Clinic Information Packet – Fall 2015

Attached are descriptions of the currently anticipated Fall 2015 semester clinic offerings through the SUNY Buffalo Clinical Legal Education Program, including each Clinic’s class meeting time. Please review this carefully as some Clinics have prerequisites or co-requisites. All interested students should apply for a SUNY Buffalo Legal Clinic via the online application. *Please note that practicum applications are run though a similar but separate process. Please see the Registrar’s website for more details.

Applicants should be aware that all enrolled clinic students are considered members of the SUNY Buffalo Clinical Legal Education Program Law Practice, and most will be admitted to practice under a practice order. Accordingly, enrolling in a SUNY Buffalo clinic requires students to agree to abide by law firm policies and procedures, including appropriate conflicts checks and confidentiality commitments that may go beyond matters in the particular clinic in which the student enrolls. This will be a substantial commitment both for the semester(s) in which the student is in a clinic, and thereafter.

Because of the intensity of the experience, students are strongly discouraged from enrolling in more than one experiential course in a semester (i.e. a clinic, practicum, or externship). Permission will be granted in very limited cases only after a meeting with Professor Kim Diana Connolly.

Questions regarding the clinical program should be directed to Professor Kim Diana Connolly, kimconno@buffalo.edu.
Application Instructions

The steps for applying for a Clinic are:

1. Complete the online application. List your first choice for a Clinic. You may list a second choice if you wish.

2. Submit the online application by providing your electronic signature.

3. If additional material is required for the application, submit this information to law-clinic@buffalo.edu.

4. **Online applications must be received by Friday, April 3, 2015 at 5:00 PM.**

5. All applicants will be notified of whether or not they have been selected for a clinic. Based on the selection process of the clinic(s) to which you are applying, the timing of these notifications differ among clinics.

6. If you are accepted, you will see Elisa Lackey (the Clinical Program Paralegal) in 508 O’Brian Hall to complete other necessary forms for registration. Your registration will not be approved until you submit all required paperwork, and your approval will be rescinded if you do not submit them all paperwork within the required deadlines.

   Acceptance to a Clinic is not guaranteed so we recommend that you register for a full schedule in case there is not room for you in a clinic. If you are approved for a clinic and submit all the required paperwork, you may drop a course during the drop/add period.

   **NOTICE TO JD/MSW STUDENTS: All JD/MSW students should consult with Vice Dean for Student Affairs, Melinda Saran, regarding their choice of Clinic, or Law and Social Work Clinic placement, for their JD/MSW Advanced year.**

   Thank you.
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AFFORDABLE HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CLINIC
Fall Semester – 3 Credits
Professor Lauren Breen
Wednesdays – 2:15 - 5:15 p.m.

The Affordable Housing and Community Development Clinic provides transactional legal assistance to community-based nonprofit organizations, small businesses and local developers partnering with nonprofit entities. The Clinic’s housing work focuses primarily upon the creation and preservation of high quality housing stock within the financial reach of low-income families, the elderly and disabled. Community development legal services include forming local social enterprises within economically challenged neighborhoods; strengthening public housing tenant associations; and working to sustain quality child care businesses. Building quality housing, creating quality jobs and ensuring that residents have a voice in determining the economic future of their communities all are essential not only to the immediate well-being of low-income individuals and families, but also to overall economic and social stability. In the process of developing housing and jobs with a variety of community-based groups, the Clinic strengthens capacity for future housing and economic development initiatives within community-based nonprofits and businesses.

Open to second and third year students who, under the supervision of the instructor, will undertake legal representation of community groups in the development of low-income housing and jobs in the Western New York area, this Clinic involves legal work at all stages of the housing and neighborhood-based economic development process. Student attorneys may represent an individual client and/or research legal or policy questions that impact the Clinic’s client base. In this context, student attorney project opportunities typically include: forming and advising corporations; negotiating and drafting contracts; drafting client memoranda; and engaging in legal and non-legal problem solving/strategy counseling with Clinic clients. Through their work in the Affordable Housing and Community Economic Development Clinic, students are exposed to very sophisticated contract issues and financing mechanisms, including tax credit and bond financing.

Clinic participation will require attendance at weekly group meetings devoted to project reviews, strategy making, problem resolution, and work assignments. Active participation in these meetings and in meetings with clients is expected of each student enrolled in the Clinic. Conferences with instructors will also be arranged, as necessary, to review work product.

Following your online application, you will be required to submit the following additional materials for this clinic: Statement of Interest, Resume & Transcript. Please submit these documents to law-clinic@buffalo.edu. Admission for this clinic is by permission of the instructor only.
ANIMAL LAW PRO BONO PROJECT

Fall Semester – 4 Credits
Professor Kim Diana Connolly
Tuesday 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
Additional Meeting Time – TBD by students schedule

“Humanity’s true moral test, its fundamental test…consists of its attitude towards those who are at its mercy: animals.” Milan Kundera

In Fall 2015, the Animal Law Pro Bono Project will be offered as a three or four-credit clinic (based on student request). Students in the clinic will focus on state and local policy regarding animal welfare issues related to Western New York. Student Lawyers will be working on issues such as local government laws related to the protection of community and feral cats. This work will involve presentations to municipal councils, and work with municipal attorneys to amend local law. Under the supervision of Professor Connolly, Student Lawyers will coordinate directly municipalities and community partners to assess and update state and local requirements. Student lawyers will also work on legislation and policies supporting opposition to puppy mills. Student Lawyers will leave the clinic with experience in advocacy in various fora, applied research, working with interdisciplinary professionals, client interviewing and counseling, fact investigation, drafting, teamwork, ethics and professionalism, and other profession-ready skills.

There will be weekly group classes with all clinic students on campus Tuesdays from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. There will also be separate team meetings (that will be scheduled around other obligations) with the instructor to address current client matters, devoted to instruction in substantive law and vital legal skills, as well as project reviews, strategy making, problem resolution, and work assignments. Students often want to schedule additional working meetings on their own throughout the semester. Active participation in these meetings, and in occasional client and stakeholder meetings that may take place off-site during the day and in the, is expected of each student enrolled in the Clinic.

Please apply online for this clinic. Following your online application, you will be required to submit the following additional materials for this clinic: Statement of Interest, Transcript and Resume. Please submit these documents to law-clinic@buffalo.edu. Admission for this clinic is by permission of the instructor only.
Interested in getting out of the classroom and into the courtroom? Want to use your skills, knowledge and passion to help end an epidemic which affects 1 in 4 American women?

Student Attorneys in the DVWR Clinic work on diverse, exciting projects and develop real litigation skills, while helping vulnerable and underserved populations. In Family Court, Student Attorneys will advocate for victims of domestic abuse, helping them to secure orders of protection and other relief against their abusers. There may also be opportunities for students to appear in Criminal and Supreme Court depending on what cases and issues present themselves. Student Attorneys will “first chair” client and witness interviews, bargain with opposing counsel and other adversaries, and argue before judges and Court Attorney Referees. Students will do pre-trial discovery, develop case theories, collect evidence, draft motions, serve subpoenas, and, in some circumstances, take a case to trial.

Students also develop effective community outreach techniques to fight domestic violence, and work with experts to plan and implement local and state-level legislative advocacy. The outreach projects will be designed to educate groups within the community about issues of domestic violence, including teen dating violence. Finally, students will sample a variety of current topics in women’s rights to give them a flavor of the larger field of study, as well as improve their presentation skills.

There will be weekly classes on campus Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 - 2:00pm. The classes will focus on analysis of statutory and case law, as well as the development of practical lawyering skills. There will also be separate meetings with the instructor to address case matters, usually on a weekly basis, scheduled around other obligations. Students should arrange their schedule to allow for court appearances.

Students in the Family or Criminal Law Concentrations may take this Clinic as part of their program. Students in the JD/MSW Program may take this Clinic as their field placement.

**Pre-requisite or Co-requisite:** Domestic Violence Law

Following your online application, you will be required to submit the following additional materials for this clinic: Statement of Interest, Resume, and Transcript. Please submit these documents to law-clinic@buffalo.edu. Admission for this clinic is by permission of the instructor only.
The Health Justice Law & Policy Clinic (HJC) offers students opportunities to work with individual and organizational clients and community partners in the context of a medical-legal partnership.

Medical-legal partnerships bring lawyers and front-line health care providers together to address civil legal barriers to patient health in the medical setting. For example, if poor rental housing conditions such as mold or rat infestation are exacerbating a child's asthma condition, then medication won't effectively control the child's asthma attacks; rather, the asthma needs to be “treated” with a legal intervention to enforce landlord compliance with housing conditions laws.

The HJC also works collaboratively with local health and advocacy partners to support good health at the population level through changes to statutes, regulations, and policies. Current community partners include: the Clean Air Coalition of Western New York, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Neighborhood Legal Services, Volunteer Lawyers Project, and Legal Services for the Elderly, Disabled or Disadvantaged of Western New York.

HJC students develop skills transferrable to virtually any legal practice setting, including:

- How to advocate for individuals both informally and in negotiations, courtroom and/or administrative settings;
- How to build client-centered attorney-client relationships;
- How to interview and counsel effectively;
- How to work with and within the context of a large corporation or not-for-profit;
- How to collaborate with other professionals to advance client goals and improve client outcomes;
- How to communicate with non-lawyers about legal issues and rights;
- How to conceptualize and advocate for systems change based on an understanding of how particular laws, regulations and/or policies affect individual lives; and
- How to work with community partners to advance positive change.

At the same time, we think broadly about how U.S. legal, healthcare, and social service systems support – or fail to support – good health and quality of life across the lifespan. As part of this broader conversation, we learn about population-level health disparities, discuss whether such disparities constitute injustice, and consider how and why lawyers can contribute to alleviating health disparities.

To prepare for client representation and project work, HJC students will attend weekly classes on campus each Tuesday & Thursday from 12:30 – 2:00 p.m. Some seminar classes will convene all enrolled clinic students across the law school. In other Tuesday seminar classes, students will meet separately with the HJC instructor to discuss topics specific to our practice, including social determinants of health and racial/ethnic, gender and other population health disparities.

Following your online application, you will be required to submit the following additional materials for this clinic: Statement of Interest, Resume, and Transcript. Please submit these documents to law-clinic@buffalo.edu. Admission for this clinic is by permission of the instructor only.
IMMIGRATION & HUMAN RIGHTS CLINIC
Fall Semester – 4 Credits
Professor Anjana Malhotra
Tuesdays & Thursdays – 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.

The Immigration and Human Rights Clinic will represent individual and organizational clients in immigration, labor, discrimination practices, human rights, and other matters in both immigration and human rights proceedings. All students will be assigned to at least one litigation and one non-litigation matter, and have the opportunity to explore multiple practice areas.

Working under the close supervision of experienced clinical faculty, students will provide scarce pro bono legal resources to defend immigrants who have been targeted by aggressive federal and local law enforcement initiatives. Students will focus on plaintiffs who have grounds for relief or asylum, among other things. The clinic’s non-litigation advocacy work is equally important. Students will also have a project representing grassroots organizations, as regional, national and international NGOs in regulatory and legislative reform efforts. This clinic is an ideal way to engage in impactful advocacy, including promoting international human rights advocacy, economic rights, media advocacy, strategic planning, direct litigation and other matters.

The IHRC seminar will meet weekly and is centered on a practice- and theoretical-oriented examination of advocacy on behalf of immigrants, workers and social movements, and an extended analysis of community and social justice lawyering. It will also include a skills seminar component run jointly with clinical faculty. This is a four-credit semester long clinic, with a preference that students enroll the following semester.

Please apply online for this clinic. Following your online application, you will be required to submit the following additional materials for this clinic: Statement of Interest, Resume and Transcript. Please submit these documents to law-clinic@buffalo.edu. Admission for this clinic is by permission of the instructor only.
The Law and Social Work Clinic serves students in the University’s dual program in law and social work. The four-year JD/MSW program includes a two-semester field service placement in the second year of study. This clinic enables JD/MSW students to gain experience in working where the practice of law and social work intersect and diverge. It helps them to develop skills in both areas while understanding their professional role as it applies to each.

Students in the clinic work in legal service agencies, social service agencies, prosecutor offices, or in therapeutic courts such as drug and domestic violence courts. These placements have included the Law Guardian Unit of the Legal Aid Society; Family Court; Legal Services for the Elderly; Journey’s End Refugee Services; and the Buffalo City Courts’ Therapeutic Courts. **Students must remain in the same placement for both the fall and spring semesters, and complete a total of 480 hours of placement and colloquium time to meet the School of Social Work’s Field Placement requirement.**

In each semester of their placement, students also participate in a one-credit JD/MSW colloquium, where they discuss some of the issues and concerns of being a dual professional.

Some JD/MSW students meet their field service requirement through other SUNY Buffalo Law School clinics.

**Admission for this clinic is by permission of the instructor only.**
Those who provided military service to this nation often find themselves facing legal problems, with nowhere to turn for help. This Clinic gives Student Attorneys the opportunity to do something about problems veterans face while gaining valuable legal experience.

Student Attorneys in the Clinic directly represent veterans in various matters. Student attorneys take the lead in conducting client interviews, investigating faces, bargaining with opposing counsel, arguing before judges and court appointed referees. Students also conduct case “intake,” helping to connect veterans with other legal service providers. Finally, students advocate for broader policy changes to address veteran issues through local, state, or federal-level legislative and/or administrative advocacy.

There will be weekly classes on campus Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 – 2:00 p.m. The classes will focus on analysis of work for veterans, as well as the development of practical lawyering skills. It is preferable—though not required—that students have their own transportation. Depending on case needs, students may need to travel frequently within the Buffalo area, including to the offices of community partners, the VA Hospital, court, and other settings.

Pre-requisite or Co-requisite: Evidence (can be taken prior to taking the Clinic or concurrently)

Following your online application, you will be required to submit the following additional materials for this clinic: Statement of Interest, Resume, and Transcript. Please submit these documents to law-clinic@buffalo.edu. Admission for this clinic is by permission of the instructor only.