

#### RECOMMENDED BAR COURSES DURING THE SECOND AND THIRD YEARS OF STUDY

These are the elective courses offered by the college that correspond to the Texas essay portion of the examination:

<i>Texas Essay Subject</i>	<i>South Texas College of Law Houston Course</i>
Uniform Commercial Code	Payment Systems, Secured Transactions
Business Associations	Corporations, Agency and Partnership
Family Law	Family Law, Marital Property and Homestead
Wills and Administration	Wills, Trusts, and Estates, Administration of Estates and Guardianships
Real Property	Oil, Gas and Mineral Law
Trust and Guardianship	Wills, Trusts, and Estates, Administration of Estates and Guardianships
Consumer Law	Consumer Transactions

The examination also sometimes includes “crossover” topics, such as taxation and bankruptcy, that may be tested under various subjects. Possible bar “crossover” questions may come from Federal Income Taxation (*already a required course*), Estate and Gift Taxation, Business Bankruptcy, and Consumer Bankruptcy and Debt Collection.

#### MULTISTATE PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY EXAMINATION (MPRE)

You are required to take and pass the MPRE. A passing MPRE score is valid for five years from the date the MPRE is taken. The MPRE requirement must be completed prior to the issuance of a Texas law license. A passing Texas bar examination score is void if an applicant has not satisfied all admission requirements within two years of notification.

The MPRE is administered three times each year. You may obtain information about MPRE by visiting [www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre](http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre).

#### BAR REVIEW COURSES

Graduates can prepare for the Texas Bar Exam with various bar review courses. A first-year student can “freeze” the price against any price increase by making an early deposit. Deposits for bar review courses vary in amount. The student receives appropriate outlines of courses and other study aids along with helpful hints on studying for and taking the bar exam. Representatives of these courses will be available in the student lounge at various times throughout the year. (*See also Free South Texas College of Law Houston Bar Preview, page 108.*)

### BAR EXAMINATION 86-HOUR RULE

The Rules Governing Admission to the Bar of Texas (*effective February 1, 1994*) permit a person to sit for the bar if he or she has graduated with a J.D. degree or satisfied all J.D. requirements “except for not more than four semester hours ...” Accordingly, a student seeking to take the Texas Bar Examination prior to graduation may be certified under the “86-Hour Rule” (*i.e.*, being within four hours of completing degree requirements), subject to the college regulations requiring a clear balance on the student’s account.

Any student planning to take the bar examination under the “86-Hour Rule” should give due consideration to the following rules which will be strictly enforced:

- » The 86 hours must be in your “official records” by the end of the fall semester for the February bar and by the end of the spring semester for the July bar. The qualifying hours must be on record prior to the summer session for the July bar.
- » Students must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.200 at the time of the bar in order to be certified
- » A student taking the bar examination early may not have grades received and posted in time to be sworn in with the other successful bar candidates. Grades are due 28 days after the date of the last final examination. The college does not request any early grades. The Office of the Registrar certifies a candidate as a graduate upon receipt and posting of all grades and verification that all graduation requirements have been met. The certification date may not be earlier than the day after the official date of graduation.

### BAR CARD

Texas state law permits qualified law students and qualified unlicensed law school graduates to participate in the trial of cases in Texas under the supervision of a licensed attorney. The application form for obtaining a “temporary bar card” is available through Ben Santillan, Room 1035T.

There are two situations that make an enrolled student eligible for a temporary bar card:

- » Completion of at least two-thirds of the required hours toward graduation.
- » Completion of at least half of the required hours toward graduation and enrollment in a clinical program.

In either case, the student must not be on scholastic probation. The student must also certify that he/she has read and is familiar with the Code of Professional Responsibility of the State Bar of Texas and will abide by those rules, including the grievance procedures of the State Bar.

#### A GUIDE TO THE BASICS OF LAW PRACTICE

All lawyers licensed in the State of Texas on and after July 1, 1996, are required to take the course entitled A Guide to the Basics of Law Practice, sponsored by the Texas Center for Legal Ethics and Professionalism. The Texas Center for Legal Ethics and Professionalism shall offer the course a number of times each year in cities where law schools are located. The requirement of course attendance may be satisfied by a prospective lawyer taking the course within 12 months before licensure or within 12 months after licensure. Topics covered include: Law Office Management, Advertising and Marketing Legal Services, Professionalism, Practicing in State and Federal Courts, A Client's Honesty, Your Role in a Law Firm, A Malpractice Primer, Guide to Attorneys' Professional Liability Insurance, Law Practice Killers, Lawyer Disciplinary Procedures.

#### STATE BAR EXAMINATION INFORMATION: OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Any student planning to take the bar examination in another jurisdiction should stop by the Registrar's Office to obtain information regarding dates and locations, applications, filing requirements, bar exam fees, bar exam format, grading formula, MPRE score requirements, and reciprocity.

#### THE DOCTOR OF JURISPRUDENCE DEGREE

The Doctor of Jurisprudence degree (JD) will be conferred upon students who have successfully completed all requirements of South Texas College of Law Houston for graduation. There are three graduating classes each year (*May-spring semester; July-summer session; December-fall semester*) with two graduation ceremonies. The May graduation ceremony honors the May and July graduates and is traditionally held off campus. The December graduation ceremony honors the December graduates. The size of the graduating class will determine the location of the ceremony, whether on or off campus.

#### REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

A candidate for a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree is required to:

- » Meet all entrance requirements.
- » Earn at least 90 semester hours of credit with a passing grade and a cumulative grade average of 2.200 or better within seven years of the date of first enrollment. No more than 30 semester hours may be earned at other law schools.

Complete with a passing grade the following required courses for graduation: Civil Procedure; Constitutional Law; Contracts I and II; Criminal Law; Evidence; Federal Income Taxation; Legal Research and Writing I and II; Professional Responsibility; Property I and II; Torts I and II; substantial writing and professional skills courses (*minimum of six (6) credit hours*).

- » Complete the degree no earlier than 24 months and no later than 84 months after commencing law studies.
- » Complete all required courses in residence, unless required courses were accepted when a student transferred into the college.
- » Submit a formal application for graduation.
- » Pay all fees and tuition charges incurred prior to graduation.
- » Participate in commencement, unless permission to graduate in absentia is granted by the Dean.
- » A student under Academic Supervision must satisfy the following additional requirements for graduation:
  - Complete with a passing grade the following courses: Consumer Transactions, Payment Systems, Secured Transactions, and Texas Pretrial Procedure.
  - Complete with a passing grade at least six of the following nine courses: Agency and Partnership; Corporations; Criminal Procedure; Family Law; Marital Property; Oil, Gas, and Mineral Law; Texas Criminal Procedure; Texas Trial and Appellate Procedure; and Wills, Trusts, and Estates.
  - Attend the college's bar examination preparation course. Students satisfy this requirement only by attending at least 80 percent of the course's regularly-scheduled sessions. Students are not obliged to pay for this course, and it will not count toward the 90 semester hours credit required for graduation.

If any of the above requirements are not met, the degree cannot be conferred and the anticipated graduation date will move to the next semester. Examples typically include: 1) a grade of "F" or "incomplete" entered on the record or 2) credit not received for a course taken as a visiting student. All requirements must be met within a period no later than one year after the original graduation. The degree will be conferred in the semester when all requirements have been finally met.

## OFFICIAL NOTICES

Students will be deemed responsible for having received official college information when delivered through the following sources:

*Campus Mailboxes* – Each student is assigned a mailbox in which various official communications from the college will be placed. This includes, but is not limited to, checks and financial aid notifications, etc. (*For complete information on student mailboxes, refer to the Student Organizations Office description under the General Information section of this handbook.*)

*Websites, Internet, the STANLEY Portal, and E-mail Accounts* – South Texas College of Law Houston provides each student with a Student Computer Account to access the STANLEY portal. This account allows a student to conduct legal research, serves as a vehicle to receive official notifications from faculty and administrators via the student's e-mail, and provides access to personal academic and financial information. Each student is required to obtain a Student Computer Account to access the above services and receive official college communications. The account is furnished free of charge upon admission to South Texas College of Law Houston. Contact Phi Le, Portal Manager, at 713-646-2926, for further Student Computer Account information. For further information on the STANLEY portal, refer to Information Technology-STANLEY (see page 30). The South Texas College of Law Houston website is located at [www.stcl.edu](http://www.stcl.edu).

*It is the student's sole responsibility to check these sources on a regular basis.*

## STANLEY

STANLEY is the college's portal. Every student is assigned a STANLEY user name and password prior to the first semester of classes. Once this account has been activated, a student may conduct most official college business through this portal, including e-mail, course registration, course drop/add, and viewing exam numbers, account information, grades, and academic records.

## ACADEMIC ADVISING AND COUNSELING

The Office of the Registrar advises students with regard to all academic regulations, including:

- » Class scheduling
- » Attendance
- » Residency requirements
- » Graduation
- » Final examinations
- » Grading system and calculation rules
- » Requests for exception to academic rules and policies, and Student records

Assistant Dean Gena L. Singleton oversees the Office of Student Academic Affairs. She and her staff are available to counsel students regarding personal and professional concerns affecting academic progress including mental, emotional and physical concerns. The Office of Student Academic Affairs coordinates the Faculty Student Advisory Program (*see page 37*). This program assigns second-semester students to a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor assists the student with academic and curricular planning. Students who need accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act must contact Assistant Dean Singleton. Students who need to amend or update their admissions application regarding character and fitness matters must contact Assistant Dean Singleton immediately (*see page 36*). If necessary, Assistant Dean Singleton and her staff can also help with referrals for professional assistance and to other wellness programs. An appointment is recommended.

#### FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME STUDENT CLASSIFICATION

	<i>Full time</i>	<i>Part time</i>
Long Semester ( <i>Fall and Spring</i> )	12-16	8-11
Summer Session**	6-9	3-5

\*\* *Students are not allowed to register for more than 9 semester hour credits in a summer session.*

Students enroll initially as either full-time or part-time students and are required to remain in that status for the academic year. During the first academic year, a student experiencing an extraordinary change in circumstances must obtain approval from the Registrar to change enrollment status.

Under no circumstance is a student allowed to be enrolled full time if they work more than 20 hours per week. Violations of this regulation may result in disciplinary action.

Students seeking to register for more than 16 semester hours during a long semester must submit a request to the Registrar using the Course Add/Drop Waiver form. *Part-time* students may not enroll for more than the maximum number of hours stated above. Graduating seniors in their final semester who need less than the minimum load to graduate are permitted to enroll for less than the minimums set forth above.

#### COURSE LOADS FOR VETERANS' BENEFITS:

	<i>Full time</i>	<i>Three-quarter time</i>	<i>One-half time</i>
Fall and Spring Semesters	12	9	6
Summer Session	6	5	3

### FINANCIAL AID SPECIAL ENROLLMENT RULES

Notwithstanding the number of hours required for full- and part-time South Texas College of Law Houston classifications, any student receiving financial aid must comply with federal requirements. No student will be eligible for financial aid if registered for less than six credit hours during the fall or spring semester or for less than three hours during the summer session. Students who do not complete at least the above-stated hours are treated as if they had withdrawn and the resulting adverse effect under federal regulations may be severe. Students are further advised that under federal regulations a change from full-time to part-time status may result in an overaward of financial aid and require repayment of some or all financial aid received.

### ADD/DROP PROCEDURES

Students have a period of time in all semesters and the summer session to drop a course without prejudice. These dates are published in the school year calendar. After this period, if a student drops voluntarily or is dropped administratively, a failing grade of “WF” will be entered on the student’s record and counted in computing the student’s grade point average. Similarly, a student who withdraws from or leaves the college at any time without following the required procedures will receive a grade of “WF” in every course.

The college will not be responsible for discrepancies in the record of a student who fails to follow the prescribed procedure for adding or dropping courses or otherwise changing his or her registration.

### ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

FALL & SPRING SEMESTER ABSENCES		SUMMER SESSION ABSENCES	
Meetings per Week	Max Absences	Meetings per Week	Max Absences
1	2 (Drop on 3)	1	1 (Drop on 2)
2	5 (Drop on 6)	2	3 (Drop on 4)
		3	4 (Drop on 5)
		4	7 (Drop on 8)

Regular and punctual class attendance is an important part of the learning process for all law students. A student registering or adding a course after classes have begun will be counted absent for classes missed prior to entering the course. These absences will be included in the computing of eligibility to take the final examination and to receive credit for the course. The faculty has determined that while a student should attend 100 percent of scheduled classes, a student must attend at least 80 percent of the classes regularly scheduled in each course; absences in excess of 20 percent of the classes scheduled for any course during the semester

will result in the student's being dropped automatically from such course. An administrative drop due to excessive absences results in a "WF" being entered on the student's permanent record, even if the drop occurs before the last day to drop voluntarily. No refund of tuition or fees will be made when students are administratively dropped for excessive absences.

*Note: In addition, financial aid entitlements may be adversely affected when a student fails to drop a course officially but allows an administrative drop to occur due to excessive absences.*

Every student sitting for a final examination will be required to sign a statement that he/she has attended at least 80 percent of the classes regularly scheduled for each course for which the student was enrolled during that semester. Individual members of the faculty, at their discretion, also may adopt some additional reasonable method of enforcing the 80 percent attendance requirement, such as distribution of an attendance roll sheet. A student's false declaration on that statement or any other attendance document is an act of academic misconduct, subjecting the student to expulsion, suspension, or other discipline. Associate Deans, Assistant Deans, the Registrar, and Professors do not have authority to grant absences in excess of those allowed.

Students are also expected and required to prepare all assignments, to attend classes promptly at the time scheduled, to remain in attendance until excused by the professor or until class is dismissed, and to participate in classroom discussions. A professor may deduct up to two grade increments (*e.g.*, change a student's grade from a B- to C+ or C) from the final grade of any student who, in the opinion of the professor, has been deficient in classroom punctuality, conduct and/or performance. A greater percentage of a student's grade may be allocated to classroom performance only in those classes that are of seminar type or in which a paper or project is required in addition to or in lieu of a final examination. Further, with the permission of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the professor may drop any student from the course for unsatisfactory classroom performance or for misconduct.

All students are required to enroll for classes during each fall and spring semester. Attendance in the summer session is optional. Failure to register for any long semester, or dropping all courses, is considered to be a withdrawal from law school, unless withdrawal without academic prejudice has been approved in advance. Students who have or are deemed to have withdrawn may not re-enroll except with permission from the Registrar.

#### AUDITING COURSES

Students regularly enrolled in the college will not be permitted to audit courses. Permission will be given to graduates of approved law schools and licensed attorneys to audit a course, depending on space availability. Such permission conveys only the privilege of hearing and observing but not taking part in class discussions or examinations. Auditors pay the regular tuition and fees, except that graduates of South Texas College of Law Houston will not be assessed any tuition or fees. Auditors will not receive credit for any course(s) taken; however, their attendance may be reflected on the official transcript of the college upon request.

#### ACCOUNTING SERVICES OFFICE APPROVALS

The college will not award a degree, release an official transcript, or issue a Letter of Good Standing until a student has paid his or her account in full. Graduating students must clear their accounts in the Accounting Services Office by cashier's check, money order or cash payment at least one month before taking the bar examination to ensure the timely release of all necessary bar papers. Cash payment will be necessary from any student requesting immediate clearance. However, students on financial aid who have only a current semester or session balance, and will receive additional loan funds to cover the current balance, will be considered as having cleared their accounts with the Accounting Services Office.

Current students intending to transfer or to visit another law school must submit a request for a Letter of Good Standing at the Office of the Registrar. For students who intend to transfer, a \$35 transfer application fee per transfer application is due at the time of this request. Cashier's check, money order or cash payment will be necessary to ensure immediate release of this information. A Letter of Good Standing will be issued only if a student has cleared his or her account with the Accounting Services Office.

Students who are delinquent in their financial obligations are subject to exclusion from classes until payment is made, and a hold will be placed on their account. Further, delinquent balances will be turned over to a collection agency.

#### CLASSROOM VISITORS

Children may not be brought to class under any circumstances. Adult visitors must have prior permission of the professor but may not visit more than once during any semester.

#### COURSEWORK DEADLINES

In all courses, including seminars, where a professor has imposed a deadline by which a student must submit written materials or perform course-related tasks,

no extension of time or waiver of a deadline shall be granted by anyone other than the professor who imposed the deadline. Students may appeal a professor's deadline decision directly to the Student Appeals and Disciplinary Committee, if aggrieved. This policy in no way is meant to alter or extend the deadline imposed for the faculty member's submission of final grades in a course.

In Legal Research and Writing I and II, failure to meet the deadline imposed by your professor for submission of the final graded memorandum (*in LRWI*) or for the appellate brief (*in LRWII*), will result in a grade of "WF" for the course, and such grade will be used in computing the student's average for scholastic purposes. *Students will not be permitted to withdraw if they fail to meet the deadline.* Legal writing professors will not grant extensions of the deadline absent extraordinary circumstances, adequately documented, such as hospitalization of the student or the death of a close family member. Computer problems and/or transportation delays are not considered sufficient reasons for an extension of time. Accordingly, students are strongly advised to have backup plans in case of computer or traffic emergency.

#### POLICIES FOR ACCOMMODATING LAW STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

It is the policy of the college to provide reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified students, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended in 2009 by the ADAAA. In order to receive accommodations, a student must document a disability protected under the ADA and must describe the current level of impairment and the rationale for requested accommodations deemed necessary to minimize the effect of the disability on the student's educational opportunities. Reasonable accommodations may include adjustments or modifications to course loads, examinations, and auxiliary services. Reasonable accommodations are accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the educational program; impose an undue administrative or financial burden on the law school; lower academic or other performance standards; compromise the validity and reliability of the exam; or provide an unfair advantage to the student.

Students requesting accommodations must submit the Student Application for Accommodations and requisite documentation to the Office of Student Academic Affairs at least six weeks prior to examination and/or program accommodations. The Student Application for Accommodations and the Directions for Documenting Physical Disabilities, Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder, and any other Medical, Physical, or Psychological Disability are available in the office. A noninclusive referral list of qualified diagnosticians and healthcare providers is available in the Office of Student Academic Affairs.

In no circumstance will a student be given retroactive consideration for an exam retake, change in grade, readmission, or other such actions or events due to a qualified disability discovered or disclosed to the college after the deadline for the action or event in question.

If your Student Application for Accommodations is denied, you may pursue two actions:

1. You may submit new or additional information that the college will consider, provided the information is submitted prior to the deadlines described above. You may discuss the feasibility of this option with the Office of Student Academic Affairs based on the reasons for the initial decision; the submission of additional information in no way guarantees a different outcome.

2. You may appeal the decision to an ad hoc committee consisting of three members appointed by the Dean. To appeal, submit a letter to Assistant Dean Singleton stating the specific reasons of your appeal. The appeal does not include a hearing at which new evidence or oral arguments will be considered. The committee will not consider, for the first time, information that was not previously submitted to and considered by the administration in making the initial decision regarding a request for accommodations. The decision of the committee is final.

In case of a medical emergency that results in a disability, please contact the Office of Student Academic Affairs as soon as feasible and prior to the program and/or examination accommodation. Emergency requests must include appropriate and sufficient documentation. Students who identify physical barrier concerns should immediately report them to the Office of Student Academic Affairs.

#### DISTANCE EDUCATION POLICY

Distance education means the teaching of a course in which the instructor and the students are not physically together for substantial periods of time and instruction is conducted via electronic transmission rather than face-to-face interaction. Distance education does not include courses in which the vast majority of the student-teacher interaction is face-to-face but in which additional interaction at a distance is also provided.

A student may not receive more than four (4) hours of credit in any semester in courses taught by distance education.

A student may not receive more than a total of 15 hours of credit toward his or her J.D. degree in courses taught by distance education.