

Syllabus

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Course Description, Overview and Objectives, and Learning Outcomes:

Administration of Estates and Guardianships is a combined survey and skills-based course providing an in-depth study of the Texas Estates Code and its application in estate and guardianship administration. The course explores the statutory framework governing wills (the good, the bad, and the awful), intestate succession, dependent and independent administrations, and alternatives to formal probate. Students will analyze contested matters, creditor claims, and other procedural and ethical issues arising in estate practice.

The guardianship component examines the establishment, administration, and termination of guardianships of the person and estate, as well as less-restrictive alternatives and related proceedings such as mental health commitments.

Through lectures, case studies, and hands-on drafting exercises, students will gain practical familiarity with the pleadings, orders, and filings most commonly used in probate and guardianship practice. Active participation is expected.

Course Material:

Texas Estates Code (2025). Johanson's Texas Estates Code Annotated, 2025 ed. (Texas Annotated Code Series) is recommended.

Course supplement containing selected cases, pleadings, and other materials.

Assignments:

Students are expected to complete all assigned readings and be prepared to discuss the designated cases and statutory provisions for each class session. Case discussions are an integral part of the learning process and will be used to reinforce both doctrinal understanding and practical application.

Each student will be assigned specific cases for presentation or discussion. If a scheduling conflict arises and you are unable to attend on the date of your assigned case, it is your responsibility to arrange a swap with another student and to notify the instructor in advance.

Failure to arrange coverage or to participate in your assigned case discussion may result in a reduction of your final grade.

Office Hours:

I am available to students by phone, text, or email between **9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday**. While my availability outside these hours and on weekends may be limited, I will make every effort to respond to messages in a timely manner.

I am also available to meet in person by appointment, as well as briefly before or after class as my schedule permits.

Inclement Weather:

In the event of inclement weather, we may opt to have class via Zoom unless the campus has closed. On potential “weather days,” please monitor your e-mail so that you can be apprised of class status.

Class, Attendance, and Instructional Mode:

Each class session will combine in-person lecture, discussion of relevant case law and statutory provisions, and application of those concepts to practical problems. Students will review and analyze actual wills, pleadings, and filings drawn from Texas probate courts, focusing on materials that illustrate the topic under discussion. Instruction will emphasize both doctrinal understanding and real-world procedural practice.

Assessment and Grading:

Course grades will be based on a combination of written and examination components designed to evaluate both substantive understanding and practical application of the Texas Estates Code.

Midterm Examination (40% of final grade): A take-home drafting assignment to be completed individually. The midterm will assess students’ ability to apply statutory requirements and procedural rules to fact-based scenarios and to produce professional-quality pleadings or documents.

Final Examination (60% of final grade): An in-class multiple-choice and true/false examination. Students may use a copy of the *Texas Estates Code* during the exam but may not consult notes, outlines, or other materials.

Adjustments to final grades may be made based on the quality and consistency of class participation in accordance with UHLC policy.

AI Generated Text and Work Product:

Your continuing enrollment in this course obligates you to not knowingly prompt, generate, or use any AI generated text in relation to any activity or assessment of this course. This obligation includes that your assessment materials in the course is without any contribution from AI generated text.

Recording of Class:

Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. 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 student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor's recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with *anyone* without the prior written approval of 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.

Syllabus Changes:

Please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus and may do so at any time. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through e-mail.

Names and Pronouns:

Chosen names and preferred pronouns (including non-binary ones such as they/them/their) must be respected in the classroom. Please feel free to reach out to me at any time if you want to make me aware of your chosen name or preferred pronouns, or if you have concerns about how I or your classmates address you.

Inclusivity and Support:

If you observe religious or cultural holidays that will coincide with synchronous class sessions or conferences, please let us know as soon as possible, so that we may make arrangements.

If you anticipate or experience barriers based on a disability (including any chronic or temporary medical or mental health condition), please feel free to reach out to me so that we may discuss options. If you require any support services, you may contact Ms. Samantha Ary, Academic Records Coordinator. Ms. Ary is located in room 44A TU-II in the Office of Student Services suite, and she can be reached at sary@central.uh.edu or 713-743-7466. Requests for accommodation that involve graded assignments **must be directed to Ms. Ary** and should be made as soon as possible to allow adequate time to document and to process the request.

The Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program ("TLAP") also supports law students who are dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and other mental health problems. You can reach TLAP at any time at 1-800-343-8527. TLAP's website includes a page with links to sources about mental health that are of interest to law students: <https://www.tlaphelps.org/law-students>.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):

CAPS can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to the demands of a professional program, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS (www.uh.edu/caps) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. No appointment is necessary for the “Let’s Talk” program, a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html.

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

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

The Center for Student Advocacy and Community (CSAC) is where you can go if you need help but don’t know where to start. CSAC is a “home away from home” and serves as a resource hub to help you get the resources needed to support academic and personal success. Through our Cougar Cupboard all students can get up to 30 lbs of FREE groceries a week. Additionally we provide 1:1 appointments to get you connected to on and off campus resources related to essential needs, safety and advocacy and more. The Cougar Closet is a registered student organization advised by our office and offers free clothes to students so that all Coogs can feel good in their fit. We also host a series of cultural and community-based events that fosters social communication and helps the cougar community come closer together. Visit the CSAC home page or follow us on Instagram @uh_CSAC and @uhcupbd.

Women and Gender Resource Center:

The mission of the WGRC is to advance the UH and promote the success of all students, faculty and staff through educating, empowering and supporting the UH community. The WGRC suite is open to you. Stop by the office for a study space, to take a break, grab a snack or check out one of the WGRC programs or resources. Stop by Student Center South room B13 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday

Sexual Misconduct Policy:

The University is committed to maintaining and strengthening an educational, working and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from discrimination and sexual misconduct. If you have experienced an incident of discrimination or sexual misconduct, there is a confidential reporting process available to you. For more information, please refer to the University system’s Anti-Discrimination Policy SAM 01.D.07 and Sexual Misconduct Policy SAM 01.D.08, available here:

<http://www.uhsystem.edu/compliance-ethics/uhs-policies/sams/01-general-information/index.php>

http://www.uhsystem.edu/compliance-ethics/_docs/sam/01/1d7.pdf (antidiscrimination)

http://www.uhsystem.edu/compliance-ethics/_docs/sam/01/1d8.pdf (sexual misconduct)

Please be aware that under the sexual misconduct policy, SAM 01.D.08, faculty are required to report to the University any information received regarding sexual misconduct as defined in the policy. Please note that the reporting obligations under the sexual misconduct policy reach to employees and students. Also, as a required reporting party, Law Center employees and faculty members are not a confidential resource.

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/>.

Security Escorts and Cougar Ride:

UHPD continually works with the University community to make the campus a safe place to learn, work, and live. Our Security escort service is designed for the community members who have safety concerns and would like to have a Security Officer walk with them, for their safety, as they make their way across campus. Based on availability either a UHPD Security Officer or Police Officer will escort students, faculty, and staff to locations beginning and ending on campus. If you feel that you need a Security Officer to walk with you for your safety please call [713-743-3333](tel:713-743-3333). Arrangements may be made for special needs.

Parking and Transportation Services also offers a late-night, on-demand shuttle service called Cougar Ride that provides rides to and from all on-campus shuttle stops, as well as the MD Anderson Library, Cougar Village/Moody Towers and the UH Technology Bridge. Rides can be requested through the UH Go app. Days and hours of operation can be found at <https://uh.edu/af-university-services/parking/cougar-ride/>.

Resources for Online Learning:

The University of Houston is committed to student success, and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our [Power-On](#) website. Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources, tools, and tips including: obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, Blackboard, and Canvas; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact UHOnline@uh.edu.

Webcams:

Access to a webcam is required for students participating remotely in this course. Webcams must be turned on when class starts so that students can participate in class discussion.

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).

Additional Helpful Information:

Coogs Care: <https://uh.edu/dsa/coogscare/>

Student Health Center: <https://www.uh.edu/healthcenter/>