

Gator TeamChild Juvenile Law Clinic
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA LEVIN COLLEGE OF
LAW
SPRING, 2025 SYLLABUS – LAW 6940 – 3 CREDITS

Professor Stacey Steinberg
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 9-11 AM

MEETING TIME: Thursdays 10 AM – 12 PM

LOCATION: Clinic Suite (meet in the UF Law Welcome Center office)

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 provides representation primarily in dependency 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.

Journal Entries

Beginning in the second week of the semester, you must submit a journal entry each month, reflecting on your experiences in the clinic over the previous weeks or on the legal system more broadly. Journal entries are due on the last day of each month by 11:59pm. Please submit these entries via Canvas.

Your entry should be between two and four double spaced pages.

Please write a few paragraphs each week, but only submit them on the monthly due date as one document. You have many choices on what to cover each week. Here are a few suggestions:

Writing about work:

It is helpful, but not required, to begin these entries with a brief description of what you did or saw in the previous month.

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.

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](#).

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 175 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 time sheets showing that you have completed approximately 10 hours of out of class/client/field placement work each week. If permitted by your field placement supervisor, this can include class preparation and other

assigned tasks associated with our class, however, field placement students must add additional out-of-class time for any time they are excused from class due to case rounds.

You are permitted to work ahead on your hours, but please ensure you do not fall more than one week behind on recording your assigned hours.

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.

All assignments and readings should be completed before class each week.

Clinic Swearing In Ceremony – January 13th 5:30 – 7 PM (HOL 180/Bailey Event Space)

Week One

Read chapter one and two of *What Happened to You*, by Bruce Perry and Oprah Winfrey (available at most libraries. Please let me know if you can't find a copy, I have a few copies that I can loan out).

January 16th -- Observe Court in Alachua County. We have cases on the Thursday docket at 9:50 and 10:20, so please try to arrive by 9:30 if your schedule permits.

Week Two

Read chapter three and four of *What Happened to You*, by Bruce Perry and Oprah Winfrey
Review in-house GTC clinic memo, work with staff attorney Lindsay Hanson, Esq. to ensure you have access to CLIO, email, and clerk websites.

Review KB's file on CIVITEK and CLIO. Write a 2-4 page double-spaced memo on what you learn. You can use bullets or organize it any way you see fit. Please include any questions you would like to ask me about the case at the end of the memo.

Review CE's file on CIVITEK and CLIO. Write a 2-4 page double-spaced memo on what you learn. You can use bullets or organize it any way you see fit. Please include any questions you would like to ask me about the case at the end of the memo.

January 23rd – Case Rounds and Class Discussion. We will also go over the syllabus at this time.

Begin submitting your student hours and Lindsay has instructed.

Week Three

Read chapter four and five of *What Happened to You*, by Bruce Perry and Oprah Winfrey

Review The Dependency Benchbook, pages 10 – 11, Florida Statutes 39.001, 39.00145, 39.01, 39.01375, 39.201, 39.301, 39.401, 39.402, 39.501, 39.521, 39.621, 39.701, 39.801, (all including in the dependency Benchbook but also available through other means). This document is available at: <https://www.flcourts.gov/Resources-Services/Office-of-Family-Courts/Family-Court-in-Florida/Dependency/Dependency-Benchbook>.

Review KD's file on LINDAS and CLIO. Write a 2-4 page double-spaced memo on what you learn. You can use bullets or organize it any way you see fit. Please include any questions you would like to ask me about the case at the end of the memo.

Review ER's file on LINDAS and CLIO. Write a 2-4 page double-spaced memo on what you learn. You can use bullets or organize it any way you see fit. Please include any questions you would like to ask me about the case at the end of the memo.

January 30th – Case Rounds and Class Discussion.

Week Four

Read chapter six and seven of *What Happened to You*, by Bruce Perry and Oprah Winfrey

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

Week Five

Read [ABA Model Act Governing the Representation of Children in Abuse, Neglect, and Dependency Proceedings](#)

February 13th – Case Rounds and Class Discussion

Week Six

Read chapter eight, nine, and epilogue of *What Happened to You*, by Bruce Perry and Oprah Winfrey

February 20th: Visit to the Partnership for Strong Families Office at 9AM

Week Seven

Read:

[Advocating for Children with Disabilities in Child Protection Cases](#), by Joshua Kay.

Russell v. APD, 929 So.2d 601 (2006)

Florida's Baker Act Laws: How Florida's Excessive Use of Baker Acts Can be Harmful to Children, by Kaitlin Gibbs <https://scholarship.law.ufl.edu/gator-team-child/3/>

February 27th – Case Rounds and Class Discussion

February 28th – Submit an outline of your presentation.

Week Eight

Read:

Sharenting: Children's Privacy on Social Media, available at:
<https://scholarship.law.ufl.edu/facultypub/779/>

March 6th – 1st and 2nd group to present (class may start late as I have a 9:30 case on the docket).

Week Nine

Week Ten

Spring Break

Week Eleven

March 25th – tabling for clinics over lunch

March 25th – first group to present to the College of Medicine at 3:30

March 27th – 4th group to present; Case Rounds and Class Discussion

March 28th -- second group to present to the College of Health and Human Performance at 9 AM

Week Twelve

April 3rd – case rounds and case discussions

April 4th – Third group to present to College of Health and Human Performance.

Week Thirteen

April 10th – Case transfer memos and presentations due.

Week Fourteen

April 16th – Clinic Capstone class at 12 pm.