

Batra Real Property Spring 2024
Syllabus
2 Credit Hours

General Information

Required Text: The required text for the course is Sprankling, *Understanding Property Law*, (Carolina Academic Press, 5th ed. 2023). Note that this is a treatise rather than a traditional casebook. All page references are to this book unless otherwise indicated.

Other Supplementary Materials: You are welcome to consult any outside material you feel enhances your knowledge of the subject, including hornbooks or commercial outlines. However, remember that you will be tested on your knowledge of material from this class alone.

Class Times: Asynchronous, entirely on Zoom

Email: rbatra3@gmu.edu

Blackboard: Please make sure you are receiving notifications from the BlackBoard site for this course. I will use BlackBoard to post announcements or additional information related to the course. See below for information on the technology requirements for and steps to access Blackboard.

Student Learning Objectives

Listed below are two learning objectives for this course. At the conclusion of the course, it is my goal and intent that these outcomes will have been achieved.

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the law surrounding the development and contemporary treatment of property law in the U.S., including an understanding of the way individual and group property rights are classified, restricted, and subjected to regulation, with a focus on subject matter tested on the bar exam.
2. Students will analyze legal issues that arise in a variety of property law contexts by applying relevant law and policy concerns to legally significant facts to suggest possible resolution of the issues.

Blackboard Login Instructions

Access to [MyMason](#) and GMU email are required to participate successfully in this course. Please make sure to update your computer and prepare yourself to begin using the online format BEFORE the first day of class. Check [the IT Support Center](#) website. Navigate to [the Student Support page](#) for help and information about Blackboard. In the menu bar to the left, you will find all the tools you need to become familiar with for this

course. Take time to learn each. Make sure you run a system check a few days before class. Become familiar with the attributes of Blackboard and online learning.

Technology Requirements

You will need a reliable computer and internet access to view course materials in Blackboard.

Hardware: You will need access to a Windows or Macintosh computer with at least 2 GB of RAM and access to a fast and reliable broadband internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL). A larger screen is recommended for better visibility of course material. You will need speakers or headphones to hear recorded content and a headset with a microphone is recommended for the best experience. For the amount of Hard Disk Space required taking a distance education course, consider and allow for:

1. the storage amount needed to install any additional software and
2. space to store work that you will do for the course.

If you consider the purchase of a new computer, please go to [Patriot Tech](#) to see recommendations.

Software: This course uses Blackboard as the learning management system. You will need a browser and operating system that are listed compatible or certified with the Blackboard version available on the [myMason Portal](#). See [supported browsers and operating systems](#). Log in to [myMason](#) to access your registered courses. Some courses may use other learning management systems. Check the syllabus or contact the instructor for details. Online courses typically use [Acrobat Reader](#), [Flash](#), [Java](#), and [Windows Media Player](#), [QuickTime](#) and/or [Real Media Player](#). Your computer should be capable of running current versions of those applications. Also, make sure your computer is protected from viruses by downloading the latest version of Symantec Endpoint Protection/Anti-Virus software for free [here](#).

Students owning Macs or Linux should be aware that some courses may use software that only runs on Windows. You can set up a Mac computer with Boot Camp or virtualization software so Windows will also run on it. Watch [this video](#) about using Windows on a Mac. Computers running Linux can also be configured with virtualization software or configured to dual boot with Windows.

Note: If you are using an employer-provided computer or corporate office for class attendance, please verify with your systems administrators that you will be able to install the necessary applications and that system or corporate firewalls do not block access to any sites or media types.

Exams and grading

Course grades will be based on a series of multiple-choice exams that will be similar in format or content to the Multistate Bar Exam, as well as occasional Discussion Board Posts in the class.

Multiple Choice Exams

There will be a short multiple-choice exam released on Blackboard after each Module. You will be able to take each module exam twice. One will be a Practice Exam which will not count towards your grade but will let you know which questions you completed correctly, and which were incorrect. You will then *be able to take the same quiz again as a Multiple-Choice Exam for a grade* using the knowledge from before. **You must take the practice exam for the Multiple-Choice Exam (graded) to appear.**

Multiple Choice Exams will count for 90% of your grade.

Discussion Board Posts

There will be occasional prompts for discussion board posts on the course discussion board as part of a Module. Completing these posts in a thoughtful and timely manner is a requirement for completing the Module.

Discussion Board Posts may result in an upward (for excellent posts) or downward (for failure to complete the posts) grade adjustment of one-half grade (i.e. A- to A or B+ to B).

Course Topics and Reading

WEEK	TOPICS	READINGS
Module 1 Introduction, Adverse Possession and Concurrent Ownership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Adverse Possession 3. Concurrent Ownership 	Chapter 1 §1.04 Chapter 27 Chapter 10
Module 2 Selling and Financing Real Property	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Sales Contract 2. Condition of the Property 3. The Mortgage 	Chapter 20 Chapter 21 Chapter 22
Module 3 Recording Real Property	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Deed 2. Land Title 3. Recording Systems 4. Title Assurance 	Chapter 23 Chapter 24 Chapter 25 Chapter 26
Module 4 Estates and Future Interests	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. History of the Estate System 2. Present Estates 3. Future Interests 	<i>Skim</i> Chapter 8 Chapter 9 Chapter 12 Chapter 13 Chapter 14, §14.01-§14.09 (<i>Skip</i> §14.10-§14.14)
Module 5 Leasing Real Property	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Creating the Tenancy 3. Condition of the Premises 4. Transfers 5. Termination of Tenancies 	Chapter 15 Chapter 16 Chapter 17 Chapter 18 Chapter 19
Module 6 Private Land Use Planning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Easements 2. Real Covenants 3. Equitable Servitudes 4. Condominiums 	Chapter 32 Chapter 33 Chapter 34 Chapter 35
Module 7 Zoning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Zoning 2. Course Review 	Chapter 36 Chapter 37 Chapter 38

Instructor-Student Communication:

Announcements for the course will be posted on BlackBoard. Make sure you are receiving emails from the BlackBoard site. Feel free to ask questions about the subject matter of the course or any questions on course policies or procedures through:

1. Emailing me at rbatra3@gmu.edu and rishib@gmail.com
2. The "Questions for the Professor" Discussion Board on BlackBoard

Feel free to respond to other students in the Questions for the Professor Board if you know the answer.

University Policies and Resources

- a. Academic Honesty: You are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University's Honor Code. The Code can be found [here](#). It is your responsibility to see me if you have questions about these policies. George Mason University has an honor code that states the following:
To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this:
- b. Students must follow the university policy for [Responsible Use of Computing](#)
- c. Student services: The University provides range of services to help you succeed academically and you should make use of these if you think they could benefit you. I also invite you to speak to me (the earlier the better).
- d. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- e. [The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance. Counseling Center: Student Union I, Room 364, 703-993-2380.
- f. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the [George Mason University Office of Disability Services \(ODS\)](#) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Please note that accommodations MUST BE MADE BEFORE assignments or exams are due. I cannot adjust your grade after the fact.
- g. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- h. [The George Mason University Writing Center](#) staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support

students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. University Writing Center: Robinson Hall Room A114, 703-993-1200. The writing center includes assistance for students for whom English is a second language.

- i. [Diversity](#): George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.
- j. Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence: Pursuant to proposed Academic Regulation 4.3, the use of generative artificial intelligence (“GAI,” defined herein) is not permitted except as the professor expressly permits in writing in the course syllabus. For this class, GAI may NOT be used on the Pre-course knowledge evaluation or on any of the graded examinations or discussion posts mentioned above. Definition: Generative artificial intelligence (GAI) is a type of artificial intelligence that uses algorithms to generate new content, such as text or images, based on the data it has been trained on. For purposes of this regulation, GAI is not intended to encompass legal research databases and word processing applications that, while incorporating AI-based elements or enhancements, do not generate novel text. ChatGPT and other chatbots are good examples of GAI as that term is used here.