

**CLIMATE CHANGE LAW**  
**PROFESSOR TRACY HESTER**  
**FALL 2017**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

This final examination is a take-home exam subject to the following requirements:

1. You will have **eight (8)** hours to complete the examination after you check it out from the UH Law Library reference desk. If you check out the examination at a time when the library will not accept take-home exams at the 8-hour deadline, you must turn in your exam **before** the library stops accepting exams that day. Examinations turned in the following day will be counted as late. You are responsible for knowing the Law Center's rules regarding when take-home exams can be picked up and turned in at the library.

As always, provide only your exam number (not your name) on your exam. LL.M. students should write "LL.M." next to the exam number on their exams. Foreign LL.M students will have an extra hours (i.e., ten (10) total hours) to complete the exam.

2. You may pick up your examination at the start of final exams period, i.e. **December 1 at 9:00 am**. The deadline to submit all final examinations is **December 14 at 5:00 pm**. We cannot accept any examinations submitted after that date.
3. This examination consists of three (3) essay questions. Each essay has a limit on the length of your answer. Rather than page limits, you will have a **2,500-word limit** (approximately 10 double-spaced pages) for **each** essay (i.e., your total exam answer should not exceed 7,500 words, or 30 double-spaced pages). Please remember that we do not require you to use all ten pages, and that a clear and concise five-page answer will get a higher grade than an unfocused answer that fills ten pages. We assume that you know the materials, so only recite definitions, quotes, background information or cases to the extent necessary to provide a cogent answer. Each question will weigh equally in your final grade, so please be sure to answer each of them fully.
4. This examination is **open book**. You can use your own notes and any materials distributed in class or posted to the class website. Do not use third-party commercial materials, outlines, other texts or online resources. You can access and use cases or direct primary materials (e.g., treaties) if they were specifically discussed in class or directly referenced in the website. The answers to these questions, however, should not require extra materials.
5. We are not requiring you to use the Electronic Blue Book for your typed answers. You are allowed to use spell checkers or other grammar software (subject to the source restrictions described above).

6. This final examination is subject to the University and the Law Center honor codes. Once you have received this examination, do not discuss it with any other student until after the full examination period closes (i.e., end of day on December 14).

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**FINAL EXAMINATION**

**Question 1**

After graduating, you have started your career by forming a new law firm dedicating to protecting the rights of persons injured by environmental contamination and pollution. As your law firm's reputation grows, an unexpected new type of client begins to appear in your office: sophisticated corporate plaintiffs seeking recovery for their environmental damages. While these cases usually involve spills or polluted properties, one prospective client has brought a particularly intriguing claim to you.

Jim Queen owns and operates the vast Queen ranch in Southwest Texas. His family has owned and run the ranch for over 100 years, and its farming and ranching activities have generated a vast fortune for the Queen clan. The ranch covers nearly 1 million acres, and it has supported lucrative agricultural crops, cattle and sheep herding, some oil and gas development and tourism. All of these activities rely on stable and consistent surface water and groundwater supplies.

This rich family history, according to Mr. Queen, is under siege. A historic drought during the past two years in South Texas has caused a total loss of the Queen Ranch's crops, and he has had to sell most of his cattle and sheep herds. While the Ranch's mineral estate remains potentially profitable, he cannot lease or develop those deposits without a reliable source of water needed for hydraulic fracturing operations. Because the Ranch has become an arid desert scrubscape, tourism has dramatically decreased. While Mr. Queen has sought other water supplies, the Great Texas Drought has made alternative water supplies very expensive or impossible to obtain.

Mr. Queen is a very intelligent fellow with a master's degree in agricultural ecology. He has read that the Great Texas Drought is part of a larger weather pattern that has caused hotter and drier conditions throughout the American Southwest region. He has also learned that some climatologists believe that the Texas drought has resulted in part from accelerating climate change due to historical and current emissions of anthropogenic greenhouse gases.

Mr. Queen wants to hire your firm to sue large emitters of greenhouse gases for damages to the Queen Ranch caused by climate change. He has asked you to describe what claims he might bring, who he might sue, which court might hear his claim, and what relief he could seek. He is open to approaching other plaintiffs who might join his lawsuit, but he is also happy to proceed on his own. Rather than a fancy (and expensive) memorandum or brief, he just wants you to give him a clear and concise letter that outlines his claims and prospects which he can then provide to his family members. Be sure to include any facts or additional information that you would need from Mr. Queen (or other sources) to help provide a realistic assessment of his potential lawsuit.