



**Instructor  
Manual Guidelines  
For  
Core Real Estate  
And Real Estate  
Related Courses**

**Texas Real Estate Commission  
P.O. Box 12188  
Austin, Texas 78711-2188  
[www.trec.state.tx.us](http://www.trec.state.tx.us)  
1-800-250-8732  
512-459-6544**

## OVERVIEW

THESE GUIDELINES HAVE BEEN PREPARED to assist providers of core real estate and real estate related courses in creating manuals for course instructors. The Instructor Manual is submitted as part of the course application ED 3-0. the Instructor Manual must follow the guidelines presented in order for the course to be approved. Rule 535.65(d)(2) states that once a course is approved, "Instructors must teach a course in substantially the same manner represented to the commission in the instructor's manual filed with the application for course approval." Throughout this manual, the term "course" means a core real estate course as specified in The Real Estate License Act or The Rules of the Texas Real Estate commission or an acceptable real estate related course.

As a result of familiarizing yourself with these guidelines, you should be able to:

1. Describe your course, explaining the relevance and purpose of the course, as well as summarizing the content;
2. Develop learning objectives which form the goals for the learning process;
3. Design evaluation techniques which measure the effectiveness of your course;
4. Utilize instructional strategies which enhance the effectiveness of your course; and

Outline your course and all its components so that the instructor's manual is a useful teaching tool for the instructor.

## I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The *Instructor Manual* begins with a description of the course. This description shall include three parts:

### A. Purpose of the Course

The course description should begin with a statement describing the purpose of the course. The *purpose* reflects the broadest goals for the course. If the course is geared towards a specialized student population (i.e., commercial licensees, property managers, farm and ranch, etc.), identify that population when defining the purpose of the course. All learning objectives for the course should support the *purpose*. (Learning objectives are discussed in Section II.) The *purpose* provides the "why," or the rationale for the course.

This statement should identify the intent of the course. What will the student gain as a result of the course? What is the overall objective of the course?

### B. Relevance of the Course

Does the course meet the requirements for a core real estate course as stipulated by TREC? A statement should be provided which explains how the course fits the criteria for Core as specified in Section 1101.003 of the Texas Occupations Code (The Real Estate License Act) or an acceptable real estate related course.

Justify how the course meets the criteria for the course, explaining the relevance of the subject matter. One or two paragraphs should be sufficient.

### C. Course Content Summary

This summary should be extensive enough to provide the reader with an understanding of the scope and depth of the course. Describe the content area and define the parameters of what the course covers. One to two paragraphs should be sufficient.

## II. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The next step in creating the *Instructor Manual* is the development of specific learning objectives for the course. These objectives shape the development of the course. All objectives must, in some way, be tied to the purpose of the course. Objectives enumerate the desired outcomes for the learning. Consequently, learning objectives form the foundation of course evaluation. (Evaluation is discussed in Section IV.)

Though writing learning objectives require a time investment, there are many reasons why they are worthwhile:

- Formulating learning objectives helps ensure that the course is well planned and focused upon the learner.
- Learning objectives move the learning environment from a passive to an active one as the student will be aware of the goals for the course.
- Learning objectives identify the type of learning the student is expected to achieve: knowledge, skill, or attitude. Students who are aware of the expectations will invest more energy into achieving their goals.
- Clear statements of learning objectives provide criteria for evaluating the success of the learning process.

There is no mandatory number of objectives required for each course. Learning objectives should, however, cover the main points of the course. At least one learning objective for every segment of the course is recommended.

Learning objectives have been defined in the literature using many different theories and labels. For the purpose of these guidelines and for your *Instructor Manual*, learning objectives will have four components. These four components are described below. In order to create learning objectives, put together the components described in A, B, C and D below.

## A. Beginning Phrase

Each learning objective begins with a phrase which defines the learning process and the learner. Such standard phrases might include but are not limited to:

- *By actively participating in this class, the student should be able to...*
- *At the conclusion of this course, having fully participated, the student should be able to...*
- *As a result of attending this course, the student should be able to...*
- *At the completion of the course, the student should be able to...*
- *By participating in the fair housing segment of the course, the student should be able to...*

## B. Observable Action

This component provides the observable action which the student "should be able to do" at the conclusion of the course:

The following is a partial list of possible action verbs: (*Kemp, pg. 71*)

apply	compare	demonstrate	explain	make	recall	solve
arrange	contrast	distinguish	identify	name	repeat	state
build	define	duplicate	list	order	show	write

## C. Object

The observable action (examples listed below) is followed by the object of that action:

Observable Action	Object
Name	the four components of a learning objective
Arrange	the six steps in water purification
Compare	tax laws of 1988 with current tax laws
Distinguish	who is the customer and who is the client
List	the protected classes

## D. Standard

The standard indicates the minimum acceptable accomplishments in measurable terms.

Observable Action	Object	Standard
Name	the four components of a learning objective	with 100% accuracy
Arrange	the six steps in water purification	in correct order
Compare	tax laws of 1988 with current tax laws	describing significant changes
Distinguish	who is the customer and who is the client	identifying each in a case study
List	the protected classes	identifying all six during the post assessment

## E. Examples

The following are examples of complete learning objectives. They are not presented as a related set, but as random examples.

- "By actively participating in this class, the student should be able to arrange the six steps of water purification in correct order."
- "At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to name the four components of a learning objective with 100% accuracy."
- "By active participation in this class, the student should, at the conclusion of the course, be able to compare the tax laws of 1988 with current tax laws, describing salient changes during group discussion."
- "By participating in the fair housing segment of the course, the student should be able to list the protected classes, identifying all six during post assessment."

In the *Instructor Manual*, include a copy of the learning objectives.

## III. COURSE OUTLINE

THE COURSE OUTLINE SHALL ARRANGE the actual course content as it is to be presented in class, breaking down the content of the course into major core real estate topics (as specified in Section 1101.003 of the Texas Occupations Code (The Real Estate License Act) for each core course, sub-topics, etc. and indicating the approximate time allotted for each. Instructors must teach a course in substantially the same manner represented to the commission in the instructor's manual.

For each major topic (I, II, III, etc.) you must give the following additional information:

### A. Learning Objective

State what learning objective(s) each topic supports. All learning objectives listed for the course must be included in the course outline. (Learning Objectives are discussed in Section II).

### B. Instructional Strategy

Explain what instructional strategy or strategies are to be used for each topic. (Instructional Strategies are discussed in Section VI).

### C. Course Participant Handouts

Indicate what handouts and texts will be used to support each topic. Copies of any handouts and texts used in the course should be included with the Instructor Manual. Each handout should contain a title, number, or other identification which commission staff may use to refer to the attached handouts. (Course Participant Handouts are discussed in Section VII).

In addition, the course outline should reflect the following:

- Pre-Course Announcement
- Information such as the enrollment agreement should be announced at this time.

NOTE: An enrollment agreement must be used to enroll the students in the course. A copy of the enrollment agreement must accompany the Instructor Manual.

- Attendance verification, breaks, and evaluation techniques. These activities should be put into the outline in the sequence in which they will occur.

The following is an example of a one hour course segment in the proper format. Your outline should follow this basic format. As the length, depth, and organization of courses will vary, so will the arrangement of topics.

## LAW UPDATE\*\*

Pre-course Announcement

Attendance Verification (Course Completion Roster)

Pre-Assessment: Time: 15 minutes

### I. Ad Valorem Taxation

#### A. Two 1989 law benefits for taxpayers 65 and older

1. If a person 65 or older pays one fourth of the property taxes on a personal residence, the balance can be paid in three equal installments with penalty or interest.
2. A taxpayer over 65 has always been allowed to file an affidavit with the appraisal district and defer collection of ad valorem taxes on their homestead. New 1989 benefit is that the accrued taxes are no longer subject to penalty and interest is limited to 8% during deferral periods.

#### B. Other changes in 1989 tax code:

1. Taxes may be paid by credit card for a fee not exceeding 5% on the taxes paid.
2. A clarification of property possession during the two year tax redemption period now allows the purchaser at a tax sale to acquire good title, the right to use and possession of the property so acquired.

### II. Community Property Rights

A. In Texas, property acquired after marriage is presumed to be community property. Separate property could be acquired after marriage only through gift, devise or descent. Since 1980 there can be "contractual" separate property when both spouses sign a written contract dividing community property into separate property providing the agreement is not the result of fraud or coercion.

B. Spouses agree to hold separate property as joint tenants with right of survivorship. Creates two problems:

1. Spouses have proportional liability rather than joint and several as found under community property. Lenders would have to pursue each spouse separately-this may have halted some refinancing efforts.
2. Can joint tenants convert the property back to community? A difficult situation as the reconveyance would be from themselves to themselves.

C. In 1987 the Texas Constitution was amended permitting a community property estate with a right of survivorship to be created by agreement between the spouses. Questions - can a prospective purchaser or creditor rely on these agreements?

D. A 1989 amendment to the Texas Probate Code clarifies the issue by enabling spouses to make such an agreement in writing and signed by both spouses. Agreement is not subject to testamentary transfer rules under the probate code.

E. How to know who holds title? Four categories of person dealt with:

1. *Purchaser without notice*: Bona fide purchaser from a person claiming from a decedent more than six months after date of decedent's death shall have good title. Effectively creates a six months statute of limitations.
2. *Purchaser without notice of revocation of the survivorship agreement*: A person with notice of survivorship agreement but no notice of its revocation may purchase property from decedent's surviving spouse more than six months after date of death. If there is a survivorship agreement, it may mean no safe conveyance until six months after death.
3. *Debtors and other without notice of survivorship agreement*: A person owing money or having custody of property of the decedent may transfer such property to a personal representative of the estate or any heirs, legatees or devisees if no administration is

pending.

4. *Creditors*: Creditors with claims against community property are basically unaffected by these agreements.

*\*\* This outline example is excerpted from Jacobus & Wiedemer, 1990, and must not be used or reproduced without the authors' written consent.*

Post-Assessment

Time: 50 minutes

Learning Objectives: As a result of this segment of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Explain during the post-assessment at least one 1989 change in ad valorem taxation that benefits people 65 and older, and
2. Describe in group discussion the conditions under which community property might be held as separate property by each spouse.

Instructional Strategies: Lecture with overheads, discussion of pre-assessment, and discussion in small groups of post-assessment items.

Handouts: Text, Chapter 1, and copies of pre- and post-assessment items.

End-of-Course Examination

Time: 1 to 2 hour examination with a minimum of 60 questions.

Learning Objectives:

The student should be able to show a knowledge of material covered in the course. The learning objectives should be addressed in the examination. All of the core real estate topics, as specified in The Real Estate License Act should be addressed in the final examination.

#### **IV. EVALUATION TECHNIQUES**

HAVING ESTABLISHED LEARNING OBJECTIVES for this course, the next step is designing the course evaluation. The purpose of course evaluation is to measure how effectively the course meets its objectives. Are the students learning what you intend? Are there parts of the course which seem more successful than others? These are some of the questions that an evaluation of the course answers.

The course evaluation is not the same as the final examination, although the final examination may be used as part of the evaluation of the course effectiveness. Keep in mind that the purpose of evaluation is to measure the effectiveness of the course, not to test the student. Evaluation can be used as a tool to motivate the students' interest in the course as well as a strategy for learning. It is up to your discretion to decide what form of evaluation is used in your course. There are many ways to evaluate a course.

- One reliable and effective method of evaluation is the pre- and post-assessment. The pre-assessment is administered at the beginning of the course. The advantages of a pre-assessment include: developing the students' interest in the subject matter, giving the instructor a feel for the knowledge level of the class and introducing key concepts that will be covered in the course.
- The post-assessment may be administered at the conclusion of the course or may be integrated into the body of the course as an ongoing instructional strategy. Advantages of a post-assessment include: reinforcing the learning that has taken place, giving the instructor an idea of how effective the instruction has been and identifying areas for further study for the student.
- Avoid giving the impression that the student is being tested. This will detract from the value of the assessments. Correct answers to assessment items should be given at the bottom of the assessments or on another page so that the student may check his or her answers. Assessments need not be complicated nor time consuming. Your objective may be reached by addressing the most critical points covered in the course. Assessment items may be open ended questions, fill in the blank, true/false, multiple choice, or case studies. BE CREATIVE.

Another evaluation technique is student rating of the course and instructor. Although this method does not provide a reliable indication of the effectiveness of the course, student rating may give information on the instructor's rapport with the students and the students overall

satisfaction with the course.

You may wish to employ yet another method of course evaluation. There are many ways to achieve the same end.

In your Instructor Manual, describe how you plan to evaluate the course and provide copies of any documentation. Also, send a copy of the form for your end-of-course evaluation.

## V. FINAL EXAMINATION

THE FINAL EXAMINATION, of at least 60 questions, must address all of the course learning objectives, which should include the core real estate topics. The length of the examination should be such that an average of one to two hours is needed to complete the exam. The time for the examination cannot be counted in the credit time for the course. If the course is 30 clock hours in length, the examination cannot be included in that 30 hours.

Using the course exam, write the question number of each question on the exam next to the point in the course outline where that question is addressed in the course material. In other words, where in the course is the student taught the information on which they are being tested?

## VI. INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES are used to increase the effectiveness of the course instruction. Instructional strategies shall be indicated on the course outline for every major topic. The purpose of this section is to provide the potential provider with ideas and possible alternatives for instructional strategies. Utilizing a variety of instructional strategies can make a course more interesting and may better hold the attention of the student. At least three instructional strategies must be used in each 30 classroom hour course.

Generally, students retain more of the information presented if they actually apply the information through problem-solving activities, such as case studies, role playing, and group discussion. Combining lecture with visual aids may also increase the effectiveness of instruction.

### A. Lecture

We encourage instructors to move away from the straight lecture format as there is some question as to its effectiveness as an instructional strategy. If certain parts of a course are designed around the lecture format, there are ways in which to improve the quality of the lecture.

- Make sure of variety and surprise in order to keep the students' attention. A student who is asleep has little opportunity to learn!
- Do not speak in a monotone. Vary the speed and pitch with which you speak.
- Use humor; it provides variety and may make an important connection between instructor and student.
- Ask questions of your students; this will provide them with an opportunity to use their recently acquired knowledge.
- Allow time for students to ask questions.
- Summarize your lecture at appropriate points and solicit feedback to ensure that the class is "with you."
- Provide the students with an outline of the lecture; it will help them follow along and give them some idea of where you are going.
- Combining lecture with any of the instructional strategies described below can greatly improve the quality of instruction.

### B. Group Discussion

Discussion requires that the student become more actively involved in learning. In the interaction between the instructor and student or among the students, the classroom becomes more responsive to students' needs, clarification is immediate, and students have the opportunity to express their reactions to the information presented.

Discussions may be centered around the instructor. The instructor asks open-ended questions and allows the class to take off on his/her questions. Discussions may also be led by the students. In this case, students both ask the questions and give answers. The instructor usually serves as a moderator in this circumstance.

#### C. Small Group Discussions

Small group discussion creates a safer environment for student participation. In the smaller groups, students have a greater opportunity to voice their opinions. Students may also feel there is less risk in speaking in smaller groups.

In small groups, students are usually given a problem to solve or a topic on which to come to a consensus. Ordinarily, the class is then brought back together to form one large group and a representative from each group reports the results or their discussion. Small groups provide an excellent forum for use with case studies and role plays.

#### D. Case Studies

Scenarios may be prepared in which students are required to analyze or solve a problem. As with role plays, case studies provide a "real world" element for the student to apply concepts and methods presented in the course. Printed copies of case studies are given to each student. Students may work individually, in small groups, or in the large group to discuss the cases.

#### E. Active Demonstration—Role Plays

Some parts of the course may require illustration in order for the student to fully understand its intent. In these situations, the instructor may choose to demonstrate certain actions and behaviors to the students. The instructor may solicit help from students in performing in order to apply the course material.

#### F. Student Presentations

Involving students in presenting the course material may be an excellent way to structure a course which will be held over several meetings. In this situation, individuals or teams of students take responsibility for presenting certain topics or sub-topics. The instructor should work with the students in developing their presentations. The instructor should be prepared to supplement the student presentations to ensure that the course topics are fully addressed. In using this strategy, the students may gain a greater sense of investment and ownership for their own learning. This strategy is not appropriate for shorter courses.

#### G. Responsive Reading—Recitation

Some material is so crucial to the intent of a course that it should be memorized. One method of emphasizing material and increasing the likelihood of memorization is recitation, or responsive reading. For this exercise the instructor prints the designated material and visually presents it to the students (overhead, slides, etc.). Each student should be given a copy of such pertinent information.

#### H. Audio-Visual Equipment

Following is a partial list of equipment which may be used to enhance the interest and effectiveness of other instructional strategies.

1. Boards: Chalkboards, magnetic boards and flip charts.
2. Overhead Projection: For use with transparencies.
3. DVD's, CD's, or interactive video
4. Audiotape: May be used with visual presentations.
5. PowerPoint
6. Internet

Whatever instructional strategy you choose, being well-prepared and organized is essential for successful delivery.

**VII. COURSE PARTICIPANT HANDOUTS**

HANDOUTS OF SIGNIFICANT MATERIAL will assist the student in remembering key points of the course. In addition, students may use these handouts to make notes of questions or comments. Copies of all course participant handouts must be included in your Instructor Manual. Indicate handouts on the outline with the topic they support.

**VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY OR SOURCE OF UPDATED SUBJECT MATTER**

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SOURCES for each course is required unless consent by the author to use the course is attached to form ED 3-0 Course Application.

In the bibliography for your course, cite each source from which you have drawn ideas, facts and quotes. For each citation, list author, date, title, publisher and location where published. The citations must be arranged in alphabetical order by author's last names.

The bibliography is the last page of the Instructor Manual

## Appendix A

### CHECKLIST

Before submitting your Instructor Manual to TREC for approval, utilize this checklist to ensure that you have included all the components.

1. Course Description:
  - A. Purpose of the Course
  - B. Relevance of the Course
  - C. Course Content Summary
2. Learning Objectives Sheet
3. Outline of the Subject Matter
  - A. Outline of subject by major topic and subtopic
  - B. Approximate time allotted for each core topic
  - C. Learning objective(s) for each major topic
  - D. Instructional strategy(ies) for each major topic
  - E. Attendance verification, breaks and evaluation
  - F. Course participant handouts. Indicate on outline which topics will be supported with handouts. Submit copies of handouts and texts with the Instructor Manual.
4. Description of Evaluation Techniques
5. Final Examination
6. Bibliography or sources of Updated Subject Matter