



CLINICAL PROGRAMS

Introduction

The clinical programs at UMass Law help students transform their learning of the law into practice while also providing opportunities for students to improve the lives of those in our neighboring communities.

The Law School faculty believes it is important that students acquire the skills and values necessary for satisfying careers. The faculty also wants to ensure that the members of the neighboring community who are unable to afford private attorneys access the justice system. Thus, the faculty has adopted a “practical skills” requirement, which mandates that students take at least six credits of skills courses. Three of the six practice credits must be satisfied through a clinic or field placement course, thus ensuring that all students have a real professional practice experience.

For further information on the Clinical Programs, please contact Associate Professor Margaret Drew, Director of Clinical Programs and Experiential Education (Margaret.Drew@umassd.edu) or Crystal Desirey, Clinical Programs Coordinator, at 508-985-1180 (cdesirey@umassd.edu).

Our curriculum emphasizes the importance of clinical courses as a core part of the law school curriculum in accordance with the skills and values statement written by a Committee of the American Bar Association. That statement listed the skills and values that all law students need to be exposed to while in law school, including the following:

Skills

1. Solving a problem or accomplishing an objective;
2. Analyzing and applying legal rules and principles;
3. Identifying legal issues and researching them thoroughly and efficiently;
4. Participating in factual investigations;
5. Communicating effectively, whether orally or in writing;
6. Counseling clients;
7. Negotiating in either a dispute-resolution or transactional context;
8. Employing or advising a client about the option of litigation and alternative dispute resolution;
9. Practicing effectively, familiarizing themselves with the skills and concepts required for efficient management; and
10. Representing a client consistently with applicable ethical standards.

Values

1. Providing competent, professional, and ethical representation to one’s clients;
2. Promoting justice, fairness, and morality in society;
3. Contributing to the improvement of the legal profession;

4. Seeking constantly to improve one's skills, expertise, and
5. Making professional judgments through study, reflection, and discussion.

These skills and values are covered in our clinical courses. Students will be addressing a variety of them in each clinical course, but should understand that not all of the listed skills and values will be addressed in each course.

In law clinics, students directly represent clients, with the supervision of a licensed attorney staff member, who would not otherwise have legal representation. Through these experiences, students enhance their legal skills while providing important services.

The Law School currently offers five clinical opportunities: The Immigration Law Clinic, Community Development Clinic, Mashpee Wampanoag Legal Services Clinic, the Criminal Prosecution Clinic, and the Human Rights at Home Clinic.

Students will find themselves better prepared for the practice of law after taking a clinic.

In-House Clinic Opportunities:

Community Development Clinic – 3 credits (one semester); enrollment limited to 8; Graded; **(Law 640)**
Offered Fall and Spring semesters;
Prerequisites or corequisites: Legal Ethics (Law 525) and Business Organization (Law 585); completion of 30 credit hours; Permission of instructor required.

Students, supervised by a law school professor, spend one semester representing small businesses and non-profit organizations in the South Coast area of Massachusetts. Work includes drafting corporate documents, preparing state and federal filings, conducting legal audits, researching legal issues, and reviewing contracts. Students may also have the opportunity to research new developments in the law and make presentations to the board of directors and employees of nonprofit organizations. Students will also study the law of, and assist clients engaging in, small for-profit business activity. Clinic students attend a weekly two-hour seminar that will provide training in the relevant legal topics, as well as in practical legal skills such as legal drafting and public speaking skills. Students will also reflect on and consider ethical and other issues arising in practice. Students will average 10 hours weekly on their clinical work.

Advanced Community Development Clinic – 3 credits (one semester), enrollment is by invitation only; Graded; **(Law 692)**
Offered Fall and Spring semesters;
Prerequisite: Community Development Clinic (Law 640)

Students who have completed the Community Development Clinic (Law 640) may be invited to participate in the Advanced Community Development Clinic in a subsequent semester. Advanced Clinic students will continue to work with clients, expanding their knowledge of clinic-specific substantive law as they further develop their lawyering skills. Advanced Clinic students may also assist with the first-semester course, mentor students, participate in programs for the public, and engage in a writing project.

**Immigration Law Clinic -
(Law 606)**

6 credits (one semester); enrollment limited to 8; Graded;
Prerequisites or corequisites: Legal Ethics (Law 525); and
completion of 30 credit hours.
Permission of instructor required.

In this semester-long, 6-credit clinic, students, in both class and individual specialized supervision, learn to act as "real" lawyers while providing immigration legal services to those who are unable to afford legal assistance. Case types vary, but include bond hearings and deportation defense; visas for juveniles, victims of violence, and workers; and asylum and naturalization. Classes offer both substantive and practical training in case preparation -- interviewing, counseling, motion practice, court filings – along with several other skills necessary for competent, ethical practice. The 20 hours per week commitment includes supervision, class time, assignments, and other community engagement activities.

**Advanced Immigration Litigation Clinic - 3 credits (one semester), enrollment is by
(Law 667)**

invitation only
Graded; Offered Fall and Spring semesters;
Prerequisites or corequisites: Immigration Law Clinic I and
II (Law 625 and Law 626)

Students who have completed the full year in the Immigration Law Clinic (ILC) may be invited to participate in an Advanced Clinic during the following school year. Advanced ILC students will mentor first year clinic students, and will expand their own knowledge of general and clinic-specific substantive and procedural law as they build upon the lawyering skills they developed in their previous clinic year. Advanced ILC students will participate in outreach activities to educate the public about immigration law and will engage in a substantial writing project.

**Human Rights at Home Clinic –
(Law 640)**

3, 4, 5, or 6 credits (one semester); enrollment limited to 8;
Graded; Offered Fall and Spring semesters;
Prerequisites or corequisites: Legal Ethics (Law 525) or
having passed the MPRE with a minimum score of 85;
completion of 30 credit hours; Permission of instructor
required.

Law student, supervised by a law school professor, spend one semester serving the needs of local residents and beyond. Clinic work will be varied, permitting the flexibility to meet a range of community concerns. Examples of possible projects are serving domestic violence survivors, those who are incarcerated, war veterans, and others whose fundamental needs are unmet. In addition, students may address local, state or national research and policy needs as they arise. Each semester's projects are announced at the beginning of registration. Students attend a weekly seminar and consult with peers regarding their clinic work through case rounds. Students may elect to take the clinic for 3-6 credits, committing 10, 13.5, 16.5, or 20 hours per week to the clinic work, depending upon the number of credits to be awarded.

Off-Site Clinic Opportunities

Criminal Prosecution Clinic – (Law 703) 3 credits (one semester), enrollment limited to third year students, Graded
Prerequisites: Criminal Procedure (Law 521);
Corequisites: Legal Ethics (Law 525; Evidence (Law 576) or Trial Practice (Law 620)
Permission of instructor required.

The Criminal Prosecution Clinic is housed with the Bristol County District Attorney's office located in various courts around the Bristol County. Clinic students, supervised by a senior District Attorney, spend one semester engaged in the legal work of a prosecutor gaining courtroom, discovery, legal writing, and litigation strategy experience. Students will participate in weekly 2 hour seminars where they will focus on a variety of topics in criminal law and procedure, evidence, ethics, and practice skills. In addition to the two-hour seminar, students average 10 hours weekly on their case work.

Mashpee Wampanoag Legal Services Clinic - (Law 601) 3 credits (one semester), enrollment limited to 4
Graded; Offered Fall and Spring semesters;
Prerequisites or corequisites: Legal Ethics (Law 525);
Evidence (Law 576) OR Trial Practice (Law 620);
completion of 30 credit hours.

The Mashpee Wampanoag Legal Services Clinic is housed in the Hyannis office of South Coastal Counties Legal Services, Inc. Clinic clients include low-income litigants in the Tribal Court, located in Mashpee, Massachusetts as well as tribal members seeking legal assistance with various other types of civil legal issues, including family law, landlord-tenant law, and government benefits law. Students attend weekly 2 hour seminars and represent clients under the supervision of an experienced legal services attorney. Clinic students spend an average of 10 hours weekly on their clinical work. Student reflection on their direct representation work, including ethical concerns, is part of the clinical experience.

Participation in any of these clinical opportunities requires submission of an application form to the LEC for approval of Professor. An additional clinic specific questionnaire for the following Clinics are also required: Community Development, Human Rights at Home, Immigration Law, and Criminal Prosecution Clinics. Please see the Clinical Programs Coordinator, Crystal Desirey for these questionnaires.

Students are allowed to enroll in one clinic or one field placement per semester.