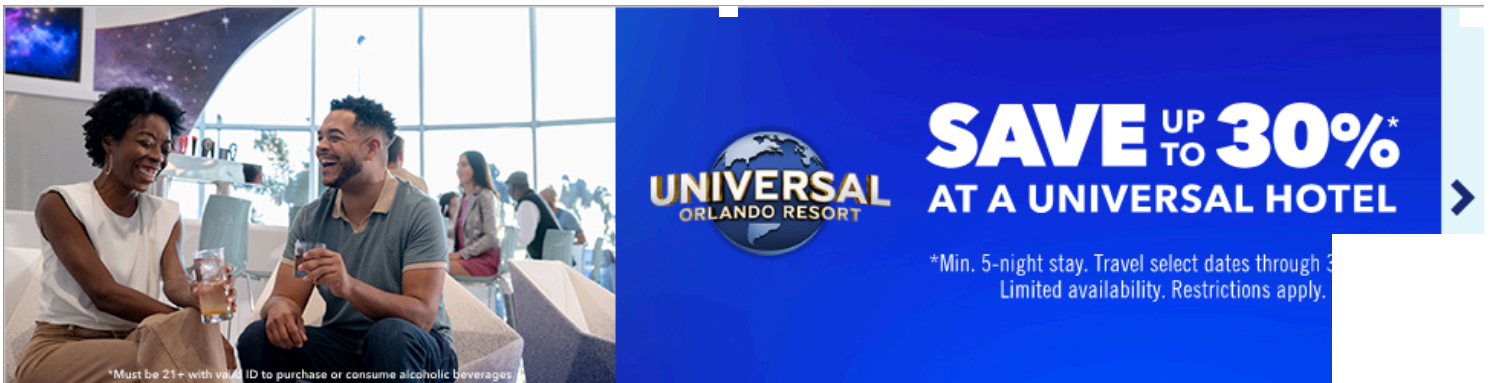


Uniquely

How Fort Worth-filmed 'Landman' inspired a new course at TCU

By **Brayden Garcia**

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A combination of Hollywood and the oil and gas industry helped inspire a new course at TCU.

“[Landman](#)” has filmed in and around TCU’s campus over the show’s first two seasons. The Fort Worth university is not just set dressing in the Paramount+ series, but a central location where [one of the main characters attends](#) school.

The show has inspired a wave of interest in the land management profession, which spurred a new eight-week course at [TCU’s Neeley School of Business](#) called “Land Management and Land Administration.”

“There’s an opportunity here to not only educate students about what a landman does, but ‘Hey, guess what guys? This is a profession,’” said Tom Seng, an assistant professor of energy finance at TCU. “There are a lot of young people that will get this type of knowledge and go into that job.”



Sam Elliott as T.L., Billy Bob Thornton as Tommy and Jacob Lofland as Cooper in “Landman” episode 10, season 2, streaming on Paramount+. Emerson Miller *Paramount+*

TCU’s new ‘Landman’-inspired class

The class was born out of a few factors, including “Landman” co-creator Taylor Sheridan’s Fort Worth ties and TCU’s appearance in the show.

Another reason is oil companies hinting to Seng that internships may be available for students if they have this knowledge of the industry. All this converged into a class that examines the actualities of the profession and what it takes to work as a real-life landman.

To do this, Seng said he received support from the [American Association of Professional Landmen](#), which is headquartered in Fort Worth. For more than 70 years, the association has been a resource for thousands of land professionals across the country.

“I reached out to people I know in the industry, because I want them to come and talk, and the responses were all positive,” Seng said.

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Each class is [led by a different land professional](#), as students learn everything from leasing mineral rights to defining land management.

The Star-Telegram attended a class on Tuesday, Feb. 3, where contract law was the topic of discussion. [Michelle Phillips](#), vice president of land at Lime Rock Resources, drove up from Houston.

When it came to lining up guest speakers for the course, Seng said it's not often you have this many experts open and ready to help.

"I have run programs like this in the past, but I'm not a landman," Seng said. "You get the people that know what they're talking about."



Members of the American Association of Professional Landmen talk to students during TCU's new "Land Management and Land Administration" course. *Courtesy of TCU's Neeley School of Business*

Why TCU students are interested

A total of 30 students are enrolled in the class.

Political science major Andrew Gentile said he enrolled in the class because he wants to be an attorney. He's also a fan of the show.

The class offered looks at several different types of law like property, contract and oil and gas, which Gentile believes to be essential for him.

“For myself, with those legal aspirations, I felt that it would be worthwhile to take this class,” he said.

One thing Gentile said he’s been particularly interested in thus far is the ownership of mineral rights.

Owning a piece of land doesn’t always mean the owner has the rights to what’s underneath, as it could have been sold to another party prior. Tracing rights ownerships over the years is like finding a piece of the puzzle, Gentile said.

It’s also been fun to tell his family about what he’s learned.

“My mother was ecstatic when she found out that I was able to take a class that was similar to the TV show,” Gentile said.

Both “Landman” and the class have added to what Gentile says has been an overall “great” experience for TCU.

The show is introducing global audiences to the university and showing a slice of Texas life. Being from the East Coast, it’s also impacting Gentile’s day-to-day life.

“More and more people ask me about TCU than ever,” Gentile said.



Michelle Randolph as Ainsley Norris in “Landman” episode 1, season 2, streaming on Paramount+. Emerson Miller *Paramount+*

‘Landman’ and TCU

Ultimately, Seng said the goal is for students to land internships or jobs in the industry.

It remains to be seen if he will offer the class again, it depends on the feedback from students after the course wraps up. If they're interested in pursuing this profession, and think this class can be a bridge to a job, than it will likely continue.

"If they do like it, they're going to tell their friends about it, and then that's when we find out, 'OK, there is enough interest to offer it again,'" Seng said. "It's certainly an experiment, believe me."

Everything harkens back to "Landman," which Seng said helped introduce this industry to the world.

If the show was called "Oil Man" or something other than what it is, Seng isn't sure it would have reached so many people. By calling it "Landman," the actual name of a profession, the show is piquing audience interest from the get-go.

Simply put, if the show is an appetizer to this world, the class is a full meal.

"None of this would be happening without the series," Seng said. "Absolutely not."

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