

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Legal Descriptions**

#### **Course Description**

SR 224. Legal Descriptions. 2 hours credit. Prerequisite: EG 112 with a C or better. This course will enable the student to understand how to write real property legal descriptions for deeds, easements, and right-of-way. The student will learn the structure and order of the elements in the description and avoid the common mistakes of language, construction, and terminology in order to deal with conflicts and ambiguities in the intent of the instrument.

#### **Course Relevance**

The concepts and theories taught in this course will allow the student to understand the fundamentals of reading, writing, and interpreting legal descriptions and prepare him/her for more advanced survey courses.

#### **Required Materials**

Cuomo, P. and Minnick, R., (1995) Advanced land descriptions (1st ed.). PCP

Colley, B., *Practice manual of land development*. (4th ed.), McGraw-Hill Publishing.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

The intention is for the student to be able to:

1. Explain the structure and order of the elements in a legal description
2. Avoid common language and terminology mistakes
3. Apply the rules dealing with conflicts and ambiguities in survey instruments

#### **Learning PACT Skills that will be DEVELOPED and/or documented in this course**

Through the student's involvement in this course, he/she will develop his/her ability in the following PACT skill areas:

##### **Analytical Thinking Skills**

1. Critical Thinking
  - The student will be expected to demonstrate proficient skill in the recognition and interpretation of legal description rules, language, and terminology.

#### **Major Summative Assessment Task(s)**

These learning outcomes and the Learning PACT skills will be demonstrated by

1. Completing a practical project by writing a legal description for a particular land survey scenario that demonstrates proficient skill in the recognition and interpretation of legal description language and terminology

#### **Course Content**

- I. Themes – Key recurring concepts that run throughout this course:
  - A. Writing legal description
  - B. Legal description interpretations
  - C. Legal description terminology

- II. Issues – Key areas of conflict that must be understood in order to achieve the intended outcome:
  - A. Ambiguous language in previously written documents
  - B. Ambiguous language in writing descriptions
  - C. The order of elements of a legal description
- III. Concepts – Key concepts that must be understood to address the issues:
  - A. Rules governing the writing of legal descriptions
  - B. Basic structure of legal descriptions
- IV. Skills/Competencies – Actions that are essential to achieve the course outcomes:
  - A. Write clear, concise legal descriptions
  - B. Research records to determine the validity of a current legal description

### **Learning Units**

- I. Essentials of proper land descriptions
  - A. Parts of a land description
  - B. Types of land descriptions
  - C. Systems used to describe real property
- II. Control afforded recitals
  - A. Importance and intentions of the parties
  - B. Monuments, measurements and coordinates
- III. Metes and bounds land descriptions
  - A. Point of beginning
  - B. Primary and secondary calls
  - C. Elements, rules and stock phrases in curved line descriptions
  - D. Title identity and senior rights
- IV. Strip descriptions
  - A. Characteristics
  - B. Variable width strip
- V. Linear, proportional, area, and “of” descriptions
  - A. Proportional descriptions on U.S. public lands
  - B. Proportional descriptions under state rules
- VI. Water boundaries
  - A. Navigable and non-navigable water bodies
  - B. Descriptions and easements
- VII. Coordinate descriptions
  - A. Classes of land
  - B. Geodetic control

**Learning Activities**

Learning activities will be assigned to assist the student to achieve the intended learning outcomes through lecture, instructor-led class discussion, guest speakers, group activities, drills/skill practice and others at the discretion of the instructor.

**Grade Determination**

The student will be graded on learning activities and assessment tasks. Grade determinants may include the following: daily work, quizzes, chapter or unit tests, comprehensive examinations, student projects, student presentations, class participation, and other methods of evaluation employed at the discretion of the instructor.