

Public Defender Field Placement Weekly Assignments – Fall 2023

First Day Assignment - Week 1 – Wednesday, August 23

- Introductions
- Syllabus Review
- Indigent Defense
- Criminal Legal System – Discussion: origin, barriers, remedies

Assignment in preparation for Wednesday, August 23, and Journal due by Sunday, August 27:

Watch: “13th” *(approx. 1 hr 40 min)*

If you have Netflix, GREAT! It makes for better viewing. If you do not have Netflix, you can watch the full feature on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krfcq5pF8u8&t=299s> (Links to an external site.)

Please note that the film contains graphic images. Please take care of yourselves while viewing it. Call me if you need some assistance processing the content prior to our class discussion.

Watch: Bryan Stevenson: We need to talk about an injustice

https://www.ted.com/talks/bryan_stevenson_we_need_to_talk_about_an_injustice (Links to an external site.)

Read:

- Criminal Practice: A Handbook for New Advocates, Introduction and Chapters 1-2
- “Careers in Indigent Defense: A Guide to Public Defender Programs,” Williams, Lisa. <https://hls.harvard.edu/content/uploads/2008/07/2012pdguide.pdf> (Links to an external site.)
- “Cultural Revolution: Transforming the Public Defender’s Office,,” Steinberg, Robin, Feige, David, Papers from the Executive Session on Public Defense (2002). <https://www.bronxdefenders.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Cultural-Revolution-Papers-from-the-Executive-Session-on-Public-Defense.pdf> (Links to an external site.)

Journal 1 due by Sunday, August 27 by 11:59pm:

Remember, your journal is a vehicle for you to comment on the criminal legal system as you see and experience it. Reflect on your experiences in the clinic over the past week or on the criminal legal system more broadly. Delivery via Canvas upload is best, but email is also acceptable. It is

helpful, but not required, to begin these entries with a brief description of what you did or saw in the previous week. Please do not merely recite events.

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

Based on student feedback, I am also offering journal prompts. Feel free to use them if you find them helpful. But you are not limited to responding to them in your journal entries.

Journal prompts:

What is your perception of the criminal legal system?

What were your main take-aways from "13th?"

How do you intend to serve as a "change agent" for the legal system?
