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Welcome and Introduction

Barton Child Law and Policy Clinic Mission:

The mission of the clinic is to promote and protect the well-being of neglected, abused and court-involved children in the state of Georgia, to inspire excellence among the adults responsible for protecting and nurturing these children, and to prepare child advocacy professionals.

The Clinic Manual is designed to help you navigate through the daily operations of the Clinic. This manual is one of many resources that may answer questions that may arise during your work here. Please keep a copy handy for your reference. A copy will remain online at our Blackboard site as well as in the shared network drive on our computers.

The life of a child advocate is not a neat 9-5 position that is left at the office each evening; events and meetings vary in timing and location, and the stories of the children stay with you long after the office is closed. While challenging and difficult, working in this field can be one of the most rewarding professional choices you can make.

Clinic Founders, Faculty and Staff

{text omitted}

Helpful Contact Information

{text omitted}

Notary Public

{text omitted}

Clinic Web Site and Childwelfare.Net List Serv

Each of you will be responsible for knowing what is on the Clinic web site, {text omitted}, and what is being distributed through the childwelfare.net list serv. During the semester you may be asked to contribute information for posting on the web site. All students working in the Barton Clinic must subscribe to the childwelfare.net list serv. To subscribe, go to {text omitted}. Follow the link to 'Mail Lists.' Follow directions under this link to subscribe to the child protection list.

An Emory University list serv has also been set up as a forum for sharing information with people across campus who also have an interest in child advocacy. If you know of an event or item that might be of interest to this list serv, please submit the pertinent information to {text omitted}. The message will go to the listserv moderator who will then post the message for dissemination.

Academic Requirements

Students working in the Barton Public Policy Clinic (fall semester) and Legislative Clinic (spring semester) will work on current legal and policy issues affecting abused and neglected children in Georgia and the systems that work with the children and their families. Students in the clinic will not provide direct representation for clients but will instead work on research and advocacy projects that have a systemic impact on the way courts and child protection agencies handle child abuse and neglect cases. Projects will arise from requests by agencies, courts or legislative committees focusing on these issues, or from current events that affect the system. For three hours of graded credit, students will work a minimum of 150 hours on clinic matters.

During the time that you are working in the Clinic you will be living the life of a child advocate—collaborating with court personnel and child advocacy organizations, drafting legislation and developing strategies to support its passage and initiating projects designed to effect systemic changes. Some of the work will be exciting and have the potential to make sweeping changes; other work will be the initial exploration into a long-range proposal that may or may not come to fruition. Some work will demand sophisticated research skills and some work will be administrative tasks required to keep a non-profit child advocacy organization viable.

Schedules

As a student intern in the Clinic, you are expected to put in as much time as is required to successfully complete your projects during the semester. The minimum time you are required to work varies according to your particular program. For law school students, the minimum time is 150 hours, averaging 11 hours per week. Because you may be working with community groups, you need to have the flexibility to attend evening and weekend meetings.

Students in the Clinic are responsible for all aspects of matters the Clinic undertakes, even those aspects that do not fall neatly within scheduled time frames. While it is hoped that all matters can be scheduled so that the work can be accomplished during predictable work hours, you must be

prepared to meet your responsibilities as the project demands, just as any responsible professional must. Team members are expected to coordinate their work hours to maximize the amount of time spent working together on projects.

You are required to keep regular office hours. By the end of the first week of work in the clinic, you are required to set your schedule for the semester. You should schedule enough hours during the week to meet the requirements of your program.

Your weekly schedule will include the following responsibilities:

- Checking Clinic email (see “Email Policy”)
- Checking Clinic phone (see “Telephones”)
- Project work with team members (see “Teams”)
- Legislative Session activities (spring semester)
- Scribe minutes for weekly meetings (1 student per week)

As you are setting up your weekly schedule, coordinate with your fellow students about telephone, email, and press catalogue responsibilities. Each day of the week should have one person assigned to respond to all incoming telephone and email messages that day and to catalogue all new relevant media stories.

One schedule with everyone’s hours listed should be submitted to the Clinic director for approval (see sample schedule at {text omitted}). Once the schedule is approved, post it on the Clinic bulletin board, then notify the Clinic Director and the Program Coordinator and email the schedule to all staff. Once the schedule is set, you will not be allowed to change hours or re-arrange dates except for the reasons listed below. If you are scheduled to be in the clinic, you are expected to be there or to be elsewhere on official Clinic business (i.e., attending meetings, participating at the capitol).

Meetings and appointments are often scheduled at odd and unpredictable times, particularly during the legislative session. If you have a conflict with another law school class or a school-related commitment, try to resolve the conflict within your team. If no one on your team can participate, see if a student from a different team can cover the event. **It is your responsibility to fully prepare another person who is covering a meeting, hearing or other appointment for you (i.e., brief him/her on the issues, provide files/materials to that person).** Please email {name} and tell her that you will not be able to attend and give her the name of your replacement. She will then contact all the clinic staff to make them aware of the change. If the conflict cannot be resolved among the students or if there is not time to address the conflict, let the post graduate fellow know as quickly as possible. During the legislative session hearings are often rescheduled at the last minute for later in the day, or an emergency meeting might be called on an hour’s notice. In these situations, there may not be time to contact all other students in the Clinic before contacting staff.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE GEORGIA LEGISLATIVE SESSION (Spring Semester)

- {text omitted}

Illness/canceling hours

While you need to complete your hours for the semester, the Clinic recognizes that unexpected events do occur. If you must cancel your clinic hours, please do the following as soon as you know you are going to be absent:

- send an email to:

- {text omitted}
- Any staff member who is expecting you to be available
- Anyone working on a project with you.

Please include the following information in your message:

- contact information
- how long you anticipate being out of the office
- who will be covering your weekly duties in the clinic (e-mails, phone messages, etc...).

You must make sure someone is covering your weekly duties and you must make arrangements to meet deadlines related to specific projects.

Additionally, by the end of the first week in the clinic, you should send an email to the Clinic Director alerting him to any dates that you know you will be out of the clinic over the course of the semester.

Working outside the Clinic

If you need to work away from the clinic on a project or choose to work at home, you must send an email to the {text omitted} at least 24 hours in advance and follow the same procedures as set forth above under “Illness/canceling hours.” If you are scheduled for clinic duties that day (phone, email, etc.), you are still responsible for those duties.

Additionally, you should leave a voice-mail message on the clinic phone letting everyone know where you are.

Teams

Most of your work in the Clinic will be performed as a team member. When you work as a team, you are expected to work cooperatively and to multiply your individual skills and knowledge. While there will be times when it is most practical and efficient to divide the work among team members, you are expected to collaborate on most aspects of the work. Each team member will be held responsible for the work of the entire team. We will discuss the composition of the teams when we discuss the workload for the semester and assign projects.

In this field it is common for lines distinguishing the roles of various professions to become blurred. Lawyers and judges perform functions that lean toward social work, social workers actively assist in building cases for trial, etc. Since much of the work in this field involves working with a variety of professions, we are fortunate to be able to form multi-disciplinary teams within the Clinic. Remember that all team members are critical to the success of the team, regardless of background, training or profession.

Each team project will have a clinic staff member as the contact person who will oversee that project. After the first meeting with the staff member, you are expected to write a confirmation email to the staff member detailing your impression of what next steps are required of you and your team members. This email will help you to clarify what your specific assignment is and will help the staff member to make sure that you and your group members are on the right track. Please feel free to continually ask clarifying questions to the staff members throughout your time with the clinic.

Professionalism

At all times when working on Clinic matters, you are expected to demonstrate integrity, honesty, commitment to the work, sensitivity to child protection issues and the professionals and volunteers

working in this field and professional, courteous behavior toward everyone you encounter in person or on the telephone.

As a student attorney or social worker in the Clinic, you are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the rules of professional conduct and to identify potential ethical issues in matters the Clinic undertakes. You are also expected to observe the ethical rules of confidentiality and not discuss confidences outside the Clinic. Even though most matters within the Clinic will not involve a client per se, they should be treated as though they are confidential client matters.

Child advocacy matters often have an emotional aspect. The Clinic environment is a safe place to discuss the variety of emotions that these issues can evoke and how they can impact the work you are doing. Most people working in this field need a forum to discuss the emotional impact of the work and to devise strategies for handling strong emotions when they arise; the Clinic should be such a forum—you are encouraged to bring these issues up in meetings and in your weekly field notes.

Professionals often disagree on how to handle a case or an advocacy matter. Disagreements within the Clinic will be handled with respect, consideration and professionalism, with a constant focus on the best interests of children.

Attire

On the Emory campus, clinic attire is casual. When working at other locations, meeting other professionals or attending court, students should dress professionally. All courts have a dress code and Clinic students are expected to comply with those codes.

Personal Responsibility

One of the goals of the Clinic is to instill in you a spirit and habit of independence. You should leave the Clinic well on your way to being a successful advocate. Toward this end, you should independently consider, research, study, analyze, and learn before asking “what do I do now” or “how do I do it.” Other students in the Clinic may be your best source of information and strategies. Learn to learn from each other and to teach each other.

If you have not sorted through various approaches before discussing a matter with Clinic staff, we may reschedule our conversation to allow you time to work through the issue on your own. This is not to say, however, that you should not seek guidance, direction and feedback. An essential skill of successful lawyers is knowing which questions to ask and when to ask them. It is a terrible waste of resources for you to spend hours working on the wrong issues or looking in the wrong places when a few questions could have prevented that work.

Meetings

As a collective undertaking to learn and teach together, it is essential that everyone attends, prepares in advance for, and actively participates in every weekly Clinic meeting. In a group this size, one person’s failure to prepare for a meeting or to participate in a discussion has a negative impact on everyone’s experience.

If you are going to miss a weekly meeting, you **MUST** e-mail {name} and let him know at least one week in advance. If you miss more than two Clinic meetings during a semester it will negatively impact your grade. You should block off the time for the weekly meetings to avoid any conflicts. If you are unable to attend a Clinic meeting but can participate via conference call, you must contact {name} or {name} and arrange to participate via speakerphone/conference call. You will be responsible for any long distance charges that may apply to your remote calling location.

If you would like to put important items on the weekly agenda for the meeting, please e-mail them to {name} 24 hours before the weekly meeting. Use “Weekly Meeting Agenda Item” in the subject line.

Students will take turns recording the minutes of the meetings. Minutes should be submitted as a Word document named “{text omitted}” and filed in the shared drive as follows: {text omitted}. X represents the current semester and year. Please also forward a copy of the minutes to {name}. Minutes need not be a recording of the meeting verbatim but should include time and date of meeting at the top of the page, names of attendees and topics discussed/decisions made/upcoming meetings and student opportunities/new student assignments. When students create a schedule for phone, email, and press catalogue coverage, also set a schedule for taking meeting minutes. Minutes must be posted within 24 hours after the meeting.

Student responsibilities for the legislative portions of the weekly meetings

{text omitted}

Field Notes

{text omitted}

Assigned Readings

From time to time you may be asked to read assigned materials in preparation for Clinic meetings. The readings will be chosen to enhance your knowledge of the child advocacy field and to supplement the work you are doing on your projects. Assignments will be given at the weekly meeting and posted on Blackboard.

Presentations

Each student team will be responsible for leading at least one “workshop” for other students in the Clinic (and possibly other people outside the Clinic) during the semester. This usually occurs in the form of students presenting the results of a project during a Clinic meeting. During the semester each student is also encouraged to make at least one presentation to a community group, volunteer organization, professional group or other scheduled gathering of people working on child protection issues.

At the end of the semester the Barton Clinic will hold a meeting at which all students will make presentations to the rest of the group about their work during the semester. All Clinic staff, the Clinic founders and possibly other invited guests will attend this meeting. This is a mandatory meeting. Failure to attend this meeting will negatively affect your grade.

Evaluations

{text omitted}

Timesheets

Students are responsible for recording hours worked in the clinic. Any time spent on Clinic matters should be recorded, including time spent reading this manual. Timesheets must be kept current on the shared drive in the student’s folder. They are checked weekly by {name} and {name} and periodic feedback will be provided to students. Timesheets are not only important to track one’s progress over the semester but are also vital for reporting purposes. The Barton Clinic Advisory Committee and various grantors need to know how the interns are spending their time in the clinic.

A timesheet template has been created for Clinic use. See example in Appendix B. All students use the template for recording time worked. The timesheet will be explained during Clinic orientation. If you do not work during a week, you still must complete your timesheet, indicating you did not work at all during the week. {name} will place the timesheet template and instructions for its use in each student's folder on the shared drive and a sample copy in Blackboard.

Portfolio

All written materials you produce must be compiled in your Clinic Portfolio. Unless otherwise agreed upon during the semester, your portfolio will be electronic rather than paper (a compilation of computer files). Your portfolio is due by {date}. Compile your portfolio in your folder on the shared drive and notify the Clinic Director by email when it is complete.

The materials to include in your portfolio are:

{text omitted}

The information listed above should be saved into subfolders within your portfolio folder, such as 'time sheets,' 'field notes,' individual projects, 'short research projects,' etc. **Do not place everything in a single folder titled 'portfolio' without using subfolders.**

Your portfolio should be named as follows: last name first initial – Portfolio. For example, SmithA – Portfolio.

Information should be placed in your 'portfolio' file as it accumulates, not in a rush at the end of the semester. The information you include in your portfolio will provide much of the documentation reflecting the grade you receive. Keep in mind that some of your grade will be based on things that cannot be captured in written materials. You are strongly encouraged to make periodic backup copies of your portfolio to prevent accidental loss.

Project folders and Documents

Document headers and footers

ALL documents should include a footer indicating the file name and path where it is saved and the date. This eliminates confusion when looking at multiple versions of the same document. It also assures that the documents will be filed correctly when they are removed from the paper file folders. To create a header/footer in Word, use the "View" menu, then click on "Header and Footer." A dialog box will pop up. Use the icon that toggles between the headers and footers to get the appropriate text box to appear at the bottom of the page. Use "Insert Auto Text" and select "File Name and Path." Every footer should include the path/file name and date to show the most recent version of a document. Do NOT use the calendar icon in the header/footer menu. Enter the date manually. Remember to change the date when you revise a document. Align the file name and path to the left margin of the document, and align the date with the right margin. Page numbers should be inserted in the footers and aligned with the right margin underneath the date. If you make a back-up copy from the shared drive onto a disk, copy and paste the document into a new document, name the file and select the disk (floppy) drive where it is to be saved. You will then need to change the header on the back up document to reflect its location.

File folders - paper

Before the semester ends, students must prepare file folders for paper documentation of the projects on which you have worked. A 'table of contents' should be attached to the front of the folder listing the documents that are included in the file. Extraneous/duplicate materials should be removed. Materials that you cite in the final product **MUST BE INCLUDED**. If web sites were used,

include a printout of the relevant pages with the URL in the header of the document. Each project must have its own folder and be properly labeled by the subject. **Do not use acronyms.** When your manila file folders are complete, submit them to the Program Coordinator for final filing procedures.

File folders – electronic

{text omitted}

At the end of the semester, all documents should be filed in the appropriate project folder and your personal folder should be empty **EXCEPT** for your Portfolio. The Clinic Director will move that folder when it is complete.

Naming protocols – Files

{text omitted}

Research

Generally

The research and work product you turn out is used by the clinic in a variety of ways, including dissemination to external contacts, publication on the www.childwelfare.net website, incorporation into larger staff projects and distribution to legislators. Consequently, we expect all research to be reliable and accurate.

You are expected to draw upon the legal research and writing skills taught to you in your first-year legal research, writing, and advocacy program and to demonstrate competency in your use of all research media including legal search engines, books and other published materials and general Internet resources. We trust that you are able to discern which sources are appropriate for your specific project assignment and present official reports and trustworthy information. Moreover, you should possess the ability to assign proper weight to each of these sources and make determinations of their relevance to your project assignment. Generally, you should locate, read, and update primary authorities (case law, statutes, constitutions, legislative process materials, administrative materials, rules of procedures and ethics) as references in your projects and incorporate non-legal materials as appropriate. Legal journal articles are also important sources. Secondary sources such as encyclopedias, periodicals, A.L.R. Annotations, Treatises and Restatements can be helpful for formulating ideas and providing context for issues and for lending further support to primary authorities. Secondary authorities such as these are also important because they lead you to primary authorities.

{text omitted}

Preserving and Tracking Research*

{text omitted}

Grades

{text omitted}

Clinic Operations

{text omitted}