Clinical Offerings—Spring 2016

Human Rights & Immigration Clinic (Professor Gwynne Skinner)

In the Human Rights & Immigration Clinic, students will have the opportunity to work with clients seeking asylum cases; international human rights cases under the Alien Tort Statute, including litigation representing former Guantanamo Bay detainees in civil litigation; human rights fact-finding and report writing; and other human rights advocacy projects. These cases involve interacting with and interviewing clients and potential clients; legal and factual research typical in international human rights cases, writing legal memoranda and briefs; and collaborating with local, regional, and national human rights NGOs. Preference is given to students who have successfully completed or are simultaneously taking International Law and Dispute Resolution course and/or the Human Rights Seminar.

Business Law Clinic (Professor Warren Binford)

Students in the Business Law Clinic provide legal advice and assistance primarily to non-profit corporations and start-up businesses. Business Law Clinic students meet with clients and frequently draft contracts, advice letters, incorporation documents, and IRS filings related to tax-exempt status. They also conduct legal research and formulate legal strategies. The students tend to work fairly closely with non-profit executives and emerging business owners. They also advise on issues ranging from employment matters to insurance issues. Business law clinic students usually conduct 4-6 client meetings per semester.

Child & Family Advocacy Clinic (Professors Warren Binford & Don McCann)

The Child & Family Advocacy Clinic is devoted to the protection of children and families across the country and around the world. The faculty and students work to advance legal protections that provide stability to the family structure and nurture children's healthy development, as well as pro bono legal representation to individual children and families in crisis. Students in the Child and Family Advocacy Clinic have the opportunity to represent family members in family law matters such as adoptions, guardianships, dissolutions, child custody and parenting time, paternity, education advocacy cases, impact litigation, and law reform. In addition to gaining experience interviewing clients and witnesses, drafting legal documents, formulating legal strategies, and conducting legal research, factual investigations, and discovery, certified law students also have the opportunity to make courtroom appearances and conduct depositions many semesters.

Trusts & Estates Clinic (Professor Susan Cook)

Students in the Trusts & Estates Legal Clinic will represent clients who need estate planning documents such as wills, living trusts, durable powers of attorney, and advance medical directives. Typical clients want to plan for the future of their minor children, provide for possible incapacity prior to death, choose the beneficiaries who will receive their property at death, or address issues related to a terminal illness. Each pair of students will conduct client
interviews, draft documents, and supervise the execution of final documents. Clients require only non-tax planning.

*For more information about any particular clinic, please contact the professor supervising the particular clinic that interests you or the Clinical Law Program Director, Professor Warren Binford, at 503-370-6758 or wbinford@willamette.edu.*

**Common Questions about the Clinical Law Program**

**What is the Clinical Law Program?**

The Clinical Law Program is the in-house law firm at the law school. It is where our law students begin to learn to practice law under the close supervision of the law faculty.

**What areas of law are practiced in the Clinical Law Program?**

In Fall 2015, we are offering sections of International Human and Immigration Law, Business Law, Law and Government, Child and Family Advocacy, and Trusts and Estates.

**Who teaches in the Clinical Law Program?**

Professor Warren Binford is Director of the Clinical Law Program and teaches the Child and Family Advocacy Clinic and Business Law Clinic. Professor Don McCann co-teaches the Child and Family Advocacy Clinic with Professor Binford. Professor Gwynne Skinner teaches the Human Rights & Immigration Clinic. Professor Andrew Shull teaches the Law & Government Clinic. Professor Susan Cook teaches the Trusts & Estates Clinic.

**How is it staffed?**

The Clinical Law Program is essentially staffed by Willamette law students under the supervision of Willamette law faculty. We also have a full-time administrative assistant.
Who should enroll in the Clinical Law Program?

Second- and Third-Year students who would like to have more “hands on” experience with the practice of law should enroll in the Clinical Law Program. It is also appropriate for students who would like to (1) “try out” a particular area of practice prior to graduation, or (2) apply abstract legal principles that have engaged them intellectually in lecture classes and seminars earlier in their law school career.

What is the difference between clinics and externships?

Externships allow you to work in law-related positions outside of the law school. The Clinical Law Program is based here in the law school and allows you to work closely with law school faculty on law-related work. Clinics are organized as educational programs and tend to allow students to serve as the attorneys and take on more responsibility.

What type of work will I do in the Clinical Law Program?

It depends on the clinic you enroll in. Most of our students gain a tremendous amount of experience interviewing and counseling clients, developing legal strategies, and researching and drafting legal documents. Many students become relatively involved in negotiations both with opposing counsel and parties and with their own clients. Detailed descriptions of the work offered in each clinic is included above.

How many credits can I receive for my clinical work?

It depends on how many you want and earn. Clinical students can receive up to eight (8) hours of academic credit for clinical work during their entire law school career. The number of credits earned depends on the number of hours worked. Students are eligible for one hour of credit for each 52 hours of work (including class hours), with a minimum of two (2) credit hours required. The more hours a student wants to work, the more academic hours the student can earn (up to four (4) credits per semester).

How many semesters may I enroll in the Clinical Law Program?

Students can enroll in the Clinical Law Program up to two semesters if they perform well during their first semester of clinic.

How is the Clinical Law Program graded?

All clinics are graded on a standard letter grade basis (A, B, C, D, F) both semesters.

What is the class requirement?

Clinical students are required to attend two hours of class per week during their first semester. Clinical students eligible to return as advanced clinic students may be required to attend fewer class hours. All class time counts towards the overall hours requirement.
Does enrollment in the Clinical Law Program satisfy the professional writing requirement?

Yes, as long as you complete a significant amount of high-quality professional writing during your time in the Clinical Law Program.

Is it true that the Clinical Law Program usually has a waitlist?

Yes, but we work very hard to ensure that all students who try to register, are enrolled at least one semester prior to graduation. The more you register, the more likely you are to get in.

How do you choose clinical students?

We generally favor third-year students since they are closest to graduation and are more likely to be court certified, which allows them to make court appearances and conduct depositions. However, we always save a few spots (10-30%) for second-year students so that we have a core of advanced students to provide leadership the following year, and also because there always seem to be a group of second-year students especially eager to gain legal experience early in their legal career. Students must have successfully completed LRW I and II in order to enroll in any of the clinics.