

POVERTY LAW CLINIC

Spring 2022 / Course #202

(4 credit hours)

Instructor: Vincent L. Smith

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Course Schedule: This is a hybrid course that will meet in person and on Zoom on Mondays 1:50-3:50.

Office Hours: Online office hours are flexible and available by appointment through Microsoft Bookings from 10:00am to 12:30pm Monday through Thursday. The calendar is available here: <https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/PovertyLawClinic@lsnv.org/bookings/>

Required Text: Poverty Law, Policy, and Practice by Juliet Brodie, Clare Pastore, Ezra Rosser, & Jeffrey Selbin, ISBN-13: 978-1454812548

Course Description: The Poverty Law Clinic provides students with a first-hand experience practicing poverty law, laws that apply particularly to the poor and disadvantaged members of our community. The Clinic will be a comprehensive course providing classroom instruction on poverty law and simultaneous real-world experience through assignment of cases from Legal Services of Northern Virginia.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course students should have be able to:

- Proficiency in problem solving
- Development of interviewing and client counseling practice
- An understanding of how to case strategy and legal analysis
- Learn substantive law on various subjects related to legal aid clients
- Learn how to manage a caseload, document client interactions and work product

Assessments:

- Class Participation and Discussion of the Readings
- Reflection Papers
- Outreach Participation
- Case Work
- Action Plans
- Transition Memos

Attendance:

Attendance is required for the weekly class meeting held on Monday afternoons. There will also be a weekly outreach and/or individual meetings to provide legal information, legal representation, and to discuss case developments and substantive law.

Class Recordings Prohibited: Pursuant to Academic Regulation 4-2.2, no portion of a class session or an examination may be preserved by means of a recording device such as an audio recording device or camera. Any exceptions to this policy must be expressly permitted in writing by me.

Classroom Accommodations: Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disabilities Registration Process. Faculty may not receive or respond to requests for an accommodation. All requests must be handled by the office of Disability Services. You may contact Disability Services directly via email at ods@gmu.edu or phone at (703) 993-2474. If you have any questions about how in-class or testing accommodations are implemented at the law school, please contact the Assistant Dean, Student Academic Affairs for more information.

COVID Health & Safety Requirements: It is important to note that under current University health and safety protocols, face coverings and social distancing are required for all persons on campus. Any student or instructor who anticipates being on campus for any reason should refer to the most up-to-date University policies [here](#).

Course Assignments:

Dates	Topics	Readings	Assignments
January 24	Updated Case Management Guidelines / Outreach Structure Introduction.	Review Housing & Protective Order CLEs materials provided.	
January 31	Housing Law	Chapter 6: Housing	
February 7	Review Current Outreach Structures / Discuss Current Cases.		
February 14	Criminalization of Poverty	Chapter 9: Criminalization	
February 21	Case Management / Action Plans		Draft Action Plan for Current Cases.
February 28	Health Law	Chapter 7: Health	
March 7	Structure of Case Memoranda		
March 14	Spring Recess – NO CLASS		
March 21	Education Law	Chapter 8: Education	Prepare Initial Case Memos.
March 28	Case Review / Evaluation		
April 4	Legal Landscape – Lasting COVID-19 Effects	Articles TBD on Current Legal Landscape	Review Discussion Questions
April 11	Discuss Status of Cases / Create Final Timelines		Reflection Paper Following Discussion.
April 18	Poverty Legal Landscape	Articles TBD on State of Poverty Legal Issues	Review Discussion Questions
April 25	Final Thoughts		Finalize Case Transition Memos Management & Final Reflection