

**Juvenile Justice Clinic**  
The University of Texas School of Law  
Pam Sigman, Director

Application Form  
Spring 2010

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Undergraduate school/major/year: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe your employment after college, if any:

1. Have you taken any criminal or juvenile law classes? Have you taken evidence? (This is not a prerequisite.) If yes, please list them.
  
2. Have you taken any trial advocacy courses or been involved in any mock trial or moot court competitions? (This is not a prerequisite.) If yes, please describe.
  
3. Have you previously taken a clinic? If yes, please list. Are you applying for any other clinics for Spring 2010? If yes, please list.
  
4. Do you speak Spanish?
  
5. Why do you want to take the Juvenile Justice Clinic? Please write a brief statement about why you are interested in this clinic and attach it to this application.
  
6. I have read the attached course description and understand the class requirements, particularly regarding the assignment of court dates.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\*\*\*If you have any questions, please contact Pam Sigman at 619-3222, [psigman@law.utexas.edu](mailto:psigman@law.utexas.edu), or [pam@sigman-law.com](http://pam@sigman-law.com).

## **JUVENILE JUSTICE CLINIC**

Law 397C and Law 397D

This program offers litigation experience while exposing students to the operations of the juvenile justice system, by placing them as student attorneys with the Travis County Juvenile Public Defender. Clients are indigent juveniles, aged 10 to 17, who are charged with criminal offenses ranging from Class B misdemeanors to first degree felonies.

Student attorneys are assigned a caseload (four open cases at all times during the semester) for which they have primary responsibility under the supervision of an attorney in the public defender's office. The student attorneys perform all investigation, interview, discovery, plea bargain and litigation functions on their cases.

Student attorneys are required to have at least one morning each week (Monday through Thursday) when they are available to be in court to handle their plea adjudications/dispositions. Contested hearings are scheduled for the afternoon on the student attorney's designated court day. It is preferable that student attorneys have two days each week when they are available to be in court on either Monday/Tuesday or Wednesday/Thursday. This flexibility provides students with more opportunity for handling a variety of cases and works better with the court's scheduling of cases. Although this flexibility is preferred, it is not required. In most instances, student attorneys will be in court a maximum of one day per week and be finished by 12:00 p.m. on their designated court day. Thursday is a popular court day for student attorneys; however, please be aware that there are a limited number of students who can be assigned a Thursday court day. Please take this into account when scheduling other classes.

Approximately 12-14 hours per week will be required for working cases and for participating in the classroom component. A class that meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays for about five weeks and one time per week thereafter, typically on Tuesdays, provides academic background.

Each student will complete a mock hearing exercise that is recorded and held in the Eidman Courtroom. The exercise teaches the student to prepare for argument and examination of witnesses in the context of a hearing to suppress illegally seized evidence.

Each weekday, Travis County Juvenile Court holds hearings to determine if juveniles who are being detained should be released. A public defender is present to provide representation for each juvenile who has a hearing that day. Student attorneys will each take responsibility as the public defender for two days of the semester. This teaches students to handle a large caseload in a very short time, and to think and act quickly.

During the first month of meetings, the class travels outside of Austin to tour a Texas Youth Commission facility and meets with juveniles who have been sentenced to TYC. Additionally, the class adopts a local junior high school at the end of the semester and speaks to seventh grade students about constitutional rights/protections and the consequences of violating the law.

Students register for Law 397C and 397D. All credit is awarded on the pass/fail basis (six hours). Students must have completed forty-three semester hours in law. Recommended (but not required) background classes include criminal law and criminal procedure. The Juvenile Justice Clinic provides a meaningful opportunity for students to learn juvenile law, interact with clients, advocate for your clients in court proceedings, and participate in educating children about the law. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Pam Sigman, Director  
619-3222 (cell)