Goals and Description: This course will study the international oil and gas business, a business that must be uniquely concerned with both public and private international law, as well as the domestic law of the business entity’s home state, the law of the host government, and, oftentimes, the law of third countries. We will study sovereign rights to minerals, including disputes that arise between neighboring countries over boundaries. We will study the various kinds of host government contracts used to assign development rights to private companies, including how such rights are acquired, and we will study how disputes between a private company and host government are resolved. We will also study contracts between private companies engaged in exploration and production operations and their service providers, including confidentiality agreements, joint-study-and-bid-group agreements, consulting agreements, joint-operating agreements, farmout agreements, drilling and well-service contracts, lifting agreements, and crude-oil, natural-gas, and LNG sales agreements. Due to time constraints we may not study all of these contracts and some we will only briefly study. We will also look at how petroleum is bought and sold on the world market. We also consider human-rights, environmental, and anti-corruption law in the context of petroleum activities.


As of now, the book will be furnished in photocopy form as its printing date is not yet determined, but students will get manuscript pages.

Prerequisite: None. Students who have taken oil and gas law or oil and gas contracts & tax or both may have a slight advantage, largely due to their familiarity with terminology.

Exam Option: There will be final exam (most likely take home and open book) for any student who does not write a paper. The exams will be handed out in class and due back no later than the May 11 at 4 p.m. to be e-mailed to Dawn Tomlins, dtomlins@ou.edu. Subject to my approval, students may a write paper in lieu of a final exam.

Paper Option: Students who elect to write a paper will have access to my personal international oil and gas law library. Students may, subject to my approval, choose their own topic. Generally, papers should center on oil and gas laws and contracting practices of a selected foreign country or some other discreet issue. In lieu of a paper, students may also read a book and write a book report. Papers and book reports should be approximately 10 to 15 pages, inclusive of footnotes (not end notes), typed, and double-spaced, Times New Roman 12, submitted in hard copy and electronically. Generally, absent special arrangements for graduating 3Ls, papers may not be used to satisfy the law-school writing requirement—in part because those paper must be 30 + pages in length. Students must choose topics and have my approval by the end of the second week of class. Outlines (not due for book reviews) must be e-mailed to me by Friday, February 12 at 5:00 p.m. First (and final) drafts must be e-mailed to me by Friday, March 26 at 5:00 p.m. Any required further work must be completed by April 23 at 5:00 p.m.

Attendance and Participation: Students are expected to attend class and participate. Students should not miss more than 2 classes without being excused. Students who miss 2 or more regularly scheduled classes (even if excused) may have their grade reduced 1 increment (12 point scale). Students who miss no or only one class and who thoughtfully participate in class may have their grade raised up to 2 increments.

Disability: Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact the Dean’s Office as soon as possible so appropriate accommodations may be made.

Misc.: My office is in Room 3065. My office telephone number is (405) 325-5405. My e-mail is oanderson@ou.edu.