

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON LAW CENTER

Spring 2026 Renewable Energy Law

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| Course: | Law 7397 - 3 Credits |
| Class meetings: | 2.30 pm to 4.00 pm MW |
| Professor: | Chinonso Anozie. Office number: 341 E |
| Email: | canozie@uh.edu . |
| Phone: | 713:743-4980 |
| Supplementary hours: | Tues; 12.30 p.m. – 2.30 p.m. or by appointment |

“Compassion without Technique is a mess, but Technique without Compassion is a Menace” ~ Karl Llewellyn.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will provide a broad overview of U.S. renewable energy law and policy. It reviews existing renewable energy technologies and resources, discusses the practical limitations involved in their development, siting, and integration into the U.S. electricity grid, and analyzes the legal and regulatory framework for renewable energy development, the climate, and the environment. It also addresses the regulation of energy production and delivery strategies to promote economic efficiency and mitigate adverse impacts on the natural environment.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, students will be able to

- a. Identify general principles underlying energy policies, regulations, and laws in the United States
- b. Use the principles and concepts in the class to tackle energy and climate issues in the United States.
- c. Investigate and identify the challenges of extant regulatory policies in addressing climate change impacts in the United States.
- d. Conduct independent and in-depth research on the intersection of energy/electricity generation, climate change, and renewable energy policies in the United States.
- e. Develop expertise in at least two critical aspects of energy regulation and climate law in the United States.

COURSE MATERIALS

Troy A. Rule, *Renewable Energy: Law, Policy, and Practice* (West Academic) (2nd ed. 2021)

PRIMARY TEACHING METHODS:

I will use a variety of methods, depending on the topic. Some topics will require me to lecture, while others will require students to work in groups under my supervision. Students should be prepared to respond to questions and problems posed in the casebook and those discussed in class. Our class discussion will be guided by the law as is stands, the law as it should be, and whether any improvements are required.

This course is designated as a face-to-face course, and students are expected to be physically present in the classroom for all class sessions.

SUPPLEMENTARY HOURS

The supplementary hours are Tuesdays from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. or by appointment. This is the time students can use to discuss any further questions about the class material or any other issues about the class. Please email me to schedule a meeting if you have a conflict with the supplementary hours. I can also meet on Zoom (via appointment). I may also be available to meet right after class. Please check with me.

COMMUNICATION

I will communicate with students via CougarNet email, Canvas, and through in-class announcements. I will use the CougarNet email to respond to course-related inquiries, such as grade queries or progress reports, for reasons of FERPA. I will also post assignments and class exercises on Canvas. I recommend setting up instant Canvas notifications. Each student is responsible for checking their Canvas accounts for any class information.

NAME PLAQUES:

I will request support to provide students in the class with name plaques. Pick up yours before the first day of class. The instructor values proper appellation; therefore, your name plaque must be placed in front of you for every class meeting. It is important for the instructor to address you correctly.

CLASS SEATING

After the first day of class, you cannot change your seat without my prior express permission. Take **the time to select** your first seat on the first day. I will bring name plaques on the first day of class. Each student **MUST** place his/her name plaque in front of them from the first day of class till the last day of class.

GRADING AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

Grades are assigned pursuant to the UHLC Handbook. Grades will be determined on the following basis: Class Participation - 20%, Assignments -20%, and Final Exam - 60%.

ASSIGNMENTS: 20%

Students shall complete two comment papers of no less than 500 words (excluding footnotes). Students shall pick a topic from any issue we discussed or assigned materials and provide a well-written and highly analytical paper. I will check for plagiarism. The due dates are as follows: **Wednesday, February 26, at 11.59 pm and March 31, at 11:59 pm.**

FINAL EXAM: 60%

A final in-class exam will be used for this class on a date to be determined.

CLASS PARTICIPATION:

Class participation is essential in this class. **Each student must choose at least two class sessions in which to serve as the lead discussant.** I will circulate the signup sheets by the end of the second week of class. Ensure that you sign up for a class you are certain to attend. Be ready and prepared to lead the class discussion. If you cannot attend class that day, inform me, and I will reschedule you to lead another day. If no other spots are available, I will require you to write a 650-word (excluding footnotes) comment paper on a topic I choose to make up for the class discussion.

Class participation will be assessed throughout the semester. Grading for this course element considers individual and group contributions to class discussions that are informed and based on the relevant readings/cases/articles/discussion questions during class meetings, workshops, and exercises. Questions, including discussion questions from the textbook, will be assigned regularly or discussed in class.

As with any professional meeting, the basic minimum requirement is that you attend each class, be prepared and on time, and complete all class assignments without exception.

Keep in mind that the purpose of law school is to explore ideas. To that end, I expect you to show due respect to your classmates and to the thoughts they express in class.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

The handbook notes that UHLC insists on a minimum 80% student attendance policy. Any student who attends fewer than the minimum percentage of class sessions (in other words misses more than 5 classes) may be dropped automatically from the course or receive a failing grade. I also reserve the right to notify OSA of a violation of this policy and request that the student be automatically dropped from the class.

Although the school has imposed a mandatory 80% attendance rule, I also reserve the right to lower the final grade by a half-point for students who miss more than four (5) classes. I understand that various situations (ill-health, emergencies, etc.) may arise, requiring students to miss a class; as such, endeavor to inform me in a reasonable fashion as the circumstances permit. I am flexible to that end. Let me also restate that attending classes is crucial, and I emphasize them because they are invaluable for student learning. To that extent, I factor class attendance into grading.

Tardiness may count as an absence. Students should attend class sessions and arrive on time. I expect every student to be seated before class starts at 10.30 a.m. If you arrive late, out of respect for the other students and the class environment, please try to minimize the disturbance. I reserve the right to count a student as absent if they come into class after 10.30 a.m.

I will take attendance by distributing a roll sheet at the beginning of each class. Each student should personally initial by name for that class session. You must ensure that you initial the roll sheet before you leave the classroom each day. Students who do not sign the roll sheet are deemed absent. Please remember that it is your responsibility to manage your attendance and ensure that your total absences do not exceed the threshold set for the class. If you cannot attend a class or need to arrive late or leave early, kindly notify me via email, if possible. I request this notification mainly because I may call on students during class, and it would be helpful to know in advance if a student is unavailable.

Even though you have notified me that you will be absent, that absence still uses one of your available absences. Also, I advise you to use caution when taking absences early in the semester. Early semester absences reduce your “margin for error” for the remainder of the semester and can create a difficult situation if sicknesses or other life events arise. You need not provide a reason when you notify me that you will miss a class. On the other hand, there is no loss of goodwill on my part toward any student if he or she takes most or all of their absences.

I enter the roll sheet into my records immediately after each class. My records are my source for determining whether a student is within the absences limit. Thus, if you discover on Wednesday that you did not sign the roll sheet on Tuesday but attended on Tuesday, you must not simply sign on Thursday for both Tuesday and Thursday. Instead, please email me requesting a correction for the previous day. I can only consider such correction requests going back one class day.

A. 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.

1. PERMISSIVE USE OF AI

Generative artificial intelligence is a form of machine learning that creates new and original output based on the data it has been trained on or has access to, employing algorithms to generate content in response to prompts. Examples of the technology include what are known as generative “large language models” (LLMs). Two well-known LLM implementations are ChatGPT and Claude. LLM output can include text, images, music, code, and more. This syllabus policy covers the textual output of generative LLMs (AI Generated Work Product) which can include computer code

or programs and human-language content. Because AI-Generated Work Product can often mimic human intelligence, it could potentially be used as a substitute for a student's own work product. Such use is potentially problematic to the extent that it becomes a substitute for internalized student understanding of the material or creates a dependency on AI-Generated Work Product, which may be strictly prohibited in settings that include the bar examination.

Prohibition.

Subject to the exceptions immediately below, your continuing enrollment in this course constitutes your pledge not to generate or to use any AI-Generated Work Product—whether from yourself or others—in relation to any assessment in this course. The term “assessment” means any graded or ungraded work product for this course that is submitted to the instructor, presented in a class session, or used in an oral or written graded assessment for this course.

Exceptions.

The following AI-Generated Work Product uses are exceptions to the preceding prohibition. The exceptions' intent is to allow the generation and use of AI-Generated Work Product for specific, narrowly defined activities related to this course.

- You may generate and use AI-Generated Work Product for class preparation, although you must disclose the full extent of that use if your instructor asks. You may generate and use AI-Generated Work Product for study supplements to aid with general understanding of course content. This could take different forms that include creating examples or explanations of a concept, generation of diagrams and flow charts, “gamification” of course content, flash cards for study, or sample questions and answers.
- You may generate and use AI-Generated Work Product for an outline that summarizes the course content.
- You may use AI-Generated Work Product to check your originally drafted text for misspellings, grammar and punctuation errors, strength and clarity of prose, verbosity, effective transitional language and thesis sentences, word choice, excessive passive voice, and like things.
- You may use AI-Generated Work Product for the purpose of language translation.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Respect for the thoughts, ideas, and speech of classmates and faculty is the foundation of the educational process. Threatening behavior in the classroom will not be tolerated. I will, as required, report any such instance to the school authorities. In addition, as a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence.

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of electronic devices, including but not limited to phones, during class is prohibited except for laptops used for class purposes only. Refrain from browsing on your laptops during class. It may distract other classmates. Students shall professionally comport themselves in class and avoid actions that will distract the instructor and other students. Using your phone, texting, talking, or any other side activity that distracts the instructor or your classmates' during class is considered unprofessional and may be factored into reducing your participation grade. An exception is when the class is on break, or the in-class activities require that students speak to each other.

2. Recording Of Class

Students may not record all or part of the class, live stream all or part of the 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 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. However, I authorize the publishing of those recordings to students at the end of the semester for review purposes. If you miss class, endeavor to collect notes from other classmates. Read over the notes and come speak with me. I will be more than happy to explain any confusing aspect of the class. 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.

3. Syllabus Revisions

Other than grading and attendance policies, information in this syllabus is subject to change with reasonable notice.

4. Copyright Warning

All the course content provided during lectures, including written materials, is protected by copyright laws. Students are strictly prohibited from uploading any material to any course shell, discussion board, or website used by the course instructor or other course forum if it is not their original work unless they comply with all applicable copyright laws. Faculty members have the right to delete any materials that they suspect are infringing copyright laws. Students are allowed to use class recordings for educational purposes only. Sharing class materials outside the class, including uploading, selling, or distributing course content or notes taken during the course, is strictly prohibited.

5. Wellness

Personal Resources Counseling and Psychological Services (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. Go to http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html. Discrimination and Sexual Harassment/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.

6. Security Escorts and Cougar Ride

UHPD continually works with the University community to make the campus a safe place to learn, work, and live. The 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. 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-universityservices/parking/cougar-ride/>.

7. Eating/Drinking

Eating is prohibited in the classroom. Drinking water and non-alcoholic beverages are allowed but must be done respectfully and should not distract the class.

8. Class Coverage

If some material is left uncovered during a class, the next class may start by addressing the pending material before moving on. Students will be accountable for reviewing the uncovered material as part of their readings.

Further class readings will be supplied.

| Class # | Description | Readings & Questions |
|---|--|---|
| Unit 1: Energy Law Basics; Non-Renewable Energy Strategies | | |
| Class 1 Jan. 21 | What is Energy? Traditional Energy and Renewable Energy The Existing Energy Industry Landscape | pp. 1-13 & 33-41. Qs*: p. 5, 1-3; p. 9, 1-2; p. 41, 1-5 |
| Class 2 Jan. 27 | Fossil Fuels (Coal, Oil, and Natural Gas) | pp. 13-27 |
| Class 3 Jan. 29 | Nuclear Energy Policy | pp. 27-32. |
| Class 4 Feb. 3 | The Basics of Utility Regulation | pp. 42-68. Qs: p. 47, 1-2; p. 54, 1-4; p. 57, 1-2; p. 61, 1-4 |
| Class 5 Feb. 5 | Factors Driving the Transition to Renewables; Recurring Themes in Energy Law. Unit 1 Review | pp. 68-91. Qs: p. 82, 1-3; p. 89, 1-2 |
| Unit 2: Wind Energy Policy | | |