

INNOCENCE PROJECT CLINIC

Year-long Clinic

Professors Jennifer Givens and Juliet Hatchett

Credits: 8 (4 S/U (Fall) and 4 H/P/F (Spring))

Students in this year-long clinic will investigate and litigate wrongful convictions of inmates throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. Some of the cases will have forensic evidence (usually DNA) that could be tested, and some will be non-DNA cases. Students work in teams of 3-4 to investigate and, in some cases, litigate cases. In every case, students will be directed and assisted by the clinic Professors, but as students demonstrate competence and confidence, they may earn the opportunity for greater independence. Although the clinic will have a classroom component, most time will be devoted to casework – interviewing potential clients and witnesses, general investigation, reviewing case files, collecting records, searching court files, and drafting pleadings. Students will likely be visiting inmates at correctional centers and conducting investigation in a wide variety of socioeconomic settings accompanied by the clinic Professors, a private investigator, or, in some instances, another student. Some cases may also involve attendance at court proceedings.

Students should attempt to arrange their schedules to have at least **one full weekday** free for investigations, Monday and Friday being preferable. **Some weekend and evening** investigations will also be required. In addition, student teams will meet regularly with Professors Givens and Enright for supervision and direction. Students will earn eight credits for the year. Interested students should anticipate that the clinic will require a minimum of 15 hours per week and you will be expected to record your time on clinic timesheets. The hours required for clinic work will vary according to the demands of the cases. The professor will not always be able to predict or control when the cases will demand intensive hours, so flexibility is important.

Interested students must both rank the clinic in the lottery system and submit an application to the clinic. If you are selected in the clinic application/lottery selection process, you will be automatically enrolled. **ONCE YOU ARE ENROLLED IN THE CLINIC, YOU MAY NOT DROP.** To apply, please forward a resume, an unofficial transcript and a brief letter explaining your interest in the Innocence Project Clinic to Professors Jennifer Givens (jlg2ac@virginia.edu) and Juliet Hatchett (jhatchett@law.virginia.edu) no later than July 3rd. Selected students will have the clinic posted to their schedules **before the commencement of the regular course lottery process.** Although grades and experience are relevant considerations, your motivation and commitment to this work will be the primary consideration in selecting clinic students. Remember that your letter of interest (along with your ranking of the clinic) is our only source for evaluating those qualities.

Enrollment Limitation: Students may enroll in one clinic per semester. On a space-available basis, students may petition to enroll in a second clinical offering after the add/drop period has ended.

Prerequisite: Second- or third-year status. Criminal Procedure and Evidence recommended, but not required.

Course Requirement: Interviewing potential clients and witnesses, general investigation, reviewing case files, collecting records, searching court files, developing and implementing litigation strategies, and more. **Having access to a car for travel purposes is extremely helpful.** Please indicate in your letter of interest whether you have access to a car for use in investigations. (You will be reimbursed for your mileage.)