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Room 2-26-B

Seminar:
Wednesdays 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Room 2-26

Overview of the Course

The Child Advocacy Clinic is a 4-credit, in-house, live-client, litigation skills clinic. The Child Protective Practice is *of counsel* to the Legal Aid Society and represents children in Family Court abuse and neglect cases. Current and past child protective cases include allegations of parental drug use, failure to send children to school (educational neglect), domestic violence, mental illness, excessive corporal punishment, abandonment, etc. The Child Protective Practice is limited until such time as the full court reopens.

The Immigrant Children's Justice Project serves children who lack immigration status. Some cases involve Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, asylum, or other forms of immigration relief.

Most of our cases are litigated in Queens County, but we also represent clients in Nassau, Suffolk, Manhattan, Bronx, Westchester and Rockland counties. Clinic participants are "student lawyers" for a semester. Small groups of clinic partners (two or three to a team) work together to represent multiple clients. As a student attorney, you will interview clients and witnesses, conduct factual investigations, attend court conferences and court hearings, research and draft legal documents; visit foster homes, group homes, psychiatric hospitals, schools, etc. and oversee all aspects of pre-trial, trial, and post-dispositional proceedings. (Some in-person activities are limited during the pandemic.)

The weekly clinic seminar class focuses on the law of child protection, special immigration juvenile status, skills-building, perspective-taking, professionalism, and the lawyering process. Classroom exercises are accelerated during the first half of the semester, providing necessary skills earlier, and freeing up the remainder of the semester to focus solely on case handling. (This is determined after reviewing student schedules.)

Clinic Requirements

- * Weekly two-hour seminar class, class reading, and regular writing assignments *
- Fourteen hours per week minimum work on cases (does not include seminar class and readings/homework)
- Willingness to prioritize clinic clients (within reason) above other commitments
- Flexibility and willingness to handle emergencies occurring during the semester
- Mandatory pre-semester boot camp on Saturday, August 28, 2021, will replace 3 in-semester seminar classes.

Suggested Pre- or Co-requisites

There are no pre- or co-requisites, but students often find the following courses useful: evidence, family law, immigration law, professional responsibility, and/or trial advocacy.

Student Office Hours

Students schedule and **maintain 14 weekly office hours** to handle their cases (does not include seminar class and readings/homework). Students set the majority of their office hours for normal business hours. Students do not go to court during every set of office hours, but will go during some of them, as court and case schedules dictate. Students use case management software to track and submit weekly time sheets.

The clinic is rewarding but demanding. Students should carefully consider this in light of their other commitments. Families in crisis often require intensive assistance, and so within reason, we expect that during your semester you will make your clients a very high priority.

Application Process

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until seats are filled; students who wish to increase their chances of securing a seat should apply early. Seats are limited. No interview, cover letter, or resume are required to apply (however, resumes are required before the semester begins). An unofficial transcript is required to ensure that required core courses have been completed and that the student is in good academic standing. In the event more students apply than there are available seats, a lottery will be held, and students not selected by lottery are invited to apply for a later semester. St. John's law students interested in the **Child Advocacy Clinic** may apply at:

tinyurl.com/lawclinics21-22

Complete the required fields of the online application and upload the following:

Unofficial Transcript

Students will be notified if a seat or wait list seat are being offered; once the clinic is full, all applicants are notified of their place on the wait list; once the wait list is full, students will be notified and invited to apply in another semester.

Registration Process

Once you accept a seat in the Child Advocacy Clinic, **you may not drop the course without permission of the Assistant Dean for Students**. Please think carefully *before* you accept a seat. There are limited seats, and accepting a seat decreases opportunities for other students. Emergencies will happen, but please be considerate of your classmates and only accept a seat if you really do plan to enroll.

More Information

If you would like to know more about the clinic experience before applying or before accepting a seat, please email [Janet Kroll \(krollj@stjohns.edu\)](mailto:krollj@stjohns.edu) to obtain the contact information of current students who are willing to share their experiences with you. If you would like to speak with Professor Baum, you may email her at baumj@stjohns.edu, or just stop by the clinic and ask to chat.