

**Texas Marital Property
Course Syllabus
Spring 2015**
Professor: Barbara J. Stalder
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Office Hours: By Appointment or if I am in my office you are welcome at any time

Course Description: I intend on teaching you the information you will need to know for the Texas Bar Exam. Therefore this course will be a comprehensive overview of Texas marital property rights, including key constitutional provisions, statutes and case law. The course will cover subject areas such as prenuptial and post nuptial agreements, separate and community property rights, characterization and tracing, valuation and division of marital property, homestead rights, allocation of liabilities, retirement benefits, other employee benefits and reimbursement claims.

Textbook: there is no textbook for this course. *If you wish to purchase the Texas Family Code I will make arrangements with the bookstore for you to have the student addition along with the Texas Family Law Handbook.*

Course Materials: I will provide you with the applicable statutes from the Texas Family Code, Texas Constitution, various articles from Continuing Legal Education presentations, relevant case law and other materials. These will either be emailed to you or set up through TWEN.

Instruction Methods: Class is conducted in primarily a lecture format. There will be periodic guest speakers who are known to be experts in a certain area of family/marital property law. In addition, there will be no required recitation of cases or specific or mandatory questions asked of students during class unless I tell you in advance to be prepared for the next class. Any student may ask any question or make any comment at any time during the class. Often, the class will be asked to consider and discuss various areas of study, specifically any “hot topics” relating to marital property.

Attendance: Attendance in class will prove to be critical to a strong success in the class. Many areas on the final exam will be the information obtained through the class lectures, presentations by the guest speakers and analysis of the other materials covered during class time. I will have a sign in sheet for you to sign in each class time. If you are close to maxing out your allotted absences then I will let you know and will give you the opportunity to file a Motion to Expunge at least of one those absences if you can show good cause. This serves two purposes. You get experience drafting documents and you get a chance to argue your case.

Grading: There will be a final exam consisting of multiple choice and one (with subparts) essay question. There will be a nongraded mid-term assignment and a graded drafting project. There will also be opportunities to earn extra points.

Reading Assignments: Reading assignments for the semester will either be posted on the class web site for TWEN and/or e-mailed to students in advance of the start of the spring semester.

First Day Class Assignment: TBD

Computer Use: I do not have a problem with you using your computers during class. I do have issues with internet surfing so if you are tempted to use your computer for other things other than note taking I suggest you think about taking notes by hand.

Extra Points: From time to time throughout the semester you will have an opportunity to gain extra points through your willingness to engage in public service. I will explain more about this on the first day of class.

I will bring to the first day of class a more detailed syllabus or I will send it prior to the first day so you will have an idea what the semester will look like.