

Western State University College of Law
Community Property
Summer Semester 2013
Class Days and Times:
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Syllabus & Policies
Professor Jason A. Blonska

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Office Hours: Appointments can be scheduled directly with me. Email me or, preferably, see me before class to set up an appointment.

Course Objectives:

1. To introduce students to the substantive legal rules that courts and legislatures have developed in identifying, valuing, managing, and distributing property acquired during marriage.
2. To enhance the student's analytical skills through the use of cases and problems.
3. To enhance the student's statutory interpretation skills through the use of various community property statutes.
4. To effectively understand community property principles so you can advise your future clients of their rights and responsibilities under California law. Even if you don't practice family law, many of your clients will be married, so this is important information to know. That's why community property is bar tested.

Required Texts:

Casebook: Grace Ganz Blumberg's Community Property in California, Aspen Law & Business (6th Edition).

Attendance

Attendance is required for all classes. Any student with more than two (2) absences will be academically disenrolled from the course and will receive a grade of "W" or "F" on their transcript as provided under the applicable attendance policies in your Student Handbook. It is your responsibility to keep track of the number of your absences. Because this course is bar-tested, I cannot waive or excuse any absences.

Please be punctual. We will start class promptly at 4:00 p.m.

Class Participation:

Class participation is required of all students. Class participation consists of being prepared when called upon, and bringing the casebook to class.

Methodology:

This course will use the case method of learning:

The case method. Your textbook also contains cases, notes and questions. You are responsible for reading and briefing all assigned material.

This course will also, in conjunction with the case method, use a collaborative approach to mastering the family law cases included in the textbook

Examinations and Grading:

All students will receive a numeric grade for the course. Course grades will be based upon a point system. Your grade will be based upon a final exam, which will be worth 100 points.

The final exam will be a two-hour examination. The exam will be a closed book exam, which means that you will not be able to bring anything into the exam except a pen, a regular calculator, and a ruler. The exam is intended to mock a bar exam question or questions. To prepare for your exam, you should review sample community property questions that have been on past California Bar Examinations. As we near the end of the summer session, we will discuss effective approaches to spotting issues and preparing for the final examination.

Blackboard:

I have created a web course stocked full of information just for you. This web course contains exam tips, additional hypotheticals, mini bar lectures for each chapter, etc. Blackboard will be where I will post changes in the reading assignments, including which problems we will not be discussing in class. Blackboard is the appropriate forum for questions regarding the final exam. Information provided on Blackboard may not be provided in class. Everyone in the class will be expected to use the web course, and everyone is assumed to have the information it contains. The Blackboard for our class will be up and running by the end of the second week of class.

Reading Assignments:

We will cover the material in the following order. You should always be at least 60 pages ahead of where we left off from the last class to be considered prepared. The 60 pages are only a minimum and there will be times that we may go faster than 60 pages. You need to read the relevant statute sections listed within your assigned reading. For the first day of class, you will need to have read the first 60 pages assigned below (chapters 1 and 3).

Chapter 1 (pages 1 – 13 only)

Chapter 3

Chapter 4 (skipping the Andrews case)

Chapter 5

Chapter 6

Chapter 7 (starting at page 414)

Chapter 8

Chapter 9 (skipping pages 578-to end of chapter)

Chapter 11 (starting at page 646)

Chapter 12