

# AGBU 4365

## Legal Issues in Agribusiness

Spring Semester 2018  
3 credit hours

### **FACULTY INFORMATION:**

Dr. Art Wolfskill, Associate Professor of Agribusiness

Department of Agricultural Sciences

440E Pirkle; Phone: 936-294-1226

Email: [wolfskill@shsu.edu](mailto:wolfskill@shsu.edu) (Best method to contact professor)

Office Hours: On campus Mon and Wed 9:30 – 11:30 am, other times by appointment or drop-in

**MEETING TIMES AND LOCATION:** ONLINE through SHSU ONLINE. The class times will be arranged; please note that only Blackboard and/or university email will be used to communicate with students in the class.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will examine legal concepts and practical legal problems facing rural residents, farmers, agribusiness and local government. Taught from a "preventive" perspective, students will acquire legal awareness necessary to become an effective and analytical agribusiness decision maker. Legal issues will include statutes, common law (cases), customs, and business and administrative regulations. Prerequisite: AGBU 2317 and completed 45 credit hours.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** Through class discussions, research, written reports, and guest presentations, students should demonstrate the following:

1. Gain knowledge on how the legal system works and how laws and policies affect U.S. agribusinesses.
2. Analyze and understand the role of law in protecting the property rights of U.S. agribusinesses.
3. Develop an analytical legal perspective on how to become an effective agribusiness decision maker.

**COURSE MATERIALS:** Course documents, announcements and other materials will be posted on Blackboard accessed at <http://shsu.blackboard.com> or through the university's homepage. Students will be expected to log into Blackboard at least three times per week, if not daily, for course materials. A working internet connection, hardware and browser requirements will be noted in Blackboard. All students will need access to a webcam to complete presentation assignments.

**COURSE STRUCTURE:** There will be 14 units of course material presented during the semester. Each unit will have a various number of modules, quizzes, and assignments to complete. Most units will have a quiz at the end, and some will have multi-unit exams. Each unit will be open on Blackboard for approximately 1 week. Students may complete the material in each unit at their own pace, although each unit must be completed in the time (week) available and each student should allow adequate time to complete all modules within the unit. Please note that many modules will have at least one assignment that will require the student to work offline. Unit exams will have time limit restrictions on when they can be accessed, and how long they will be open. Unit exams may not be taken unless the module quizzes and assignments have been submitted.

### **COURSE EVALUATION PROCESS:**

Course grades will be based on the weighted average of scores in the following areas: unit and module assignments, unit examinations including a final examination, and unit quizzes. Each student's grade assessment is comprised of the following categories:

#### Module Quizzes:

Units will feature a number of learning modules. Each module will typically have a quiz to evaluate comprehension. Quizzes will be taken online through Blackboard, be timed, and students will receive one attempt for each. Quizzes will directly relate to the lectures and/or assigned readings for each module. Module quizzes will

cease to be available after the date they close. All quizzes need to be completed and submitted prior to the deadline. No late quizzes will be accepted.

#### Module Assignments:

Each unit will feature a number of assignments related to each module. Most will require a written deliverable, although some will require a recorded formal presentation. All will require an application of the lecture and/or assigned reading materials. Some local travel may be required for some of the assignments although traveling outside of your region is not foreseen. Most assignments will be submitted through Blackboard. There may be a few assignments that will be submitted by email, but unless they are specifically for email submission, they will only be accepted through the Blackboard link.

Students should complete units when they first go live so that they have enough time to properly interact with other students through the discussion boards. Assignments will cease to be available after the due date. All assignments need to be completed and submitted prior to that date and time. No late assignments will be accepted.

#### Examinations:

Exam format will vary and may consist of objective questions (T/F, M/C) and written responses. Questions will come from material in lectures and other readings taken from handouts and internet sites. Make-up exams will not be given. If a student misses an exam, the student will take a zero for that exam. Exams will have a window of availability, so be sure to plan accordingly. Students may not receive any help on exams from anyone else.

#### Grading Scale\*

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 90 - 100  | A |
| 80 - 89.9 | B |
| 70 - 79.9 | C |
| 60 - 69.9 | D |
| Below 60  | F |

#### Final Grade Assessment

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Module Quizzes & DBs  | 30% |
| Module Assignments    | 40% |
| Exams (3 exams @ 10%) | 30% |

*\*The instructor reserves the right, but not the obligation, to curve grades at the end of the semester.*

#### **SEE [WWW.SHSU.EDU/SYLLABUS](http://WWW.SHSU.EDU/SYLLABUS) FOR DETAILS ON “SYLLABUS GUIDELINES”**

Note that as an online course, much of the normal syllabus guidance does not directly apply, but I’m supposed to put it in here anyway. Use common sense to be in the spirit of the rule. If you have questions, ask.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** This course is offered through SHSU Online (distance education) and therefore no in-class attendance is required. Students will be required to check Blackboard daily and to submit materials in a timely manner. Inability to submit due to student technical reasons will not be excused.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

**CLASSROOM RULES OF CONDUCT:** While the course is facilitated online, students are expected to refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Students who are especially disruptive also may be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy. Students need to check Blackboard daily for lecture materials, assignments and updates. Students should allocate an appropriate amount of time to complete the assignments via their technical devices (laptop, tablet, mobile device, etc.).

**VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM:** *(This one really doesn’t apply that much)* Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor’s discretion

whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom. Only students registered for the online class are allowed to view the classroom materials.

**CELL PHONE POLICY:** The use by students of electronic devices that perform the function of a telephone or text messenger during class-time may be prohibited if deemed disruptive by the instructor to the conduct of the class. Arrangements for handling potential emergency situations may be granted at the discretion of the instructor. Failure to comply with the instructor's policy could result in expulsion from the classroom or with multiple offenses, failure of the course.

Any use of a telephone or text messenger or any device that performs these functions during a test period is prohibited. These devices should not be present during a test or quiz and should be stored securely in such a way that they cannot be seen or used by the student. Even the visible presence of such a device during the test or quiz period will result in a zero for that test or quiz. Use of these devices during a test or quiz is considered de facto evidence of cheating and could result in a charge of academic dishonesty (see student code of conduct <http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/StudentGuidelines2010-2012.pdf#page=29>).

**USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON CAMPUS:** The use of tobacco products is prohibited in any Sam Houston State University academic facility. Use of tobacco products includes burning tobacco products, chewing tobacco, and snuff. SHSU instructors teaching off-campus courses will ensure that any rules promulgated by the off-campus entity pertaining to the use of tobacco products in classrooms are followed.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT:** Students with a disability which affects their academic performance are expected to arrange for a conference with the instructor in order that appropriate strategies can be considered to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. The physically impaired may contact the Director of Counseling Center who also serves as chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students by telephone at extension #1720.

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS:** University policy states that a student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. Not later than the 15th calendar day after the first day of the semester, or the 7th calendar day after the first day of a summer session, the student must notify the instructor of each scheduled class that he/she would be absent for a religious holy day.

**COPYRIGHT STATEMENT:** All materials (handouts, texts, slides, etc.) used in this course are under copyright, and may not be sold, rented, or otherwise transferred for any compensation, including taking notes for others or providing to businesses that sell tutoring or other grade-increasing services. Use of these may require permission or perhaps payment to the copyright holder.

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Legal Issues in Agribusiness is a course designed to introduce students to laws and legal issues related to agriculture, agribusiness, and property as related to the rural living and the food production system. It is not a course designed to give students legal advice and the material taught should not be interpreted as such. Topics to be covered include judicial process and types of law, torts law and product liability related to agricultural enterprises and the food system, and legal issues facing owners or operators of our nation's natural resources.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** Through class discussions, research, written reports, and guest presentations, students should demonstrate the following:

1. Gain knowledge on how the legal system works and how laws and policies affect U.S. agribusinesses.
2. Analyze and understand the role of law in protecting the property rights of U.S. agribusinesses.
3. Develop an analytical legal perspective on how to become an effective agribusiness decision maker.

## DISCLAIMER NOTICE:

**Information Presented in this Course is Not Legal Advice.** The information provided in this course is prepared for general information and educational purposes only. The information provided is not legal advice and the student acknowledges that the instructor is not an attorney. Legal advice involves the application of legal knowledge and skills by a licensed attorney to specific circumstances. Additionally, court rules vary from county to county as well as from state to state, so information presented may not be directly applicable to the city, county, state or nation in which you live or operate. Laws also change frequently, so the information contained in this course is not guaranteed to be up to date. Therefore, the information contained in this course is not intended and cannot replace the advice of a competent attorney licensed in your state.

Student Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Links.** This course may provide you with links to resources on the Internet. Those links are provided as citations and aids to help you identify and locate resources that may be of interest, and are not intended to state or imply that the instructor, department or university sponsors or is affiliated or associated with the persons or entities who created such site.

Student Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_