and General Information (1/8/14)  
Practice of Law in the Oil and Gas Industry

Spring, 2014 Mon & Wed 7:30-9:01 pm  
Lynn Alan Bortka

First Day Assignment: Go to the Law Center's website to view and complete the First Day Assignment well in advance of our first class. It requires you to send information to me as soon as possible.

Attendance: Students must comply with the University's 80% attendance policy. I have no authority nor ability to allow or permit deviations from that policy...for good cause or otherwise. I will circulate a sign-up sheet each class period which will be the sole record of your attendance. Attending class is critical. If you have to miss a class, enlist a classmate to record the class for you. Reading and relying on another student's notes without benefit of the class discussion is a certain way to lose value from this course.

This is anticipated to be a large class with few empty seats. I ask that by the SECOND class period you pick your permanent seat for the semester. Use of a master seating chart will help me more rapidly get to know you.

Class Schedule: I will teach an extra 16 minutes during each class period we meet. Class will dismiss at 9:01pm. This will accumulate enough "bonus" time so that five scheduled classes will not be held. Those five class periods have not yet been finalized and could be impacted by rain-outs, locust plagues, hospital visits, flat tires, and other apocalyptic events

Communication: I will email reading material to you throughout the semester. Contact me via email at [lynnbortka@gmail.com](mailto:lynnbortka@gmail.com). Do not send email to me at my University of Houston email account. I check that black-hole once a year.

Office (sic) Hours: I will only be on campus Monday and Wednesday evenings. By prior arrangement, I should be able to arrive several hours early each class day to meet with you. I should also be able to stay indefinitely after each class to help you. I have a lot of time to devote to this class. Be a pest.

Course Material: This course is a result of ponderings, observations, experiences, and reflections of my 36 years in the oil and gas business. It is a compilation of subjects and matters on which I have lectured and/or taught, piecemeal fashion, to other lawyers, corporate employees, industry groups, government agency personnel, and (mostly unappreciative) friends and relatives. The material we will cover is that which every lawyer who is going to deal with the industry (or has clients who do so) must know to be most effective and valued. There is nomenclature you *have to understand* along with applicable scientific, business, political, economic, and public-perception concepts and principles.

The two assigned books, Oil and Gas Production in Nontechnical Language (Production) and Petroleum Refining in Nontechnical Language (Refining) are the assigned books. We'll cover most of the Production book first. Throughout the spring I will provide material from other texts and sources.

There will be a lot of impromptu drawing, sketching, and diagramming on the classroom white-boards. While you are, of course, free to use your computers, I recommend you also have a writing pad, notebook, camera, smart phone, etc to copy some of the whiteboard diagrams.

Regarding the reading material: DON'T GET BEHIND! ASK QUESTIONS! The reading material is NOT written for experts in the field. It is written for lawyers and other people who need to understand what "oil and gas people" know and do. You will be much better off asking for clarification as we go along versus waiting until late April to clarify the material.

If you're bored during the semester, have no plans for Saturday night, are caught up on the assigned reading, and want to improve your income potential, read the assigned texts cover to cover. Contact me when you get stuck and need an explanation and I'll help you through your issues.

Periodically we will see video of oil field activities, practices, and events in class. I will use power-point presentations and will send them as electronic attachments to you by email; usually before each class period. Included in the attachments will be links or web addresses to the videos.

Grading: There will be a three hour, ***closed-book***, exam at the end of the semester. It will probably require a lot of definitions and include a combination of short essay and short answer questions. You will have to know the industry vocabulary we will cover in class to do well on the exam. If you plan to work at a Mexican restaurant and don't know what taco, enchilada, burrito, and margarita mean you're going to have a hard time impressing the boss that she should hire you. Likewise, if you don't understand what MCF, BOE, Christmas tree, riser, cracker, and mud are, your (soon to be ex) clients will look for a "smarter" lawyer...even though intellectual capacity likely has nothing to do (in your ex-clients' eyes) with your shortcomings.

My goal is to make you more valuable to clients and employers who are in the oil and gas industry and to those who work with or against the industry such as law-firms, landowners, mineral rights owners, government agencies, and non-profit organizations.

I am allowed to, and likely will, award one-third of a grade "bump ups" to students who consistently and constructively participate in class. Participation also can include sending meaningful, pertinent, timely, and succinct articles, pictures, or videos from the press, technical journals, law journals, web sites, etc that I use in class or that materially improve and update my knowledge in the subjects we cover.

On a down note, I am also permitted to reduce a student's grade by a third of a grade for poor participation, failure to timely complete any assignments, un-preparedness, frequent tardiness, absenteeism, leaving early, or disruption to the class. Although I have never done so, through this legal disclaimer, I'm keeping my options open.

Final Comments: I may update this document as the semester progresses. Check the on-line version of this document every two weeks early in the semester for additions, corrections, and modifications (another great legal disclaimer!) OK....ready to go? **STAY IN TOUCH! ASK QUESTIONS! MAKE ME EXPLAIN!** If you have problems or complaints about the class, share them with Maria Lopez in the Dean's office or call 1-800-DUMP-HIM. Proper action is sure to follow.

See you soon....

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maria Lopez', with a stylized, cursive script.