

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: Wednesdays 9-11 AM

MEETING TIME: Mondays 10 AM – 12 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 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/White Paper Research

Beginning in the second week of the semester, you must write a journal entry each month, reflecting on your experiences in the clinic over the previous week 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 email to steinberg@law.ufl.edu.

There is no page restriction on these papers, but it is unlikely you could reflect well on a month's work in less than two double-spaced pages.

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

Writing about your field placement or in-house 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 time sheets showing that you have completed 8-10 hours of 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.

Week One (Week of January 15)

No Class

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.

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

Field Placement GTC students: meet with your field placement supervisor.

Week Two (Week of January 22)

Lecture Topic: Welcome to GTC!

In House GTC students: Begin reviewing client memos found on CLIO. You can also review the communications and notes tab in CLIO as well. This will give you a basic overview of our cases, however, the docket lines will offer a more comprehensive picture of our clients’ cases.

Review the docket lines for your first client. By Friday, please upload all recent filings to CLIO. Submit a one-to-two-page memo summarizing what you’ve learned about our client. Include at the bottom of your memo at least three questions you have for me about the case.

Field Placement GTC students: Work with your field placement supervisor to get started on your field placement work.

Begin submitting your student hours (via email). Use the template provided.

Week Three (Week of January 29)

Class: (all students) Field trip to Partnership for Strong Families Office

In House GTC students: Review docket lines for your remaining clients. By Friday, please upload all recent filings to CLIO. Submit a one-to-two-page memo summarizing what you've learned about our client. Include at the bottom of your memo at least three questions you have for me about the case.

Week Four (Week of February 5)

Class: Observe court in Gilchrist County

All students please read: At least two papers published at: <https://scholarship.law.ufl.edu/gator-team-child/>. Identify two or three topics that you are interested in researching this semester. You will present on the topic later in the Spring (details to be provided).

Week Five (Week of February 12)

Class: TBA

Week Six (Week of February 19)

Class: TBA

Week Seven (Week of February 26)

Class: Weyrauch Lecture in Family Law. We will be joined by Professor Nancy Down and Margaret Beale Spencer, *Radical Brown: Keeping the Promise to America's Children*.

Please plan on also attending the Weyrauch Lecture at noon.

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.

Week Eight (Week of March 4)

Class: Class presentation overview and discussion.

All students: Begin outlining your class presentation.

Week Nine (Week of March 11)

Spring Break

Week Ten (Week of March 18)

Class: Levy County Court

Week Eleven (Week of March 25)

Class: Case Rounds. Field Placement Students are excused but should complete an additional two hours of field placement work this week in lieu of class.

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

Week Twelve (Week of April 1)

Lecture Topic: Children's Online Privacy

Week Thirteen (Week of April 8)

Class: TBA

Week Fourteen (Week of April 15)

Class: Student Presentations

Week Fifteen (Week of April 22)

Class: Student Presentations