Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
College of Science and Technology
Department of Computing Sciences
Geographic Information Science Program

SPRING, 2012

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Stacey D. Lyle, RPLS
CBI 108, Phone: 825-3712 or 548-8852
eMail: Stacey.Lyle@tamucc.edu

COURSE NAME: GISC 4305: Legal Aspects of Spatial Information 3sem. hrs.

LECTURE TIMES: M-W-F 10-11:50am

LECTURE LOCATION: CCH103

OFFICE HOURS: 8-10 am MW 2-4pm and by appointment 108 CBI

Note: Dr. Stacey D. Lyle, RPLS reserves the right to change this syllabus at anytime. It is the student’s responsibility to have the most current syllabus. Sometimes meetings are called during my office hours, so contact me before coming – that is, try and arrange your meeting with me in advance.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Legal ownership of spatial data and information collected in the public sector. Public access to large digital databases. Copyright law as applied to spatial data. Legal issues related to property boundaries, statutory boundaries, voter district boundaries, and jurisdictional boundaries. Government fees and charges for access to Spatial data. Social and economic value of spatial data.

II. Prerequisites: GISC 2470, COSC 1372.

III. Required Text:
Selected Handouts

V. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:
1. Understand the origins of legal principles and how they are applied to spatial information.
2. Familiarize with the concepts of open records and copyright.
3. Be familiar with the way legal issues change over time.
4. Understand the concepts of statute law and common law as applied to spatial information.
5. Understand some legal requirements for running a business.
6. Undertake an oral and visual presentation of a researched precedent setting legal case.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Course requirements include the following:
1) Attendance at lectures.
2) Completion and hand in of assignments by the due date.
3) Attendance and completion of quizzes on the scheduled date and time.
4) Participation in class discussion.

V. COURSE OUTLINE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>MATERIAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION: Overview of course objectives and requirements. Definitions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>TYPES OF LAW: The history of the development of law in Texas and the United States. Civil law, common law, statute law, and case law</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>LAND INFORMATION AND THE LAW: The legal cases under which land tenure has evolved. The development of land law from cases in Texas.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>EVOLUTION OF LEGAL ASPECTS OF GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: The reliance of spatial information in decision making and the liabilities of providing information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>DEEDS RECORDING AND OTHER SPATIAL PUBLIC RECORDS IN THE UNITED STATES: The development of the County Courthouse system of deeds recording and other spatial data available to the public. The case in Texas and the US.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>COPYRIGHT: The reason copyright and where it can be used in spatial information.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>MISREPRESENTATION OF SPATIAL INFORMATION: Technical and liability issues in providing incorrect spatial information</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>CONTRACTUAL ISSUES IN PROVIDING SPATIAL INFORMATION: The principles behind the use of contracts and their use in providing spatial information.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>OPEN RECORDS LAWS: How open records have been drafted and put into effect. Issues related to spatial information and open records.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>COURT CASES INVOLVING SPATIAL INFORMATION: A review of court cases that have provided a legal interpretation of the liability of providing spatial information.</td>
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\(^1\) Subject to change.
LEGAL ASPECTS OF GEOMATICS/GIS BUSINESS OPERATION: A review of legal aspects of running a business for profit. Includes topics on employees, OSHA requirements, insurance on liability, and contractual arrangements with clients.

VI. ASSESSMENT:

1) Assignment on legal research.
2) Mid-semester Quiz.
3) Research assignment on Geomatics/GIS case law.
4) Oral presentation of court case research.
5) End-semester Quiz.

VII. Grade allocations.

1) 20%
2) 20%
3) 25%
4) 15%
5) 20%

TOTAL 100%
Notice to Students with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in Driftwood 101, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

ACADEMIC ADVISING: The College of Science and Technology requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor (Ms. Ida Olivarez. Office: FC 168. Phone: 825-5797. Zip+4: 5806. URL: http://www.sci.tamucc.edu/camsadvising/. Email: ida.olivarez@tamucc.edu) as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair.

Grade Appeal Process. As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, 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 University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR COURSES AND LABS
IN THE GISC PROGRAM
CULTURE, REGULATIONS, MODES OF OPERATION AND PROCEDURES

These guidelines are designed to inform scholars of their responsibilities and of the course requirements in order to make this course a positive experience. The instructor is always available for consultation and discussion with students on any aspect of a course and of these general guidelines.

CLASS CULTURE

1) Consider yourself as a scholar rather than a student. The term “student” may imply some passivity, whereas the term “scholar” implies active participation, understanding and searching. We will use these terms interchangeably with the meaning of “scholar” implied. Osmosis does not work in a learning environment!

A good scholar takes NOTES at every class meeting.

2) Further, define yourself as a “thinking explorer”. You are responsible for your education; an instructor can only be a guide and a facilitator. An instructor cannot learn for you. If you come across something that really interests you, explore it further.

3) Your experience at this University should not consist of passing a series of courses to earn a degree. Your experience should rather be a series of activities that will give you an education.
4) Concentrate on “learning to learn”. You will have to be a life-long learner to survive in your chosen career.

5) There is no such thing as a stupid question; there is such a thing as a stupid answer. So ask questions, the instructor is taking all the risks! Ask questions of your instructor and of your fellow scholars. Many times questions are more important than answers.

6) Keep copious notes of all that is going on in all the meetings related to your course. Make a note of what the instructor is stressing. At the end of each lecture you should be able to answer two questions: What did I learn from this lecture? and What was not clear to me? At the beginning of each lecture, if the instructor does not ask for questions, you need to ask if there is something you did not understand from the last lecture. Review, consolidate, annotate and organize your lecture/lab notes on a regular basis, at least once a week. The Internet is a tremendous resource and also a great danger. When you find information on the Internet, you have no idea if it is correct. View such information with caution. But, use the Internet to explore topics that interest you. Do not only prepare for the exam in a course – learn as much as you can on the topics introduced to you by the course material. You are responsible for the extent of your education! READ MINDFULLY !!!!!

7) In addition to details of the syllabus given in class, the syllabus for the course includes all the chapters of the required textbook/s unless indicated otherwise by the instructor. The student is responsible for all materials/topics covered in class, in handouts, in assignments, in labs, and in outings or field trips. The instructor is NOT responsible for informing absent students exactly what was covered in previous classes, meetings, etc.

**PROCEDURES & REGULATIONS**

8) The final letter grade for the class will be based on the raw composite numerical score obtained from the weighted average of the tests, quizzes, exams, labs, etc. as indicated by the instructor. The raw composite numerical score may be adjusted (curved) based on the highest score, the statistical profile of the scores and other academic standards or other considerations. Generally the letter grade of A is 90% and over of the adjusted score, a B is between 80% and 89% (inclusive) of the adjusted score, a C is between 70% and 79% (inclusive) of the adjusted score, a D is below 70% of the adjusted score and an F is below 60% of the adjusted score. An incomplete (I) will only be given in very unusual circumstances. The University regulations on incomplete grades state: “An incomplete notation may be given to a student who is passing but has not completed a term paper, examination, or other required work for reasons beyond the student’s control other than the lack of time”. Students are expected to take ALL tests, quizzes, exams, etc., and to complete and hand in all labs and other assignments. There is no provision for “extra credit”. No final grades will be given via the telephone, e-mail, etc.

9) All University rules, regulations and expected student conduct apply to this course. Students are held responsible for the information given in the current Catalog and Student Handbook. Make yourself aware of the University security regulations.

10) All labs, assignments, etc. must be handed in on the assigned due date. Scholars having problems must notify the instructor well before the due date. Marks will be deducted for poor and sloppily presented work.

11) Labs, etc. handed in after the due date may be subject to a penalty of loss of marks. Labs, etc. handed in after the graded labs, etc. have been returned to students will get zero marks but must be handed in to the instructor. Labs will be returned to students, after they have been graded, at a class meeting. Students who miss this meeting will be able to collect graded work in the marked box outside the instructor’s office.
12) Scholars are asked to take special note of the penalties, which the University attaches to Academic Dishonesty. Consult the Student Handbook.

13) All work handed in to the instructor must be the student’s own work. Extracts, excerpts, etc. from the work of others must be suitably noted, acknowledged and properly referenced. Any Group Work will be judged in the same way. That is, it is the work of the group and the extracts, excerpts, etc. of others must be acknowledged.

14) All written and graphical work handed in must be presented neatly printed and bound (staples are adequate). Students’ written work will be judged on written communication skills, critical thinking and problem solving ability.

15) Students are expected to be present at all meetings (lectures, labs, etc.) of the class. Students are expected to be present at the date and time assigned for all tests, exams, quizzes, etc. There are NO provisions for making up missed exams except in cases where prior arrangements have been made and agreed to by the instructor. During the assigned lab session, ONLY assigned labs are to be done. All other work must be done in other rooms.

16) All cellular phones and other similar devices MUST BE TURNED OFF during lectures, labs and other class meetings.

17) All students must keep their university e-mail addresses (firstnamefirstletterlastname@islander.tamucc.edu). This will be the means of communication between the instructor and the class.

18) The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the above with due notice to the students. These changes will be announced in class and each student is responsible for keeping herself/himself informed of such changes.