Clinical Course Guide

Fall 2026 – Summer 2027

The University of Texas at Austin
Clinical Program
School of Law

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CLINICAL COURSE CHART

Students who have completed their first two semesters are eligible for all clinical courses. An application is required, enrollment is limited, and in-person participation is mandatory in all courses.

Clinics	Fall 2026 Credits	Spring 2027 Credits
Actual Innocence Clinic	6	6
Capital Punishment Clinic *Pre-requisite/co-requisite required*	4	4
Children's Rights Clinic	6	6
Civil Rights Clinic	6	6
Criminal Defense Clinic	6	6
Disability Rights Clinic	6	
Domestic Violence Clinic	6	6
Employment Rights Clinic	6	6
Entrepreneurship and Community Development Clinic	6	6
Environmental Clinic	6	6
Housing Policy Clinic	6	
Housing Clinic		4
Immigration Clinic	6	6
Juvenile Justice Clinic		6
Law and Religion Clinic	6	6
Supreme Court Litigation Clinic	6	6

Internships	Fall 2026 Credits	Spring 2027 Credits	Summer 2027 Credits
Corporate Counsel Internship	4	4	
Federal Public Defender Internship [1] *Pre-requisite/co-requisite recommended*		2	
Judicial Internship	4 or 5	4 or 5	3
Legislative Practicum		4	
Prosecution Internship	5	5	
Public Service Internship	4	4	
Semester in Practice Internship	10	10	
U.S. Army JAG Corps Internship [1] *Pre-requisite/co-requisite recommended*	2	2	
U.S. Attorney Internship [2] *Pre-requisite/co-requisite recommended*	2	2	

Note:

[1] A two semester commitment is encouraged but one semester participation is permitted.

[2] A two semester commitment is required.

CLINICAL COURSE INFORMATION

Texas Law has one of the largest and most vibrant clinical programs in the country, with most students participating in our many clinics and internships. Clinical students gain great first-hand experience as they work on issues in real world settings. They learn to integrate skills, theory, strategy, and law, building a bridge between the classroom and the profession.

CLINICS

Actual Innocence Clinic
Capital Punishment Clinic
Children's Rights Clinic
Civil Rights Clinic
Criminal Defense Clinic
Disability Rights Clinic (fall only)
Domestic Violence Clinic
Employment Rights Clinic
Entrepreneurship and Community Development Clinic
Environmental Clinic
Housing Policy Clinic (fall only)
Housing Clinic (spring only)
Immigration Clinic
Juvenile Justice Clinic (spring only)
Law and Religion Clinic
Supreme Court Litigation Clinic

INTERNSHIPS

Corporate Counsel Internship
Federal Public Defender Internship
Judicial Internship
Legislative Practicum (offered only during regular sessions of the Texas Legislature)
Prosecution Internship
Public Service Internship
Semester in Practice Internship
U.S. Army JAG Corps Externship
U.S. Attorney Internship

http://law.utexas.edu/clinics/

http://law.utexas.edu/internships/

CLINICS

Actual Innocence (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students screen and investigate claims by inmates that they are actually innocent of the offenses for which they are incarcerated. While investigating cases, students typically interview witnesses, research cases, review trial transcripts, and visit inmates in prison. The weekly class addresses topics relevant to actual innocence law and procedure.

Capital Punishment Clinic (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students work closely with experienced attorneys in the representation of indigent defendants charged with or convicted of capital offenses. Cases are at the trial, appellate, and post-conviction stages of litigation. Students perform tasks integral to effective representation, including visiting clients, interviewing witnesses, conducting investigations, drafting pleadings, and assisting with preparation for trials, evidentiary hearings, and appellate arguments.

Children's Rights Clinic (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students represent children in Travis County District Court as student attorneys ad litem in cases in which the state seeks custody or termination of parental rights based on allegations of abuse and neglect. Although the supervising attorneys sign pleadings drafted by the student and accompany the student to formal proceedings, the student attorneys sit "first chair" at hearings, depositions, mediations, and trial appearances, and they research and prepare cases as the primary attorneys.

Civil Rights Clinic (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students represent low-income clients in a range of civil rights matters such as discrimination in housing, employment, or public accommodations, prisoners' rights, or freedom of religion, speech, and association. Working under faculty supervision, students directly participate in civil rights litigation and advocacy. Students hone their lawyering skills, including client and witness interviewing and counseling, fact investigation and analysis, negotiation, drafting pleadings and motions, and trial advocacy. Students work on their cases in teams under the supervision of clinic faculty.

Criminal Defense Clinic (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students represent indigent defendants charged with misdemeanors in Travis County. Typical offenses include DWI, theft, assault, and drug possession. Students function as the "first chair" attorneys, with the supervising attorneys sitting as "second chair" during court proceedings. Students arrange jail releases, interview clients and witnesses, litigate pretrial issues, negotiate with prosecutors, and try cases to judges and juries. For appeals, students review transcripts, write briefs, and present oral arguments.

Disability Rights Clinic (OFFERED FALL ONLY)

Students represent clients with disabilities in a variety of legal contexts. Clinic students represent low-income parents of children with disabilities attending Texas public schools. The Clinic brings cases against school districts alleging violations of state and federal special education and anti-discrimination laws. Students typically draft civil complaints, develop expert testimony, mediate their cases, and participate in hearings and trials when necessary. They work in teams on one to three cases, depending on their areas of interest, client need, and capacity.

Domestic Violence Clinic (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students represent survivors of domestic violence with a variety of civil legal issues including custody, divorce, visitation, housing, consumer, public assistance, and procurement of protective orders. Students sit "first chair," and are responsible for all tasks associated with their cases. They meet with clients, draft pleadings, interview witnesses, draft and respond to discovery, take depositions, negotiate settlements, and conduct trials.

Employment Rights Clinic (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students represent low-income workers in cases to recover unpaid wages and engage in other advocacy projects asserting the rights of workers here and abroad. Depending on the case, students participate in worker education meetings, interview and advise clients, investigate facts, develop strategy, negotiate with opposing parties, research issues, prepare legal documents, and represent clients in litigation, administrative matters, community-based enforcement actions, and claims filed for criminal prosecution on wage fraud charges. Students help their clients acquire the knowledge and skills to protect their own employment rights, while grounding their representation efforts in the broader context of labor rights advocacy. The Clinic is based at the Equal Justice Center.

Entrepreneurship and Community Development Clinic (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students provide transactional business law representation to small businesses, artists, entrepreneurs, nonprofit organizations, and community groups. Clinic clients strengthen their local communities by producing and preserving affordable housing, creating asset-building strategies for low-income individuals, and providing valuable goods and services. Typical legal matters involved include a choice of entity counseling, formation of for-profit and nonprofit entities, assistance with federal tax-exempt status, contract review and drafting, real estate work, trademark and copyright work, employment law counseling, and general counsel services for nonprofit boards of directors.

Environmental Clinic (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students represent clients seeking to improve public health and environmental quality in their communities. They work to reduce pollution, protect environmental resources, address impacts of climate change, and secure safe drinking water. Students advocate in contested permit proceedings and

public meetings, litigate environmental enforcement actions, develop materials to help communities participate in environmental processes, and comment on federal and state rulemakings. Students are responsible for factual investigation; developing strategy; drafting comments, pleadings, and briefs; advocacy in contested permit proceedings and public meetings; and client communications.

Housing Policy Clinic (OFFERED FALL ONLY)

Students work in teams on hands-on policy projects to systemically advance low-income persons' access to affordable, just, and secure housing. Students engage in the housing policy landscape, working in close collaboration with clients and stakeholders, including housing advocacy organizations, government officials, and community organizations. In the classroom and through their policy projects, students develop a broad range of policymaking skills, including policy analysis, testifying before policymakers, creative problem solving, and media communications.

Housing Clinic (OFFERED SPRING ONLY)

Students represent low-income families with housing-related legal problems. The primary focus is helping clients avoid homelessness and access affordable housing. Clinic work often involves representing clients in threatened evictions, aspects of landlord-tenant law, and denials of public housing, subsidized housing, and Section 8 housing. Some opportunity may exist for real estate related work for individuals and community-based nonprofit groups. Students interview clients, investigate cases, research issues, negotiate with opposing parties, draft pleadings and discovery, and represent clients in administrative hearings and in court. The Clinic is based at Texas RioGrande Legal Aid.

Immigration Clinic (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students represent low-income immigrants before the immigration courts, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Board of Immigration Appeals, and the federal courts. Cases include bond and deportation hearings, asylum applications, Violence Against Women's Act (VAWA) cases, and applications for discretionary relief. Students engage in the full range of lawyering activities including interviewing clients, developing strategy, preparing witnesses, and presenting cases before the courts and the immigration agency.

Juvenile Justice Clinic (OFFERED SPRING ONLY)

Students serve as student attorneys with the Travis County Juvenile Public Defender. Clients are indigent juveniles, aged 10 to 17, charged with criminal offenses ranging from Class B misdemeanors to first-degree felonies. Students learn juvenile law, interact with clients, advocate in court proceedings, and educate children about the law. Students have primary responsibility for cases under the supervision of experienced attorneys, performing all investigation, interviews, discovery, negotiation, and litigation functions on their cases. The Clinic is based at the Travis County Juvenile Public Defender.

Law and Religion Clinic

(OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students participate in representing individuals and groups of all faiths who face challenges to their religious liberty. This may involve a diverse array of clients: prisoners, mosques, students, employees, churches, teachers, faith-based schools, sanctuary churches, and immigrants. Students can expect to work on cases involving the Free Exercise Clause, the Establishment Clause, similar state constitutional provisions, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and its state equivalents, antidiscrimination statutes, Title VII, and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act. Students have the opportunity to be first chair on some matters or serve as co-counsel with faculty or outside civil rights organizations and law firms on others.

Supreme Court Litigation Clinic

(OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students work closely with faculty members on cases before the United States Supreme Court. Students assist in representing clients who are seeking review of lower court decisions or who have cases before the Supreme Court following grants of certiorari. Students conduct in-depth research and draft pleadings such as petitions for certiorari, briefs in opposition, reply briefs, and merits briefs. The weekly class introduces students to Supreme Court procedures and practice.

INTERNSHIPS

Corporate Counsel Internship (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students develop practical lawyering skills important to their current stage of professional development and gain firsthand legal experience under the supervision of experienced attorneys working as in-house counsel with a corporation or business. They also participate in a weekly seminar designed to deepen their understanding of in-house lawyering, ethical issues that confront in-house lawyers, and how the role of in-house lawyers blends both law and business.

Federal Public Defender Internship (OFFERED SPRING ONLY)

Students work under the supervision of experienced Assistant Federal Public Defenders in the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Texas in Austin. By working closely with federal public defenders, students learn attorney-client relationships, indictments, the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, plea bargaining, evidentiary and witness issues, and the discovery process. Typically, students engage in significant legal research and writing, assist with trial preparation, and observe courtroom proceedings. Students may participate for one semester or two.

Judicial Internship (OFFERED FALL, SPRING, AND SUMMER)

Students learn about judicial decision-making and hone their analytical, research, and writing skills by interning with courts. Typically, students research legal issues relating to pending matters and draft opinions and memoranda under the close supervision of judges, their law clerks, and staff attorneys. Students also observe court proceedings and learn about court procedure and legal advocacy.

Legislative Practicum (OFFERED SPRING ONLY)

Students study the legislative process by working on legal issues under the supervision of experienced attorneys in offices connected to the Texas Legislature. Students learn about the role of lawyers in the operations and processes of governing, build key professional skills, and gain insight into the intersection of law and policy. The instructor consults with each student to develop the field placement.

Prosecution Internship (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students explore the substantive law and legal issues commonly encountered in criminal prosecutions and learn about the unique duties and responsibilities of a criminal prosecutor as both an advocate and a minister of justice. Each student is assigned to a Travis County trial court and is supervised by the Assistant District Attorneys assigned to the court. Students experience all aspects of the day-to-day functions of the prosecutors and may have the opportunity to participate in courtroom proceedings.

Public Service Internship (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students gain valuable hands-on legal experience under the close supervision of experienced attorneys in nonprofit and government offices. They also participate in a weekly class focused on lawyering skills applicable in a range of positions, including communication and professional development. Interns develop their knowledge and professional skills while studying the role of lawyers in public service and legal institutions.

Semester in Practice Internship (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students intern full-time under the supervision of experienced attorneys in placements that must be outside of the Austin area. Placements in the U.S. may be in government, nonprofit, and legislative offices; placements outside the U.S. may be in specialized courts, public institutions, and nongovernmental organizations. Interns immerse themselves in practice, developing their professional skills and studying the role of lawyers and legal institutions. The course addresses topics relevant to public service lawyering in varied settings, including professional development, ethics, access to justice, and the intersection of law and policy. Each student consults with the instructor to arrange the field placement.

U.S. Army JAG Corps Externship (OFFERED FALL AND SPRING)

Students work under the supervision of experienced U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Corps attorneys at the Fort Cavazos Army Base in Killeen, TX. The U.S. Army JAG Corps is a government law organization which defends soldiers in military legal matters. Working closely with military attorneys, students assist in administrative separations and criminal proceedings. JAG officers regularly change positions, working as prosecutors, magistrate judges, defense attorneys, national security attorneys, and judges. This creates a unique level of collegiality and rapport. Typically, students engage in significant legal research and writing, assist with trial preparation, and observe courtroom proceedings. Students may participate for one semester or two.

U.S. Attorney Internship (TWO SEMESTER COMMITMENT)

Students work under the supervision of experienced Assistant U.S. Attorneys in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Texas for two semesters. By working closely with federal criminal prosecutors, students learn about grand jury procedure, drafting indictments, calculating sentences under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, designing undercover operations, selecting a jury, plea bargaining, and responding to evidentiary and discovery objections. Students typically engage in significant legal research and writing, assist with trial preparation, and observe courtroom proceedings.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CLINICS AND INTERNSHIPS

Do students enjoy clinics and internships?

Yes! Students often report that a clinic or internship is one of their favorite experiences in law school. Working with the faculty and outside attorneys on real cases can be a great way to improve your professional skills and build working relationships in the legal community. Additionally, students report building a strong community with fellow clinical students.

Do many students take clinics and internships?

Yes – most of our students participate in at least one clinic or internship, and many take several.

Do I need to be committed to the area of law covered in a particular course?

No – many students enroll in clinics and internships in order to build their skills and to explore subject areas that they will not pursue immediately following graduation. Clinics and internships can help you sample various types of law practice and each program provides the opportunity to build a unique set of legal skills.

Are remote internships permitted?

No – most of a student's work in an academic internship must be completed at the field placement.

Which courses are likely to give me the opportunity to appear at hearings?

- Children's Rights Clinic
- Criminal Defense Clinic
- Disability Rights Clinic
- Domestic Violence Clinic
- Employment Rights Clinic
- Housing Clinic
- Immigration Clinic
- Juvenile Justice Clinic
- Prosecution Internship

Are any courses particularly suited for students interested in transactional and policy areas of law rather than in litigation?

Yes. The Entrepreneurship and Community Development, Environmental, and Housing Policy clinics include work that is non-litigation in nature. Many internship courses, including the Corporate Counsel Internship, also have placements in non-litigation settings.

May I enroll in a clinic or internship more than once?

A small number of students may enroll in a clinic for a second time as Advanced Clinic students (for 1 – 3 credits), subject to instructor approval. It is not possible to enroll in most internship courses more than once (the U.S. Attorney Internship requires a two-semester commitment, and the Federal Public Defender Internship and U.S. Army JAG Corps Internship may be taken for one or two semesters).

Can I take more than one clinic or internship at a time?

It is possible but strongly discouraged because of the time commitment required, and advance approval of both instructors is required.

Is there any limit to the number of clinics and internships I can take for credit?

No, although a student may count toward a J.D. degree no more than 21 hours of credit from a combination of clinics, internships, directed study, and non-law courses.

Do I have to pay tuition for an internship?

Yes – an academic internship is considered a course and you must register for it and pay tuition during the semester of your internship. Financial aid is available as for any other course.

Are clinics and internships more work than classroom courses?

Many students report that a clinical course requires as much time as a challenging classroom course. The workload often varies during the semester, depending on the demands of particular projects. Most clinics and internships conclude prior to the final exam period.

Are there any full-time internships offered in the fall or spring?

Yes. The Semester in Practice Internship is offered as a 10-credit course.

How do I enroll in a clinic or internship?

All clinics and internships require an application. Application information is available on the clinical websites.

https://law.utexas.edu/clinics/application-information
https://law.utexas.edu/internships/application-information/

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Applying for Clinics

Students must be in good academic standing to enroll in a clinic and all courses require an application. Clinics generally fill up, so interested students are encouraged to apply during the priority application window.

You may apply for one, two, or three clinics, and you must rank them on the General Clinic Application in order of preference. **Apply only to clinics in which you are prepared to enroll.** If you are accepted into a clinic, you are expected to enroll in that clinic and your name will not stay on the waitlist for other clinics.

The priority application window for spring 2027 is September 30 – October 12. After the priority application window closes, applications will be considered on a rolling basis if space remains available.

You must complete:

- The General Clinic Application (available online)

You must also upload the following materials with your online clinic application.

- Your resume
- An unofficial copy of your law school transcript (available online)

Before Early Registration beings, students will be notified of their clinic admission decisions. Clinics will populate in the Early Registration system and will automatically be awarded after Early Registration closes. Any conflicting classes will not be awarded. Students who are not admitted to a clinic after the priority application window may apply subsequently if spots remain available.

Applying for Internships

Students must be in good academic standing to enroll in an internship and all courses require an application. The internship faculty and the Career Services Office are available to help you find an internship placement. Visit the relevant internship course website to review information about placements and access the application instructions. Most internships are arranged after the Early Registration period ends, and students adjust their schedules during an add/drop period after they are admitted to the internship course. Check the internship course websites for any application deadlines.

Questions about the clinic or internship application process should be directed to the Clinical Program Manager Christina Dost at ClinicalED@law.utexas.edu.