

ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

CI 6373 Educational Law
Spring 2012



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Office Hours: My office hours are as follows: Tuesdays 1-4, Wednesday 9-11, Thursday 9-11, Friday E-hours 9 a.m.-noon.

You may also make an appointment or call me or contact me via Skype (amymw3). See instructions in Course Documents if you are unfamiliar with Skype as a communication tool.

CI 6373 Educational Law (3-0)

In this course students will explore the field of constitutional, statutory, judicial, and administrative laws that shape our educational system. It is a study of the basic legal framework, with an emphasis on Texas and an in-depth study of court decisions that affect the operation of educational institutions. It includes the study of Legislative Committees, local school districts, and administrative agencies such as the Texas Education Agency and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The objective is to provide students the information and knowledge necessary for effective decision-making during their career as a professional educator.

Meetings

There are no required class meetings. Individual or group meetings with the instructor can be arranged by appointment. The course content is provided in an asynchronous on-line mode, utilizing Blackboard as the delivery medium.

Blackboard

Blackboard may be reached from Ramport by using the quick link feature. Students should check the announcements as soon as they are enrolled in the course. Read thoroughly all of the course content to become familiar with the course requirements before beginning the first assignment.

Books

You will find any or all of these books extremely useful. New and used editions of these books are available from many sources and multiple vendors on the Internet. E-versions of some are also available.

Required Book

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington D.C: Author

Useful Resource Books

Kemerer, F., Walsh, J., & Maniotis, L. (2005). *The educator's guide to Texas school law* (6th ed.). Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press. (the 5th edition works just as well and the 7th edition is available cheap in e-version)

Schimmel, D., Stellman, L., & Fischer, L. (2007). *Teachers and the Law*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education

Kaplan, W. A. & Lee, B. A. (1995). *The law of higher education* (3rd ed.). Jossey-Bass: San Francisco (4th edition costs over \$250!!, don't buy it!)

Dunklee, D.R. & Shoop, R.J. (2006) *The principal's quick reference guide to school law*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

Kaplin, W.A. & Lee, B.A. (2009). *A legal guide for student affairs professionals*. (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey Bass

Goals

Primary Goal - The goal of this course is for the new educational professional to become familiar with the four sources of laws relevant to education: constitutional law, statutory law, administrative law, and judicial law. A professional educator must be able to readily find and interpret the pertinent law or policy when the need arises. To accomplish this, the student must know how laws are created and must understand the historically relevant court cases that have shaped public education.

Secondary Goal - A secondary but important goal of this course is to learn to communicate at a professional level with focus on written communication. Emphasis is placed on style, format, and use of valid and reliable sources of information. All submissions in this course must comply with the APA Publication Manual Sixth Edition.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, each student will be able to apply to current educational issues those Federal and State laws (including constitutional provisions, agency regulations, and court decisions) that directly and indirectly affect public education. They will be able to knowledgeably discuss the laws that govern educational institutions and have experience in creating Legal Topic Guides on issues in education.

Course Grading

A student may earn a maximum of **100 points** in the class. The final course grade will be assigned on this scale. 90 – 100 is an A, 80 – 89 is a B, and 70 - 79 is a C. Any score below 70 is an F. All work must be submitted by midnight on the due date listed. You may keep track of your grades by clicking on the “My Grades” button on the left of your Blackboard screen. If you have a question about a grade, email the instructor immediately. ***No late work is accepted.***

Course Expectations

Since this is an online course, the students are responsible for understanding the assignments and learning the material with the professor's facilitation. If questions arise, it is important to email the instructor immediately.

During this course, there is a lot of material to cover and time management is crucial. The first thing that is required of you is to review all course material in Blackboard. Do not skim the information, read it CAREFULLY. Read all instructions and expectations and take a look at the model papers that are provided. Write down questions as you go through the course material and email them to me right away. The sooner we can all get on the same page regarding course content and expectations, the more successful your will be. DON'T FALL BEHIND.

Candidates are responsible for getting work in on time. **All assignments due on Blackboard must be submitted by midnight on the due date indicated (always Sundays).** All assignments must be submitted in Microsoft Word, 12 points, Times New Roman, double spaced. Minimal headers should exist on submitted papers. Please be sure all work is saved more than once, as it is not the teacher's responsibility if technology issues suddenly occur.

As educators are expected to represent professionalism and model learning, all documents must be adequately proofread for grammar, spelling, formatting, and punctuation errors. Points will be deducted for inaccuracies. The ASU Writing Center is available to assist you as needed. In addition, all work is expected to follow the guidelines of the APA Manual, 6th edition. A positive attitude, adherence to professional dispositions (see Course Documents), effort and preparation are equally important in this course and in the profession you are preparing to join.

Active participation in all assignments is key to the success of this course. Online courses require time management, initiative, research, and a lot of effort on the part of the student. While the instructor recognizes that last minute questions are sure to arise, it is the student's responsibility to plan in advance and to ask questions as needed in a timely manner. Please allow 24 hours for email responses and up to 2 weeks for assignment grading.

Due to privacy issues, only ASU email can be utilized when communicating with the instructor.

All assignments must be submitted through the Assignments tab in Blackboard (not through Digital Dropbox). To do so, click on "Assignments" in the left tab for the course home page. Then, click on the assignment title of the assignment you would like to submit. Type any notes you have in the text box, and attach your file (just as you would an email), then submit. Do not copy and paste your entire document in the text box. To ensure your assignment has been received, check your grades. In the appropriate assignment column, there should be a code indicating your submission has been successful and is awaiting grading (usually an exclamation point). Emailed assignments are not accepted.

All work for this course must indicate reflection, insight, and required reading.

Academic Honesty:

Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor code, which is contained in both print and web versions of the Student Handbook.

Persons Seeking Accommodations:

Persons with disabilities which may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office (Room 112 University Center) to request such accommodations. You are encouraged to make this request early in the semester, and no accommodations may be implemented without such a request.

Course Activities

A fundamental activity is reading: read the textbook, read journal articles, and read Internet articles written by professionals. Expect to spend a minimum of 100 hours reading for this course. Students must analyze laws, policies, and court decisions then evaluate them for applicability. Students must take responsibility to learn:

1. how to perform legal research
2. how to read a court decision
3. to write a legal case study
4. proper citations and referencing using APA style and format

Course Assignments

There are six assignments and a warm-up exercise. The warm-up has low point value, but without this foundational knowledge you will struggle with this course. Some assignments have multiple parts and require multiple submissions. Their point value is indicated in bold. Detail instructions and help for each assignment are provided on Blackboard.

Warm up exercise.

Students learn some legal terminology and a variety of pertinent information that they will need to be successful in this course and in their professional lives. **5 points**

Sources of law.

Students investigate the categories of sources of educational law. Knowledge of the categories of sources will be derived initially from the Course Material in Blackboard, from The Educator's Guide to Texas School Law, or many other web-sources. The knowledge gained in this exercise is then submitted in the form of an academic article written for publication in a professional journal using APA style and format. The goals of this assignment are to gain or refresh knowledge of the broad categories of laws, to comprehend the technical aspects of how the laws originate, and to analyze the applicability of the source of laws to the educational system. **5 points**

Constitutional law.

Students read and analyze the United States and Texas constitutions to determine their relevance to the school systems in Texas. Students may derive initial information by reading about the constitutions in government textbooks, published articles, or even encyclopedia articles. Student's understanding of the relevance of the constitutions will be assessed by evaluation of a written assignment. Information in the paper must be obtained directly from the legal documents themselves. The goal of the assignment is for students to synthesis knowledge of the documents with their multitude of amendments into a well-organized understanding of the legal chain of authority over the system of public schooling in Texas. **15 points**

Statutory law.

Students investigate federal and state legislative bodies with emphasis on statutes that directly or indirectly influence the Texas school system. The students will write three professional papers, which each explain the origin of a code or statute and summarize the direct impacted on education. Topics must be chosen from the list provided in the assignment instructions and one, pertinent to the student's area of specialization, is a free choice. The goal of the assignment is for the student to gain experience in independent investigation of pertinent statutes using the original legal document instead of relying on published summaries and applying guidelines on the statutes that were written by others. **15 points**

Judicial law.

Students will read, analyze, and explain important court decisions that have influenced the Texas educational system. They will demonstrate comprehension of the social and educational relevance of the cases by discussing their current significance. The goal of the assignment is for students to gain legal wisdom instead of legal knowledge. Students will

comprehend the pattern of reasoning utilized by the courts in formulating their decisions on these socially relevant issues and gain the ability to apply that reasoning in their chosen profession instead of searching for a specifically relevant law. **15 points**

Administrative law.

Student investigates administrative laws then writes a paper on the administrative structure and governance of the Texas School System with emphasis on either the K-12 system or the Higher Education system(s). It will include an overview of the pertinent administrative codes. Information may be derived initially from a resource book or from the Internet. However, the paper must be augmented by information obtained directly from the administrative codes. The goal of this assignment is for the student to garner an in-depth understanding of the administrative structure of the Texas educational system and to learn the applicable administrative codes. **15 points**

Creation of legal topic guides.

Students will prepare one legal topic guide in a format of their choice. The emphasis of the guide is on the laws that control educational administration in a specific area. A list of topics is provided in the assignment instructions. The goal of the assignment is to demonstrate that the student can synthesize all of the knowledge gained in this class on the four sources of laws and applies that knowledge to real-world education situations. This will prove to you that you have mastered this competency. **30 points**

*Details for all assignments can be found in Blackboard.