

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CLINIC – 6 credits (application required) Spring 2010

Taught by: Heather K. Way, Frances Leos Martinez, Eliza Platts-Mills

The Community Development Clinic provides students with a unique opportunity to develop business law and problem solving skills while addressing systemic causes of poverty.

Students will provide nonprofit organizations with business law services needed to promote sustainable economic development in low-income communities, including job creation, affordable housing, and asset building strategies. Students will also represent small businesses. Students will learn how to represent their clients on a broad variety of business law matters. Typical legal matters include:

- incorporating nonprofit corporations
- applying to the IRS for tax exempt status
- drafting and negotiating contracts
- providing legal advice to nonprofit board of directors and staff
- drafting lending and real estate documents
- assisting businesses with choice of entity decisions

The Clinic will also offer a special tract involving policy development: At least four of the students in the Clinic will focus on assisting community groups develop local and statewide policy solutions to urban community development issues.

The Clinic is conducted in partnership with Texas Community Building with Attorney Resources (Texas C-BAR), a project of Texas RioGrande Legal Aid. The Clinic class will meet on Mondays from 12:30-2:30 pm. Several of our classes will meet offsite from the Law School. The Clinic will also meet at the Law School on Tuesdays from 9:30-10:20 am for case discussions. There will be a mandatory orientation class on Friday, January 22, from 1-4 pm. The Clinic is a significant time commitment. Students are expected to devote an average of 17-20 hours a week to the Clinic (including class time). Students need to have access to a car to travel to meetings with their local clients. There are no prerequisites for this clinic, although a background in business law (such as corporate, real estate, or tax law) or policy work will be useful.

The Clinic classes emphasize the substantive law as well the larger social and theoretical context of community development work. Classes and out-of-class simulations also emphasize the development of practical lawyering skills such as interviewing and counseling clients.

Enrollment is by application only. Students are encouraged to apply for the Clinic during early registration, as the clinic fills up quickly. The deadline for early registration is October 9th. Students may request to be placed on a waiting list if space is unavailable during registration. Grading is on a pass/fail basis for this six-credit hour clinic.

To apply for the clinic, please submit the clinic application and a resume to mpajon@law.utexas.edu. For additional information, please contact: Heather K. Way (hway@law.utexas.edu, 512-232-1210).