IMPORTANT DATES

Clinic Information Webinar: **Wednesday, March 25, 2020**

Clinic Information Sessions & Open Houses:

*Forthcoming*

APPLICATIONS DUE ONLINE April 12th by **12:00 noon**

** The system closes at 12:01pm, and **no exceptions** will be made for late applications.

Students are notified of application status by Clinics: **April 20**, by 5:00pm.

Students accept/reject offers directly to Clinics: **April 23**, by 5:00pm.
Georgetown has long been nationally recognized for its leadership in the field of clinical legal education. Our clinics offer students an unparalleled opportunity to serve the public, explore career possibilities, gain first-hand insight into the strategic and ethical dimensions of the profession, and acquire valuable legal skills in a supportive educational environment. In the 2020-2021 academic year, we will offer eighteen different clinical courses. Over 300 students are expected to participate, again making this the largest in-house clinical program in the nation. We hope you will be a part of this group!

In clinic, you will serve as the lead lawyer on a case or project – with all the responsibility that entails. You will represent actual clients facing real legal challenges and, by providing quality legal representation to under-represented individuals and organizations, you will learn about the practical art of lawyering. Through clinic, you will acquire valuable legal skills not accessible in a traditional classroom setting and gain firsthand insight into the strategic and ethical dimensions of the legal profession. You will see your identity change – from that of a student to that of a lawyer.

Our clinics vary widely in their subject matter. We have clinics that work on civil cases, while others specialize in criminal cases. Some clinics involve administrative and judicial proceedings, while other clinics work on transactional, legislative, or policy matters. Opportunities exist to learn international as well as domestic law.

All clinics focus on the skills you will need in your lawyering career. You will hone your ability to problem solve, your analytic and reasoning abilities, and your practical judgment. You will work on building relationships with, and providing advice to, clients. You will practice your research, writing, and speaking skills. And all the while, you will be given the opportunity to reflect on your own work style and to improve where needed.

Georgetown’s clinics are very intensive; the typical student-to-teacher ratio is just five-to-one. As a result, you will receive focused, individualized attention from full-time faculty and graduate teaching fellows who know your work and can help you improve in a way not possible in a traditional classroom setting. You will be pushed to accomplish more than you may think possible, but in a space where extensive support and a built-in safety net allows you to reach for those new goals.

Your clinic experience will undoubtedly be very demanding, but we trust it also will be an enriching and unique part of your Georgetown education.
1. Will being in a clinic help me learn how to be a lawyer?

Absolutely. A central goal of clinical education is teaching students how to be skilled, responsible members of the profession. Students in clinics learn how to be lawyers by engaging in the practice of law in a controlled educational environment that promotes self-reflection on each lawyering task. Given the low student-faculty ratio, clinic students are given feedback tailored to their specific learning needs. Those students who have participated in a clinic generally consider their clinic experience to be essential to their preparation for the practice of law.

2. Should I consider taking a clinic even if it’s not the same subject matter in which I intend to practice?

Yes. No matter what its subject matter, each clinic teaches the essential skills of planning, problem solving, strategic thinking, ethics, and client relations, among many others, which are transferable to any kind of law that you might practice.

3. May transfer students take a clinic?

Transfer students may apply to clinic after matriculating at Georgetown if they meet all of the required prerequisites. Since clinic registration takes place in March and April, this means that transfer students will usually participate in clinic during their third year.

4. May LL.M. students take a clinic?

No. Clinics are open to JD students only.

5. May part-time students take a clinic?

Part-time students who will have the required number of credits, will have completed the prerequisites, and can devote the required number of hours to clinic are encouraged to apply. Part-time students may enroll in most (but not all) clinics before taking Criminal Justice, Property, and the first year elective. The Criminal Defense and Prisoner Advocacy Clinic, Criminal Justice Clinic, and Juvenile Justice Clinic all have a different rule, noted in the chart on the preceding page of this handbook. Attention should also be paid to any credit hours associated with required co-requisite classes.

6. May students who work for the government take a clinic?

Because of conflict-of-interest statutes (see 18 U.S.C. §§ 205, 207), it is possible that students with part-time or full-time jobs with the Federal government may not be eligible to participate in the Appellate Litigation Clinic, the Center for Applied Legal Studies, the Criminal Defense and Prisoner Advocacy Clinic, the Criminal Justice Clinic, the Federal Legislation Clinic, the Harrison Institute Policy Clinic, the Institute for Public Representation, the Civil Rights Clinic, or Rising for Justice. Students with part-time or full-time jobs with the District of Columbia government or the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia may not be eligible to participate in the Juvenile Justice Clinic, the Harrison Institute Policy Clinic, the Civil Rights Clinic, or the Institute for Public Representation. The Social Enterprise and Nonprofit Law Clinic also limits outside legal work generally during enrollment in the clinic. Students who are uncertain about the application of this rule to them should consult the clinic director or the Director of Clinical Programs Jenn Cilingin (jlc279@georgetown.edu) to discuss their particular situation before applying to a clinic.

7. May JD/MBA candidates take a clinic?

There are special rules applicable to JD/MBA candidates designed to avoid conflict between the MBA Global Business Experience and clinic participation. Please contact Director of Clinical Programs Jenn Cilingin (jlc279@georgetown.edu) for details.

8. What does Student Bar Certification entail?

Many clinics require students to be certified to engage in the limited practice of law in the District of Columbia under the D.C. Student Practice Rule. (See the chart earlier in this handbook to determine which clinics require this). To become certified, students must 1) complete an application to the court and 2) answer a series of questions regarding previous violations of the law, current substance abuse or mental health issues, past delinquency in financial obligations, experience as a party in any civil or family law matters, etc. In the vast majority of cases, affirmative answers to these questions will not stand in the way of Student Bar Certification, but disclosure is required nonetheless. For a full list of questions, visit the clinic registration site. Students with questions or concerns about this process should contact Director of Clinical Programs Jenn Cilingin (jlc279@georgetown.edu) to discuss their situation.

9. How are students selected for a clinic?

Each clinic has its own method of selection. Most clinics choose students based solely on the strength of the application submitted, but the Criminal Defense and Prisoner Advocacy Clinic, Criminal Justice Clinic, and Juvenile Justice Clinic also fill some seats through a lottery.

10. Can a student take more than one clinic while in law school?

Students may not participate in a second clinic unless that clinic remains undersubscribed after all other students have been offered the opportunity to join. Participating in two clinics in the same academic year is prohibited.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

11. Can students take an externship or practicum course in the semester they do clinic?

No. Clinic students may not concurrently enroll in a practicum course or externship.

12. Can a student drop a clinic after accepting his/her seat?

After accepting a fall or full-year clinic seat, a student may drop that clinic ONLY with permission from the clinic director and Patrick Griffith, Assistant Dean for Clinical Programs. Permission is granted only where remaining enrolled in the clinic would cause significant hardship to the student.

A student wishing to drop a spring semester clinic seat may do so no later than 5pm on Sunday, November 1, 2020 and ONLY after meeting with the clinic director and by then notifying Director of Clinical Programs Jenn Cilingin (jlc279@georgetown.edu) in writing. After 5pm on November 1, 2020, a student may drop a spring semester clinic ONLY with permission from the clinic director and Assistant Dean Griffith. Permission will be granted only where remaining enrolled in the clinic would cause significant hardship to the student.

In the absence of permission to drop a clinic, a student failing to participate in the clinic to which he or she was admitted will receive a grade of F for the appropriate number of credits.

Additionally, in the absence of a showing of special hardship, students taking full-year clinics may not obtain any credit unless they remain in the clinic for the full academic year and complete all required work. If the clinic director and Dean Griffith permit a student to withdraw from a clinic prior to completing the clinic requirements, the amount of credit received for work the student has completed will be determined by the clinic director. Credits for year-long clinics are allocated in accordance with a fixed formula set by the faculty on the basis of classroom seminars, skills training, and field work. No additional credits will be awarded regardless of the amount of time or effort involved in fulfilling clinic obligations.

13. How does the waitlist process work?

If a student is admitted to a clinic, s/he is not placed on any waitlists. A student who is not admitted to any clinic is automatically placed on the waitlist for each clinic s/he ranked (or, if s/he indicated s/he would like to be considered for all vacancies, on the waitlist of all clinics). If a clinic seat opens up, that clinic will select a student from the waitlist. If the seat cannot be filled in this way, the Director of Clinical Programs will solicit additional student applications via broadcast email.

14. When does clinic start?

Some clinics have a mandatory orientation that starts before classes begin for the semester. Check the supplemental clinic info sheets for more information.

15. How long am I responsible for my cases or other clinic assignments?

Each clinic determines the duration of a student’s responsibility. Clinic students are generally expected to work for their clinic until the end of the examination period unless the clinic director has established a shorter period. In some cases, the needs of clinic clients will require that a student perform some tasks after the semester ends. In other cases, students may – with the approval of the clinic director – request a short extension to complete a project. In either case, an extension form must be filled out before the examination period begins and will be effective only upon review and signature of Assistant Dean Patrick Griffith. If a tribunal or legislative body has continued a clinic case for hearing beyond the period of the student’s clinic enrollment, Dean Griffith will generally grant an extension until the completion of the hearing. Except in unusual cases, an extension requested for any other reason will not be approved if it exceeds one month from the end of the examination period. If an extension is approved, grades will be submitted to the Registrar’s office within three weeks after the extension expires. In some cases, a clinic director may permit a student who wishes to handle a case that will not conclude until after the semester ends to continue representation.

16. How are students graded?

Clinics grade in accordance with the historical grade distribution (see the Student Handbook of Academic Policies for more information about this distribution). Final examinations are not given. Rather, student evaluations are based on performance of the lawyering tasks associated with the representation of a client and on a student’s ability to learn from those experiences. Most (but not all) clinics provide students with three or four separate grades for different elements of the students’ work (i.e., seminar, case work, professionalism, etc.). The faculty of each clinic determines the specific criteria upon which students are evaluated. While the faculty is ultimately responsible for determining students’ grades, fellows may participate in the grading process as well.

17. What should a student do if s/he has or suspects s/he has a disability that may affect their experience in a clinic?

Because of the nature of clinic work, students with disabilities may encounter a need for accommodations in clinics that may be different from those previously established as appropriate for other courses. The kind of accommodations will depend on the particular clinic’s area of practice and may vary from clinic to clinic. Therefore, students registered with the Law Center’s Office of Disability Services or who suspect that they may have a disability that could affect their experience in a clinic should consult Director of Clinical Programs Jenn Cilingin (jlc279@georgetown.edu) and/or the Director of Disability Services Mara Bellino (mcb260@georgetown.edu). We advise that students initiate such consultations as soon as possible, ideally before applying to clinics, so they can factor the relevant considerations regarding accommodations into their clinic selection process.
APPLICATION CHECKLIST

☐ Read clinic supplemental information sheets at https://www.law.georgetown.edu/experiential-learning/clinics/clinic-supplemental-material/

☐ Attend the Clinic Information Webinar, link forthcoming.

☐ Email Clinic Administration to set up an individual advising session over Zoom.

☐ Log on to the Clinic registration website at: http://apps.law.georgetown.edu/clinic-application/

☐ Complete all four sections of the application:
  1. Background Information
  2. Certify Eligibility/Prerequisites
  3. Rank Clinics
  4. Upload Application Materials
     • Resume
     • Transcript
     • General statement of interest
     • Up to three clinic-specific statements of interest
     • Any special supplemental materials required by certain clinics

☐ When your application is complete, click on “Submit Final Application” before April 12, at 12:00 pm (noon).

For more information on clinic registration, visit:
https://www.law.georgetown.edu/experiential-learning/clinics

Any questions? Contact our Clinics Admin Team:
Jenn Cilingin, Director of Clinical Programs (jlc279@georgetown.edu)
Patrick Griffith, Assistant Dean of Clinical Programs (patrick.griffith@georgetown.edu)