Clinic Information Packet – Spring 2015

Attached are descriptions of the currently anticipated Spring 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. Also, please note that some aspects of the clinical program are in flux and changes may be made to this schedule.

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. There will also be a mandatory on-line training as well as an in-person meeting of all students enrolled in a clinical course shortly after drop-add ends during the shared open hour; clinic students should plan work, externship and other obligations around that meeting.

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, October 31, 2014 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 apply, the timing of these notifications differ among clinics.

6. If you are accepted, you will see Elisa Lackey (the Clinical Program Coordinator and 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
Spring Semester – 3 Credits
Professor Lauren Breen
Mondays 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.

The Clinic has no prerequisite courses, but Clinic students may benefit from also enrolling in one or more of the following courses: Housing Finance and Development; Closing a Tax Deal in New York; Community Development Law; Nonprofit Corporations and Tax Exempt Organizations; Corporations; Finance Transactions; Federal Tax I / II; Corporate Tax; and the NYC Program in Finance and Law, all of which qualify for the Housing Finance & Development Law Program.

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.
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 DMWR Clinic work on diverse, exciting projects and develop real litigation skills, while helping vulnerable and underserved populations. In the recently opened Human Trafficking Intervention Court part, Student Attorneys will help women escape prostitution, and in some cases sexual slavery, by providing legal defense in coordination with the court’s effort to assist them to obtain the job skills, substance abuse and mental health counseling, and housing assistance they need to leave “the life.” 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. Student Attorneys will “first chair” client and witness interviews, bargain with prosecutors and other adversaries, and argue before judges and Court Attorney Referees. Students will do pre-trial discovery, develop case theories, draft motions, 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. Finally, students will sample a variety of current topics in women’s rights to give them a flavor of the larger field of study.

There will be weekly classes on campus Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:15 – 3:45 p.m. 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 will have the opportunity to assess a case (fact gathering, witness and victim interviews), develop their case theory by applying the law to their specific facts, and advocate on behalf of their clients in court and/or other venues.

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 or other related courses.

**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.
"Earth provides enough to satisfy every [hu]man's need, but not every [hu]man's greed.” Likewise, William H. Stewart said a few decades ago (in *Environmental Science and Technology*) that "The truly healthy environment is not merely safe but stimulating."

In Spring 2015, the Clinic will focus on state, national, and international environmental policy issues that have direct impact on Western New York as well as national and international implications. Student Lawyers will be working on issues such as legal aspects on the first North American transboundary designation of a wetland of international importance. Under the supervision of Professor Connolly, Student Lawyers will coordinate directly with a bi-national task force and perform legal research regarding Canadian and US Federal Law as well as state, provincial, and local requirements. Student lawyers will also work on climate change issues impacting the Great Lakes. Student Lawyers will leave the clinic with experience in applied research, client interviewing and counseling, advocacy, fact investigation, drafting, teamwork, interdisciplinary coordination, and other profession-ready skills.

There will be weekly group classes with all clinic students on campus Tuesdays from 2:15 to 3:45. There will also be separate meetings (that will be scheduled around other obligations) with the instructor to address case matters, devoted to 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 client and stakeholder meetings that may take place off-site and in the evening in a limited number of cases, 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.**
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 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.

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LAW AND SOCIAL WORK CLINIC

Spring Semester - 3 Credits
Professor Melinda Saran
Class time to be determined

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; the Juvenile Crimes Unit of the Erie County District Attorney’s Office; Family Court; and the City of Tonawanda Drug Court 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 clinics, such as the Domestic Violence and International Women’s Rights Clinic or the Affordable Housing and Community Development Clinic.

**Admission for this clinic is by permission of the instructor only.**
MEDIATION CLINIC

Spring Semester - 3 Credits
Steven R. Sugarman, Esq.
Fridays 1:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Mediation is becoming an extensively utilized dispute resolution tool as Federal and State Courts establish mediation referral programs and as clients are increasingly hiring private sector mediators to avoid costly court battles and to maximize results. It is vital that new lawyers are cognizant of what mediation is all about, whether they want to possibly make mediation part of their future law practices, or simply know enough to effectively advise and assist their clients at mediation sessions. The best way to understand mediation is to actually be in the mediator’s chair with real parties.

The Mediation Clinic is a three-credit course that allows students to hone their mediation skills to an advanced level by mediating disputes with actual parties in disputes. The Mediation Theory and Practice course (3 credits), offered in the fall, is a pre-requisite (or, at professor’s discretion, evidence of having recently taken a similar course in another venue). To allow for maximum personal attention and skill development, the class size is limited to six students. Students will observe and conduct mediations of family law, small claims, community and/or other disputes referred by local courts and/or other community mediation resources. The students will be supervised and, periodically, videotaped to maximize their skill development and understanding of the process. The course will also involve observations of various alternative dispute resolution processes both in and out of court, centering primarily on mediation. We will meet weekly as a class, during which students will conduct mediation role-plays, work on skill building, mediate real cases at Small Claims Court and/or share experiences and discuss the issues arising in their mediations and other course experiences. Ongoing journal entries will be emailed to the professor containing reflections on each of the student’s mediations, ADR observations, assigned articles and videos and other experiences in the course. One weekend day early in the semester will be utilized as a further mediation skills training day.

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.
VETERANS’ ECONOMIC SECURITY CLINIC

Spring Semester - 3 Credits
Clinical Teaching Fellow – Cody Jacobs
Tuesdays - 2:15 – 3:45 p.m.
Additional Meeting Time - TBD

Although many people talk about supporting our military veterans, too often former service members come home to find barriers preventing them from securing basic necessities like affordable housing and can even find themselves confronting debt collectors and others attempting to take advantage of them. These are some of the reasons veterans are more likely than other people to become homeless. This Clinic gives Student Attorneys the opportunity to do something about these problems veterans face while gaining valuable courtroom experience.

Student Attorneys in the Clinic directly represent veterans in landlord tenant court and in consumer debt related matters. Student attorneys take the lead in conducting client interviews, investigating housing conditions, bargaining with opposing counsel, and 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 prevent veteran homelessness through local, state, or federal-level legislative and/or administrative advocacy.

There will be weekly classes on campus Tuesdays from 2:15 – 3:45 p.m. The classes will focus on analysis of New York’s landlord tenant laws, New York and federal laws related to consumer debt, 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, and landlord tenant court.

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.