

Gator TeamChild Juvenile Law Clinic
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA LEVIN COLLEGE OF
LAW
FALL, 2023 SYLLABUS – LAW 6940 – 3 CREDITS

Professor Stacey Steinberg
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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 9-10 AM

MEETING TIME: Mondays 1:15-3:15 PM

LOCATION: MLAC213

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

The Gator TeamChild Juvenile Law and Policy Clinic provides free legal services to children and gives students an opportunity to advocate for children regarding a broad spectrum of issues.

The Clinic is a full-service law firm, providing representation primarily in dependency, delinquency and educational proceedings. Students are also placed in field placement sites including with attorneys affiliated with Partnership for Strong Families, Guardian ad Litem, and Children's Legal Services.

The Clinic provides presentations to outside agencies, high school and university classes, and others interested in juvenile law. Students may be required to present on a variety of topics related to juvenile law during the semester.

The Clinic writes policy papers, white papers, and other documents aimed at informing young people, their families, and their communities about issues related to juvenile law and children's rights. Students will be required to contribute to these written documents during the semester.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course, students should know how to:

1. Understand the dependency and delinquency court system.
2. Interact with professionals from various agencies and in opposing positions.
3. Utilize law office case management systems.
4. Navigate systems embedded within various administrative agencies.
5. Speak and write about legal issues to various audiences including non-lawyers.

REQUIRED READING MATERIALS:

Please be sure to register for the Canvas course and have any required materials with you in print or easily accessible electronic form in class. You are responsible for checking your Canvas page and the e-mail connected to the page on a regular basis for any class announcements or adjustments.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND GRADING EVALUATION:

This course is graded Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. For Further information on current UF LAW grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.. Your grade will be based on written assignments, class participation, management of case assignments (see minimum case requirements below), quality of preparation and performance during class exercises and role plays and class attendance. There is no final exam.

A S+ will be awarded to students who perform exceptionally throughout the semester.

Journal Entries/White Paper Research

Beginning in the second week of the semester, you must write a journal entry each week, reflecting on your experiences in the clinic over the previous week or on the legal system more broadly. Journal entries are due each Sunday by 11:59pm. Please submit these entries via Canvas. You may take off two weeks during the semester.

There is no page restriction on these papers, but it is unlikely you could reflect well on a week's work in less than one and a half double-spaced pages. Please be sure to include your name and indicate the dates covered in your report.

You have many choices on what to cover each week. Here are a few suggestions:

Writing about your externship experience:

It is helpful, but not required, to begin these entries with a brief description of what you did or saw in the previous week, but please be mindful of confidentiality. If you are in a field placement, do not discuss your specific cases at all, and if you are working directly with GTC clients, please only use initials.

Writing about law practice generally:

If it's been a slow week at the office, or if something else in the news or in the class readings or in your life experience bearing on the legal system has grabbed your attention, please feel free to discuss these other matters. Again, the aim is to reflect on the legal system and children's lives. Within that realm, you are free to explore widely.

The purpose of maintaining your journal is to encourage you to comment on the legal system as you see it. Ask yourselves whether the system is working, whether the various players are doing their jobs, and whether children are getting a fair shake.

How could the system work better? What can you do to improve it, in your role? Do you like your role?

Offering suggestions:

These journal entries also may serve as a forum for you to provide suggestions about the clinic. You may note that you would prefer a different classroom focus; that you would like different kinds of cases; or that you are having difficulties and want extra guidance.

Writing about a research topic:

You will also be asked to choose a topic to dive deeply into during the semester, and you will present on it to our class in November. Topics explored by previous clinic students include the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the impact of COVID on the education system, Baker Acts and how they impact foster kids, children's online privacy. Some students have worked solo or as a group to turn this research into a white paper, which can be published on the UF Law repository page. For examples, please see: <https://scholarship.law.ufl.edu/gator-team-child/>. Research and/or drafts of a white paper (including group research) may substitute reflection journals during any part of the semester.

CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance in class is required by both the ABA and the Law School. Attendance will be taken at each class meeting. Students are allowed two absences during the semester. Students are responsible for ensuring that they are not recorded as absent if they come in late. A student who fails to meet the attendance requirement will be dropped from the course. The law school's policy on attendance can be found [here](#).

Students completed field placements are excused from case rounds classes.

UF LEVIN COLLEGE OF LAW STANDARD SYLLABUS POLICIES:

Other information about UF Levin College of Law policies, including compliance with the UF Honor Code, Grading, Accommodations, and Course Evaluations can be found at this link: <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/427635/files/74674656?wrap=1>.

CLASS RECORDINGS

GTC is a legal live-client clinic and as such must adhere to the Florida Bar Rules of Professional Conduct. According to Rule 4-1.6, all information relating to a client's representation **is confidential** and may not be voluntarily disclosed by the lawyer without either the client's consent or the application of a relevant exception to the confidentiality rule. **Because client**

information is frequently discussed during class, GTC classes will not be recorded, and student recording of the classes is prohibited.

Students may not take, circulate, or post photos or videos of classroom discussions, whether they are in-person, hybrid, or completely online. Students failing to follow this rule will be referred to the College of Law Honor Code Council and the University's Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.

ABA OUT-OF-CLASS HOURS REQUIREMENTS

ABA Standard 310 requires that students devote 120 minutes to out-of-class preparation for every "classroom hour" of in-class instruction. Since we hold case rounds or attend court in lieu of many classes, please plan on spending 135 hours per semester on our class. This includes class time, case rounds, reading for class, case work, court attendance, and any other event or project you are assigned by Professor Steinberg or your field placement supervisor.

You are required to keep track of this time and submit weekly time sheets.

COURSE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

This syllabus is offered as a guide to the direction of the course. Our pace will depend in part on our case load and the issues coming up in our cases.

Week One (Week of August 21)

Monday Lecture Topic: Gator TeamChild: Overview of the Clinic Experience; The Dependency Court Process; How to Review Docket Lines

In House GTC students: review in-house GTC clinic memo, work with staff attorney Lindsay Hanson, esq. to ensure you have access to CLIO, email, and clerk websites. Begin reviewing active cases. (Additional information to be provided.)

Week Two (Week of August 28)

Monday Lecture Topic: Case Rounds (field placement externs excused)

All students please review:

Delinquency Flowchart: <https://www.flcourts.gov/content/download/402738/file/Delinquency-Flowchart-2018.pdf>,

[Amy Russell, Multidisciplinary Response to Youth with Sexual Behavior Problems, 40 Wm. Mitchell L. Rev. 1058 \(2014\)](#)

All students please listen to:

Sexual Behavior in Youth: What's Normal? What's Not? And What Can We Do About It?
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/one-in-ten/id1462683950?i=1000540896560>

Week Three (Week of September 4)

NO CLASS – Labor Day

All students please read:

[Sarah Katz, Trauma-Informed Practice: The Future of Child Welfare?, 28 Widener Commonwealth L. Rev. 51 \(2019\)](#)

Week Four (Week of September 11th)

Field Trip to the Child Advocacy Center

All students please read:

Curran, F. Chris. "The Expanding Presence of Law Enforcement in Florida Schools."
<https://education.ufl.edu/eprc/files/2020/09/Curran-The-Expanding-Presence-of-Law-Enforcement-in-Florida-Schools.pdf>

Week Five (Week of September 18th)

Monday Lecture Topic: Guest Speaker, Chris Curran, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy; Director of the Education Policy Research Center

All students please read: At least two papers published at: <https://scholarship.law.ufl.edu/gator-team-child/>.

Week Six (Week of September 25th)

No Class

Begin outlining your class presentation.

Week Seven (Week of October 2nd)

Monday lecture topic: Case Rounds (field placement externs excused)

All students please read: [Protecting the educational rights of students in foster care: Legal considerations for educational professionals](#), Farnsworth et. al.; [Advocating for Children with Disabilities in Child Protection Cases](#), Joshua Kay; [ABA Model Act Governing the Representation of Children in Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency Proceedings](#)

Week Eight (Week of October 9th)

Monday Lecture Topic: Interviewing and Counseling Children and Adolescents

All students please read: Sharenting: Children's Privacy in the Age of Social Media, available at: <https://scholarship.law.ufl.edu/facultypub/779/>

Week Nine (Week of October 16th)

Monday Lecture Topic: Case Rounds (field placement externs excused)

Week Ten (Week of October 23rd)

Lecture Topic: Student Presentations (prior to presentation, please read material provided by your presenting classmate)

Week Eleven (Week of October 30th)

Lecture Topic: Student Presentations (prior to presentation, please read material provided by your presenting classmate)

Week Twelve (Week of November 6th)

Lecture Topic: Student Presentations (prior to presentation, please read material provided by your presenting classmate)

Week Thirteen (Week of November 13th)

Lecture Topic: Case Rounds (field placement externs excused)

Week Fourteen (Week of November 20th)

End of semester lunch