INNOCENCE PROJECT CLINIC

Year-long Clinic
Professors Jennifer Givens and Juliet Hatchett
Credits: 8 (4 S/U (Fall) and 4 graded (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 4-5 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.

Student teams will meet regularly with Professors Givens and Hatchett for supervision and direction. Students will earn eight credits for the year. To apply, please forward a resume, an unofficial transcript and a brief note explaining your interest in the Innocence Project Clinic to Professors Jennifer Givens (jlg2ac@virginia.edu) and Juliet Hatchett (jhatchett@law.virginia.edu).

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.