

Oil & Gas Law (5355/25999)
Fall 2026 Syllabus
Professor Jasper Mason

1. Class sessions

Monday and Wednesday from 6:00 P.M. to 7:20 P.M.

2. Reading Materials

- (a) Required reading materials: Bret Wells, Texas Oil and Gas Law: Cases and Materials (LiveCarta 5th ed. 2026). Available here:
<https://app.livecarta.com/catalog/texas-oil-and-gas-law-cases-and-materials-5ed>
- (b) Strongly suggested (but not required) Reading Materials: Joseph Shade, Primer on the Texas Law of Oil and Gas.

3. Attendance requirement policy

Consistent with UHLC policy, 80 percent attendance is required. Those individuals not satisfying the attendance requirement will be reported to UHLC administrative officials to be dropped from the course.

4. Learning Objectives/Outcomes/Goals

Oil & Gas Law provides an overview of U.S. oil and gas law. Students will gain an understanding of basic oil and gas law principles, derived from a combination of property, contract, administrative, tort, and constitutional law. The course provides an opportunity to take a law course that cuts across several core law-school subjects and from the perspective of a particular business—oil and gas, a business that deals with the most widely traded and strategically important commodity and that has important customs and practices that influence both contract and law. The law of all producing states will be considered with emphasis on Texas, the state with the largest body of oil and gas case law and that most often provides persuasive, if not controlling, views on various oil and gas issues. At the end of the course, among other topics, students should be able to:

- (1) identify instances where the rule of capture applies to multi-tract situations and when spacing and density rules intervene to modify application of the rule of capture;
- (2) identify various common clauses in current and past oil and gas lease forms and apply these clauses to specific conveyance and production situations;
- (3) determine ownership of surface and mineral interests in various scenarios involving adverse possession in Texas;
- (4) identify whether a described interest is a royalty or mineral interest;

- (5) qualitatively calculate how royalty will be paid on natural gas depending on the language used in an oil and gas lease's royalty clause in Texas; and
- (6) determine whether a particular substance will be judicially determined to be a mineral or surface interest in Texas.

5. Class session coverage, focus & discussion

We will proceed in the order set forth in the reading assignment sheet, but please note that the dates for covering these materials may shift. I reserve the right to supplement the assigned reading with recent or otherwise interesting cases not found in the textbook.

To facilitate our discussion and analysis of the assigned reading, I will question students in panels of 4-6 students per class. Each student will serve on several panels during the semester. I will provide a link to an online scheduling tool no later than the second day of class, and each student will be required to sign up for a designated number of panels.

If for some reason you are unable to be present or prepared on your panel day, it is your responsibility to switch days with someone else and to inform me of the switch before the class begins. If a class is cancelled for some reason, the panel for that day will be rescheduled. All other panels will keep their previously-assigned days. In general, panel members will be questioned on the cases and problem sets that were assigned for that particular day. As mentioned, however, reading assignments may be altered based upon the amount of material that we get through in class. If there are any changes to the assigned readings for which I expect a panel to be responsible, I will announce the changes at the conclusion of the prior class session. To this extent, you are on notice that your panel may be responsible for material that was not initially designated for discussion on your panel date. Participation by non-panel members is welcomed and encouraged. Pursuant to Law Center guidelines, I reserve the right to lower your final grade by one notch (e.g., from a B+ to a B) if you are absent or unprepared on any of your assigned panel days.

Oil & Gas Law covers a tremendous amount of material. ***As a consequence, it is essential that – even you are not on a panel for that class session – you prepare for class on a regular basis, or you will find yourself overwhelmed at examination time. In addition, because later classes build upon concepts learned in earlier sessions, you will quickly be left behind without regular preparation.*** To this end, I have tried to make the reading assignments manageable and reasonable (i.e., not too short, not too long) without sacrificing coverage of the critical topics of the course. ***You will find that your time spent in class preparation and in class attendance is useful (if not essential) for learning the subject matter of the course and for doing well on the examination.***

6. Grading process for this course

- (a) Final Examination. The grade in this course will be entirely dependent upon the final examination (except as noted Paragraph (b) below). The exam is a closed book exam.

The examination will occur pursuant to the prescribed examination schedule. We will discuss the final exam in our final review for the last class session.

- (b) Participation. Class participation may positively count towards your final grade, and I reserve the right to lower your final grade by one notch (e.g., from a B+ to a B) if you are absent or unprepared on any of your assigned panel days.

7. Questions to professor/Office Hours

Student discussion after class or at my office is welcomed and encouraged. You may call me or email me at any time. Please contact me as follows:

Telephone: 713-412-9968

Email: jasper.mason@outlook.com

I welcome any comments or suggestions that you may have regarding my teaching style, class presentation, or any other subject. Please feel free to provide me with such comments during the semester as they will help me to improve my teaching. I carefully consider the comments and suggestions that I receive.

I will gladly honor your request to address you by any name, pronoun, or salutation you choose. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records, and I humbly request grace in the event of my failure to achieve 100% accuracy.

8. Counseling Options

The University of Houston has a number of resources to support students' mental health and overall wellness, including CoogsCARE and the UH Go App. UH Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers 24/7 mental health support for all students, addressing various concerns like stress, college adjustment and sadness. CAPS provides individual and couples counseling, group therapy, workshops and connections to other support services on and off-campus. For assistance visit uh.edu/caps, call 713-743-5454, or visit a Let's Talk location in- person or virtually. Let's Talk are daily, informal confidential consultations with CAPS therapists where no appointment or paperwork is needed.

The Student Health Center offers a Psychiatry Clinic for enrolled UH students. Call 713-743-5149 during clinic hours, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment.

The A.D. Bruce Religion Center offers spiritual support and a variety of programs centered on well-being.

Need Support Now? - If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call CAPS crisis support 24/7 at 713-743-5454, or the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988, or chat 988lifeline.org.

9. Recording of Class

Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without my written consent. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center. If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other person, whether in this course or not, or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

10. Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids

The University of Houston complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for disabled students. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, UH strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a disability requiring an academic adjustments/auxiliary aid, please contact the Justin Dart Jr. Student Accessibility Center (formerly the Justin Dart, Jr. Center for Students with DisABILITIES).

11. Honor Code

The UHLC Honor Code applies to all aspects of this course. You are responsible for knowing all Honor Code provisions and for complying with the Honor Code. Please inquire if you have any questions regarding how the Honor Code's provisions apply to specific activities or situations related to this course. Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed to be a pledge by you under the Honor Code to comply with the Honor Code in relation to this course and to comply with the instructions in the course syllabus.

12. AI Generated Text

The software technology known as artificial intelligence has recently expanded its capability to generate text (AI Generated Text). Examples of the technology include what are known as “generative” large language models (LLMs), and a specific implementation what is well known in the general public is ChatGPT. These systems can generate text in response to prompts and/or input of other text/documents/code/images. The output, the AI Generated Text, appears to have human-mimicking “intelligence” and is thus potentially usable as a substitute for written work product one might generate themselves. AI Generated Text can include computer code or programs as well as human language content.

Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed to be a pledge by you under the Honor Code to not prompt, generate, obtain, read, or use any AI Generated Text in relation to any activity or assessment in this course. This applies to AI Generated Text from yourself or others. This pledge includes that your assessment work product in the course is without any contribution from AI Generated Text. This specifically extends to the plagiarism policy and unauthorized aid/materials parts of the Honor Code: AI Generated Text will be treated as from another/others in applying the plagiarism policy to this course. The term “assessment” means any work product generated for this course that is submitted to the instructor or presented in a class session, regardless whether it is graded content or not. Assessments include mid-terms and final exams. AI Generated Text may not be used in the development or drafting of any assessments created by you in a non-proctored environment, such as a “take-home” final examination unless specified as an exception below. The parts of the Honor Code that refer to unauthorized materials or aid are specifically prohibited from any use of AI Generated Text in this course unless specified as an exception below.

13. Title IX/Sexual Misconduct

Per the UHS Sexual Misconduct Policy, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and state law and must report incidents of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner violence, or stalking) about which they become aware to the Title IX office. Please know there are places on campus where you can make a report in confidence. You can find more information about resources on the Title IX website at <https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/resources/>.