

POVERTY LAW CLINIC

FALL 2021 / Course #202

(4 credit hours)

Instructor: Vincent L. Smith

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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

Assessments:

Assessment will be based on class participation and discussion of the readings, simulated exercises, reflective writings, and an evaluation of client case work.

Attendance:

Attendance is required to the weekly classroom session. There will also be a weekly individual meeting to discuss case developments, make client calls, and evaluation of legal developments and substantive law.

Office Hours: Online office hours are flexible and available by appointment through Microsoft Bookings from 11:00am to 3:30pm Tuesday though Thursday. The calendar is available here: <https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/PovertyLawClinic@lsnv.org/bookings/>

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
August 23	Intro to the Clinic / Case Management & Protocols		
August 30	Professional Responsibility / Client Interviewing	Chapter 1: Introduction to Poverty	Reflection Exercise #1: What is Poverty Law?
September 6	OFF		
September 13	Case Theory / Client Counseling	Chapter 10: Access to Justice	Client Simulation Exercise
September 20	Advocacy Tools		Reflection #2: Advocacy
September 27	Closing Statements	Chapter 2: Social Welfare Policy	Closing Statement Exercise
October 4	Case Rounds		
October 12 – Monday Schedule	Poverty & Technology	Chapter 4: Welfare	
October 18	Case Rounds		Reflection #3: Client Interactions & Case Handling
October 25	Poverty & Prejudice	Chapter 12: Human Rights	
November 1	Case Rounds		
November 8	Poverty Policy Discussion	Chapter 3: Poverty & The Constitution	
November 15	Case Rounds		
November 22	Case Evaluation / Reflection		Final Reflection