

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAW CLINIC  
SPRING 2013  
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA SCHOOL OF LAW

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LAW 655, Tuesday/Thursday 2-3:25 p.m.  
Tuesdays: Multipurpose class/courtroom A245  
Thursdays: DVLC Workroom A137

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**  
SPRING 2013

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Week 1

January 8:            Myths and Assumptions about Domestic Violence  
                         Introduction to Clinic

January 10:          Introduction to Domestic Violence Law: Simulated hearing  
                         Introduction to Big Projects

\*Court observations begin this week

\*Case/team assignments made this week

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Week 2

January 15:          Nutshell law presentations: Protection from Abuse Act,  
                         Divorce, Child Support, Child Custody

January 17:          No class – cancelled. Review assigned cases.

\*Court observations continue this week

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Week 3

January 22:          Interviewing & Counseling

January 24:          Introduction to Case Rounds: Collaboration

\*Court observations continue this week

\*Intakes begin this week

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAW CLINIC  
SPRING 2013  
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA SCHOOL OF LAW

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Week 4

January 29:            Guest speaker/DV lawyer/community organizer Allison Dearing

January 31:            Visit Turning Point Agency & Shelter

\*Court observations continue this week

\*Journal Assignment #1 Due by 5 p.m. on Friday, February 1

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Week 5

February 5:            Client-centered Lawyering

February 7:            Case Rounds

\*Dorbin Association Auction to benefit Turning Point on February 7, 2013 from 6-9:30 p.m. at the Jupiter Bar & Grill

\*Big Project Proposal Due by 5 p.m. on Friday, February 8

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Week 6

February 12:           Case Theory/Battered Women Who Kill

February 14:           Case Rounds/Case Theory

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Week 7

February 19:           Fact Investigation

February 21:           Case Rounds

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Week 8

February 26:           Trial Skills: Direct/Cross Examination & Preparing for Court

February 28:           Case Rounds

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Week 9

March 5:                *No class- Midterm evaluations*

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAW CLINIC  
SPRING 2013  
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA SCHOOL OF LAW

\*Midterm Self-Evaluations Due by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 5

March 7: Case Rounds

\*Journal Assignment #2 Due by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 5

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Week 10

March 12: Cross-Cultural Lawyering

March 14: Case Rounds: Cross-Cultural Lawyering

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Week 11

March 19: Domestic Violence & Human Rights with Kelly McTear

March 21: Case Rounds: DV & Human Rights

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Week 12

March 26: No class – spring holidays

March 28: No class – spring holidays

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Week 13

April 2: Domestic Violence in the Media with Paige Miller

April 4: Case Rounds

\*April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month – Events sponsored by Women's Resource Center

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Week 14

April 9: Ethics Simulation: The Amicable Divorce

April 11: Case Rounds

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Week 15

April 16: Big Projects Presentations

April 18: Reflections

\*Journal Assignment #3 Due by 5 p.m. on Friday, April 19

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAW CLINIC  
SPRING 2013  
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA SCHOOL OF LAW

**\*\* All assigned readings will be distributed in class or by e-mail.**

**\*\*\*Schedule subject to change depending on needs and interests that arise during the semester.**

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. **Casework.** Each student will be assigned to a team, and each team assigned to a caseload. Our expectation is that each team will be responsible for all aspects of case management, including developing case theories, conducting legal research, drafting legal documents, communicating with clients and adverse parties (or their lawyers), maintaining internal office filing (paper and electronic database), scheduling meetings, and representing clients in negotiations, hearings and trials. We are looking, therefore, for you to take ownership and initiative on your cases.
2. **Journal of Court Observations and Lawyering Reflections.**  
Through your work on client cases you will encounter many new challenges and experiences. The case rounds, case status conferences, as well as seminars are all designed to maximize your learning through active reflection. The following journal exercise also will assist you in that endeavor.

For this exercise, you are asked to write about one lawyering or clinic activity in which you have engaged so far in the semester. Please type in a memo format, addressed to us, double spaced in 12-point font, with the subject heading being the activity about which you are writing. For example, the first journal might focus on the court observations you conducted, what surprised you about the process, what you expected, etc.

Your journal memo should include four paragraphs (2 pages max):

*Paragraph One:* A description of the activity. This should be the who, what, when, where and how part of the memo, and should be fairly specific.

*Paragraph Two:* A discussion of what you were thinking during the activity, any questions you had, and why.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAW CLINIC  
SPRING 2013  
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA SCHOOL OF LAW

*Paragraph Three:* A discussion of the feelings you had during the activity, and why. Be careful not to confuse feelings with thoughts. For example, “I felt that it was useful” is a thought, not a feeling. Feelings include: frustration, anxiety, anger, nervousness, boredom, being relaxed, annoyed, satisfied, etc.

*Paragraph Four:* A discussion of how you might apply what you learned from the experience – i.e., something specific that you would do differently (or would want to do the same) in the future. Be sure to describe this in behavioral terms, not just ultimate goals. For example, if the situation involves a client interview, do not simply say that next time you will be more prepared to answer the client’s questions. Rather, you should discuss what research you would do before the next client interview, the mooting that you might set up with your classmates, the approach you might take with a client or opposing counsel in the future, etc. For the first journal, this paragraph could instead include a brief statement of your goals and expectations for your clinic experience. Please include what you expect to learn as a result of your participation in clinic, and please try to be as introspective as possible because these statements are intended to serve as a basis for comparison to your more developed views at the end of the semester.

The contents of your journal entry will be kept confidential, but if patterns emerge as we read through the entries, we hope to raise any general themes in seminar and case rounds discussions throughout the semester.

Due Dates for Journal assignments: 5 pm on January 31, March 5, and April 19. Please submit your journals to us by e-mail.

3. **Big Project/Presentation.** Besides your cases, we want you to reflect thoughtfully and critically about the system, the larger issues that emerge in your cases and those of your colleagues, as well as how we as a community and clinic might address these larger issues; for example, systemic injustices, gaps in services for already-disenfranchised populations, etc.

Topics might include: researching how to create a local DV task force or coordinated community response to DV; preparing a “Know Your Rights” flyer for DV victims and presenting it at a DV awareness event or to a DV survivors’ group; researching the legislative history on DV statutes for

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAW CLINIC  
SPRING 2013  
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA SCHOOL OF LAW

themes; designing a website of legal information for DV survivors; creating a Safety Plan Template for Tuscaloosa DV survivors; revising the DV clinic's client intake form; or leading a discussion on domestic violence and . . . children & custody, criminal law, firearms/gun seizure, housing, immigration/human rights, male victims, public policy, race/class/disability, rural areas/issues, same-sex DV, welfare reform, workplace/employment.

Big Project Proposal Due by 5 p.m. on Friday, February 8. Please submit proposals by e-mail. Big Project presentations will occur during seminar on Tuesday, April 16, 2013.

4. **Case Team Meetings.** Starting the third week of the semester, each team of students will meet with the supervising attorneys to discuss cases and big projects. Each team will have a scheduled time to meet with us. Please submit a case status memorandum for each client or potential client for whom you are responsible, as well as an agenda for the meeting, at least 24 hours before your team meeting. Memos and agendas should be submitted to us by e-mail.

**CLINIC POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS**

1. Students will maintain clinic office hours. Besides working on individual cases and big projects, students will conduct intakes interviews of potential clients during that time.
2. Students are expected to devote approximately twelve (12) to fourteen (14) hours per week on clinic obligations.
3. Students should not mail a letter, transmit a substantive e-mail or submit to a court or agency any document without first providing it to one of the supervisors for review and receiving prior approval.
4. Please do not remove case files from the DVLC workroom without prior approval from a supervisor. Permission is usually granted, upon request.
5. Students are expected to maintain case files (internal and electronic), record their time spent on clinic work, complete confidentiality forms, and conflict checks.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LAW CLINIC  
SPRING 2013  
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA SCHOOL OF LAW

6. Each and every contact with a client, potential client, adverse party or his lawyer should be recorded in the case files. It is very important to be very thorough in recording all communications and events concerning your clients. These files are passed on to other students and they will need to know everything possible about the case to represent our clients.
7. At the end of the semester, students must prepare either a transfer or closing memorandum, depending on the status of the case. Unless the case is closing, this memorandum should include identification of our client, a factual summary of the legal proceedings to date, the type and date of the next hearing, and a "to do list". This memorandum must be approved by the supervising attorney before a case is deemed transferred or closed.
8. Please stay in touch! Most of the communication in the clinic happens through e-mail, and students must check their e-mail on a daily basis. All students should check their clinic mailbox for faxes, mail, and messages on a daily basis too. If emergencies arise, please feel free to contact your supervisor by e-mail or phone.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with the Office of Disability Services, 348-4285, and to meet with Associate Dean Claude Arrington, 348-5750 or [carrington@law.ua.edu](mailto:carrington@law.ua.edu). You are invited to see the Director to discuss accommodations and other special needs.

The School of Law Honor Code, Grading Policies and other policies will be applicable to this class, and are available for review and reference at <http://www.law.ua.edu/students/>.

There is a lot of interesting and important work to be done in the clinic. We are pleased to work with you and looking forward to a great semester!