OPTIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE FOR WATER LAW AND POLICY
IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Dear Student who has registered for this course:

If you would like to help me to design this course, including the teaching methods I adopt for its first-ever online presentation, please return your responses as soon as convenient, using one of what I trust are two easy methods: Either make a copy of the questionnaire, fill in your answers in hard copy—typing or hand-writing are both fine—scan your completed copy and return or just send me an email using the numbers in front of each question below in front of the answer you’re providing to that same question, so I can quickly see which of your replies corresponds to which question of mine.

After filling in your answers to questions 1-3, feel free to answer whichever of the remaining questions you want. You need not reply to all. But please note that the more questions you answer, the better I’ll be positioned to learn from this experimental means in time to benefit our class.

Please send your answers to: jcohen@law.utexas.edu.

Thanks so much for helping me to create an online offering that will be valuable to everyone and will go well!

1—Your name:

2—Your department and, if you have one, your program:

3—Your year of study (eg, Law: 2L; Arch: BA, MA; expected year of degree; Jackson: MS, expected year of degree):

4—What has caused you to choose this course for next term?
5—Is/are there any particular topic or topics you are hoping that we’ll cover in this course?

6—If you have had any especially positive experiences in any of your online courses during this pandemic, what instructional methods or other elements (other than the subject!) made them so?

7—If you have had any especially negative experiences in any of your online courses during this pandemic, what instructional methods or other elements made them so?

8—Have you encountered any effective ways to avoid instructional voids during class periods—that is, intervals of time when the instructor pauses to receive student participation and no one in the class responds? If so, what are these?

9—Is a mix of (a) questions sent ahead of the class, keyed to each reading unit and (b) an opportunity within each class period for spontaneous exchanges worthwhile? I’m guessing that the time devoted to each of these might well vary from topic to topic. Do you agree?

10—Here’s a knotty issue: Some emergent advice about online teaching suggests that students can only pay close attention to about 12 minutes of straight-up lecture online. This particular suggestion seems to arise as to non-graduate-level courses, so I’m not sure how salient it is. I can imagine gearing some presentations to that kind of brevity, but as to exploring the meaning and significance of legal texts and policy documents, not so much. Your thoughts?
11—Do you prefer or dis-prefer for there to be a scheduled break in every class meeting? If a break is worthwhile, what should be its length? The maximum I’ve heard of is 10 minutes. Five seems common, too.

12—Do you have any other advice for online class design? If so, please add it here.

13—Please add any academic concentration, specific coursework, research in any setting, extracurricular activities, and/or hobbies of yours that you think might enrich your participation in any one or more aspects of this course. Please add whether you would like to share any of your background knowledge with the class by means of a power-point or mini-lecture presentation or through any other device and, if so, on what subject or subjects, so that I can consider this possibility as I build the course.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ADD ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR USE THIS (PLUS FURTHER SPACE, IF NEEDED) TO ADD TO YOUR PRIOR ANSWERS.