FINC 4347/6347 – ESTATE PLANNING

Course Description/Overview

Various aspects of estate and gift tax planning—including the nature, valuation, transfer, administration, and taxation of property are discussed. Particular emphasis is given to a basic understanding of the unified estate and gift tax system. This course covers gratuitous transfers of property outright or with trusts, wills, and powers of appointment. It also covers federal estate and gift taxation, the marital deduction, and various estate planning devices used in the estate planning process. In addition, the client interview, fact-finding, ethical standards, and the development of appropriate personal estate plans are discussed.

Prerequisite Knowledge

None

Course Technology

Internet access necessary. Course materials may be found on the University’s Blackboard system at http://blackboard.angelo.edu.

Class Meeting Times and Location

Class will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays from Noon to 1:15p.m. in RAS 103.

Technical Support

The Technology Service Center (TSC) may be contacted by calling (325) 942-2911 or 1-866-942-2911 or by email at helpdesk@angelo.edu

Faculty/Instructor Information

Whitney Leifeste Ruiz

Senior Instructor of Business Law

Office: RAS 254
Phone: 325-486-6489
E-Mail: whitney.ruiz@angelo.edu

About the Instructor:

Doctorate of Jurisprudence University of Texas – Austin
Masters in Communication Angelo State University
Licensed Attorney State of Texas

Office Hours:
Mondays & Wednesdays 9:30a.m.-10:30a.m.
Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:30a.m.-1:30p.m.
Course Textbook and Required Readings

Publisher: Money Education
Title: Estate Planning
Edition: 10th
Author: Michael A. Dalton & Thomas P. Langdon
ISBN: 978-1-946711-77-9

Other readings are assigned in a timely manner as needed and are provided to you as PDF, MS Word format, or a link to an online resource will be provided.

Grading Policies

This course employs the following to measure student learning.
- 20% = Homework, Quizzes, and Assignments
- 20% = Exam #1
- 20% = Exam #2
- 20% = Exam #3
- 20% = Exam #4

Angelo State University employs a letter grade system. Grades in this course are determined on a percentage scale:
- A = 90 – 100%
- B = 80 – 89%
- C = 70 – 79%
- D = 60 – 69%
- F = 59% and below.

Response Time
Exams will normally be returned within seven days. Response to emails will normally be within 24 hours Monday through Friday.

Missed/Late Work
There are no makeups!!! Regardless of your attendance, you are responsible for class notes, handouts, and deadlines. There may be additional assignments and announcements made in class. It is your responsibility to find out from your classmates what you have missed.

Your homework, assignment, and quizzes must be turned in or completed online timely or you will receive a zero. Exams must be taken as scheduled. Only the most severe emergencies will be considered as excuses for missing an exam. Should you miss an exam for such an emergency, every effort should be made to contact me prior to the scheduled exam. If you are unable to contact me before the scheduled exam time, then you should contact me as soon as is possible after you have missed such an exam. Inordinate delay will result in you not being allowed to make up the exam.
Participation/Absenteeism
In order to succeed in this class, you will need to be present. Actively taking notes & participating in discussions will be a must for success. I realize that emergencies arise and you may have to miss class. Therefore, you are each allowed 4 penalty free absences this term. However, 1 point will be deducted from your final course grade for each class missed after the penalty free absences. There will be an attendance sign-in sheet, and it is your responsibility to make sure that you sign it each day; If you fail to sign it you will be counted as absent. You must be present for the entire class in order to be counted present. Do not skip four classes and then expect to have an illness excused. These penalty free absences are to be used for illnesses, family emergencies, etc. Use them wisely.

Final Exam
The fourth exam will be given during your designated Final Exam time. This exam is not comprehensive and has the same weight as the other exams.

Course Policies

Academic Honesty and Integrity
Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with the university Academic Honor Code and the ASU Student Handbook.

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.

It is the professor’s intention to be as fair and impartial as is humanly possible. Therefore, all students will be asked to adhere to the same set of guidelines and rules UNLESS there are disabilities or documented extenuating circumstances that have been discussed with the professor and the Student Life Office. Please make sure you inform the professor as soon as any situation arises. Do NOT wait until the problem is compounded by poor class performance, poor attendance, etc.

Academic integrity is expected. This includes, but is not limited to, any form of cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized sharing of work, or unauthorized possession of course materials. The professor assumes that all students can be trusted. Please do no violate this trust. Violation of academic integrity will result in a failing grade for the course.

Courtesy and Respect
Courtesy and Respect are essential ingredients to this course. We respect each other's opinions and respect their point of view at all times while in our class sessions. The use of profanity & harassment of any form is strictly prohibited (Zero Tolerance), as are those remarks concerning one's ethnicity, life style, race (ethnicity), religion, etc., violations of these rules will result in immediate dismissal from the course.
Accommodations for Disability

ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation.

Student Affairs is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by emailing studentservices@angelo.edu, or by contacting:

Mrs. Dallas Swafford  
Director of Student Development  
Office of Student Affairs  
University Center, Suite 112  
325-942-2047 Office  
325-942-2211 FAX  
Dallas.Swafford@angelo.edu

Student absence for religious holidays

As stated in the Angelo State University Operating Policy and Procedure (OP 10.19 Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Day), a student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.

Course Drop

To view information about how to drop this course or to calculate important dates relevant to dropping this course, you can visit  

Incomplete as a Course grade

As stated in the Angelo State University Operating Policy and Procedure (OP 10.11 Grading Procedures), the grade I is given when the student is unable to complete the course because of illness or personal misfortune. An I that is not removed before the end of the next long semester automatically becomes an F. A graduate student will be allowed one year to remove a grade of I before it automatically becomes an F. To graduate from ASU, a student must complete all I’s.
Grade Appeal Process
As stated in the Angelo State University Operating Policy and Procedure (OP 10.03 Student Grade Grievances), a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see Operating Procedure 10.03 at: http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14196-op-1003-grade-grievance.

College of Business Code of Ethics
Students, faculty, administrators and professional staff of the College of Business should always:

- Be forthright and truthful in dealings with all stakeholders
- Take responsibility for one’s actions and decisions
- Serve as an example of ethical decision-making and behavior to others
- Admit errors when they occur, without trying to conceal them
- Respect the basic dignity of others by treating them as one would wish to be treated

Disclaimer
Come on….I’m a lawyer, of course I have to have a disclaimer. In all seriousness, we will be discussing many different topics, some of which may involve sensitive issues. Personal opinions will be expressed and often welcomed to further the discussion. Please do not take any such expression by me or any other student personally. You will not be graded based upon your personal opinions expressed in class. You will be graded on your understanding of the law as it stands, regardless of whether or not you agree with the current status of the law or the policies behind it. At all times, however, students are expected to be respectful of each other and of me.
## Course Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description and Reading Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08/28/17, Mon.</td>
<td>Introduction to Course &amp; Chapter 1: Introduction to Estate Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/30/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Chapter 2: Basic Estate Planning Documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/04/17, Mon.</td>
<td>LABOR DAY HOLIDAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/06/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Chapter 2: Basic Estate Planning Documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/11/17, Mon.</td>
<td>Chapter 3: Types of Property Interests</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/13/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Chapter 3: Types of Property Interests</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/18/17, Mon.</td>
<td>Chapter 4: The Probate Process</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/20/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Chapter 4: The Probate Process</td>
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<tr>
<td>09/25/17, Mon.</td>
<td><strong>Exam #1 (covering chapters 1-4)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>09/27/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Chapter 5: Gift Tax</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/02/17, Mon.</td>
<td>Chapter 5: Gift Tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/04/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Chapter 6: Estate Tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/09/17, Mon.</td>
<td>Chapter 6: Estate Tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/11/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/16/17, Mon.</td>
<td><strong>Exam #2 (covering chapters 5 &amp; 6)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10/18/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Chapter 7: Transfers During Life and at Death</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/23/17, Mon.</td>
<td>Chapter 7: Transfers During Life and at Death</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/25/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Chapter 8: Trusts</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/30/17, Mon.</td>
<td>Chapter 8: Trusts</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/01/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Chapter 9: Charitable Giving</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/03/17, Fri.</td>
<td><strong>LAST DAY TO DROP</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11/06/17, Mon.</td>
<td>Chapter 9: Charitable Giving</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/08/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/13/17, Mon.</td>
<td><strong>Exam #3 (covering chapters 7-9)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11/15/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Chapter 10: The Unlimited Marital Deduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/20/17, Mon.</td>
<td>Chapter 10: The Unlimited Marital Deduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/22/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holiday ~ No class today!</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/27/17, Mon.</td>
<td>Chapter 11: Life Insurance in Estate Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/04/17, Mon.</td>
<td>Chapter 12: Special Elections and Post Mortem Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/06/17, Wed.</td>
<td>Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/11/17, Mon.</td>
<td><strong>EXAM #4 (covering chapters 10-12)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>This syllabus is subject to change by the instructor.</strong></td>
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