CHILD ADVOCACY CLINICAL WORKSHOP

Professor Elizabeth Bartholet
Ms. Jessica Budnitz

Spring 2006

Course & Clinical Fieldwork Information,
Presentation Guidelines, Syllabus and Schedule
COURSE INFORMATION

Course Materials

Student presentation packets will serve as the course materials and will be available prior to each course session through the Distribution Center as well as the course website. Materials will usually be ready on the Friday before the subsequent Wednesday session. Specifics will be provided by email throughout the year.

Administrative Details

Professor Elizabeth Bartholet
Office: Hauser Hall 422
Telephone: (617) 495-3128
E-mail: ebarthol@law.harvard.edu
Office Hours: Fridays: 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Assistant: Carol Bateson, Hauser Hall 418, (617) 496-0551
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Lecturer on Law Jessica Budnitz
Office: Pound Hall 407B
Telephone: (617) 496-1684
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Office Hours: Tuesdays: 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Program Assistant: Ashley Umbro, Pound 417, (617) 496-8852
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Course Website

Check the course website for announcements and materials. To access the course website, log on to iCommons (http://myhls.law.harvard.edu), go to the My Courses box and click on Child Advocacy Clinical Workshop.

Course Requirements

Course requirements for the classroom component include: regular attendance, active participation in class discussion (including reading and reflecting upon classmates’ presentation packets), submission of written presentation materials, and an oral presentation. The class will meet for 2 hour sessions (4:45 – 6:45 PM on Wednesdays in Hauser 103) throughout the Spring term. See the “Presentation Schedule” section for presentation assignments. Clinical supervising attorneys from our placement organizations will often be participating in these class sessions.

Course requirements for the clinical fieldwork component include: a minimum of 15 – 20 hours (depending on the number of credits registered for) of work per week for 12 weeks at assigned placement organization, professional conduct, and completion of appropriate work products/tasks required by your clinical placement organization.
Extra Written Work Credits

In addition to the required classroom and clinical credits, you have the option of receiving an extra written work credit (which can be used to satisfy the Law School’s Written Work Requirement) for work done in conjunction with your clinical placement. You and your fieldwork supervisor may jointly decide that there is an in-depth writing project that is in line with your interests and meets the needs of your placement organization. As described in the “HLS Handbook of Academic Programs and Policies” a variety of formats are acceptable, so long as the work involved is intellectually challenging. The HLS deadline for registering for this extra written work credit is the end of the drop-add period, which this year is **February 7, 2006** but you can register later if you pay a small fine. Acceptable work products include, but are not limited to: a proposal for law reform with supporting explanation and commentary; a brief, a memorandum in support of a complaint, legislative analysis, or other lawyering product; a paper which draws on materials from disciplines other than law; a paper rooted in an empirical investigation.

Generally, written work is due by **May 5, 2006**. However, **third-year graduating students** can request an extension for no later than **May 19, 2006**, assuming this later deadline meets the needs of the placement organization. **Second-year students** can request an extension for as late as Spring 2007, although you must submit something to CAP by the end of Spring 2006 exam period (e.g., draft outline, partial draft, or report on research). Please see the “HLS Handbook of Academic Programs and Policies” for more details about Extra Written Work credits as well as relevant deadlines (most of the relevant information can be found on pages 42 – 43).

If you and your fieldwork supervisor agree on an extra written work project, please contact CAP so that we can further discuss an appropriate project and timeline. Please note that for this as for regular credit clinical work CAP will rely on your fieldwork supervisor to oversee your project as well as a grade recommendation upon completion of that work. However Professor Bartholet will also read and evaluate any extra written work products.

Grading & Evaluation

Grades will be based on a combination of your clinical fieldwork and your classroom work, which includes your class participation, written presentation materials, and oral presentation. For your clinical fieldwork, at the end of the term, we will ask your supervisor to complete a brief evaluation and provide a recommended grade. CAP Faculty will take that grade recommendation into account when assigning overall student grades. You will also meet with your supervisor at the end of the term or your work with the organization for a final feedback and exit session. Your grade will generally be calculated in accord with number of credits; so, for students registered for 4 clinical credits, roughly 1/3 of the grade will be drawn from the classroom piece and roughly 2/3 of the grade will be drawn from the clinical fieldwork piece.

**Note Re Communication:** If you have any general questions or if concerns arise about your clinical placement, assigned projects(s), and/or supervisor, **please do not hesitate to contact Jessica Budnitz at 617-496-1684 or jbudnitz@law.harvard.edu.** The sooner in the semester problematic issues are
brought to our attention, the more likely it is that they can be resolved and that the rest of the semester can be productive. Moreover, please contact Jessica to discuss general information which may help make your clinical experience more productive and enriching (including background information about your placement organization, background information about your supervisor, tips on integrating into the office). We want this to be a meaningful experience for you and we are committed to doing our part to make that happen.

To that end, you should schedule a meeting with Jessica by March 10th to discuss your clinical fieldwork experience to date. As further described in the “Presentation Guidelines” section, you should also contact Jessica if you want help planning your oral presentation and associated materials. Jessica is available to meet on Tuesdays between 3 – 5 PM, although she can be available other times if you cannot meet then. To schedule a meeting, please: (1) use the sign-up tool which can be accessed through the course website (this will ensure that no one else has already signed up for the same time slot); AND (2) then email Jessica that you’ve scheduled the meeting.

Additionally, feel free to email Prof. Bartholet at ebarthol@law.harvard.edu to discuss the Clinical Workshop and your clinical fieldwork.
CLINICAL FIELDWORK INFORMATION

Clinical Credits & Hours

In addition to 2 classroom credits, you are receiving 3 or 4 clinical credits for the fieldwork performed under the supervision of your assigned fieldwork supervisor. One clinical credit corresponds with 5 hours of work. So, if you are receiving 3 clinical credits, you will be working for your assigned office for approximately 15 hours each week for a total of 180 hours; if you registered for 4 clinical credits, you will be working for approximately 20 hours per week for a total of 240 hours.

From CAP’s perspective, it is not important that you work the requisite number of hours every week, so long as on average you are working the appropriate number of hours over the course of the semester. Nor is it important to CAP that you work all your hours on-site at your placement organization if your work can easily be performed at HLS. However it is important that you get a sense for the nature of your organization and its approach to child advocacy. If you spend a significant amount of time on-site at your placement organization, it is more likely that you will be included in staff meetings, strategy discussions, community meetings, court appearances, legislative hearings, etc. Moreover, it is important that you do the work when the placement organization needs it done and that you are available when your supervisor needs you, so work out with your supervisor general expectations for your schedule.

Timeline

When you receive the name and contact information for your clinical fieldwork supervisor, please arrange a meeting for no later than February 3rd. It is essential that you meet with your supervisor early and develop a work plan since Spring term is only 12 weeks. For your reference, here is a general timeline for the semester:

- Wk of Jan 23: CAP provides student the name and contact information for clinical fieldwork supervisor. Clinical supervisor and student schedule an orientation meeting.
- By Feb 3: Clinical supervisor has an orientation meeting with assigned clinical student by no later than Feb 3. (Spring term for HLS students begins on Feb 1.)
- By March 10: Schedule a meeting with Jessica to discuss your clinical experience to-date.
- By March 17: Spring Mid-Term check-in meeting with your clinical supervisor.
- March 27 – 31: Spring recess for all Harvard Law School students.
- May 2: Student completes clinical work, unless s/he is receiving extra written work credit(s) (in which case written work is due on May 5).
- May 5: Written work completed for extra written work credit is due, unless a later date is agreed upon by student and supervisor and the student applies for and is granted an extension. Copies must be provided both to your organization supervisor and to CAP.
- May 19: Final HLS deadline for written work completed by third-year students expecting to graduate in Spring 2006.
What You Can Expect from Your Placement Organization

Your placement organization is excited to host a CAP student who can provide valuable work to further the mission of their organization. And your supervisor has agreed to be available to you for regular meetings, feedback on written and other work, and for general questions. Generally, you can expect the following from your placement organization and supervisor:

- **Orientation Meeting:** Among other issues, you may want to discuss the following topics with your clinical supervisor at the first meeting:
  - Overview of your placement organization, including its mission, philosophy, and organizational structure;
  - Office policies and procedures, particularly confidentiality issues;
  - Description of assigned projects (including expectations of work to be completed, a time frame, overall goals of the project, and how the project fits into your placement organization’s larger mission);
  - Timeline for the semester;
  - Clarification about your supervisor’s schedule, your schedule, and general office schedule. Please find mutually convenient times for regular meetings and/or when you can expect that your supervisor will be available for questions and to review work products.
  - Packet of information. Your organization should supply you with a packet of information at the orientation meeting, if they have not done so already. Typical packets should include: your placement organization’s brochure, training manuals, an orientation memorandum, office policies and procedures (including confidentiality policies), a list of helpful contact numbers and resources, an office directory, and a memorandum outlining your clinical project(s).

- **Supervisory Meetings:** We ask that you meet in person, at least weekly, with your supervisor during the early part of the semester. Depending on the nature of the project, over the course of the semester, it might be appropriate to substitute regular email and phone correspondence.

- **Multiple Supervisor Issues:** In some instances, you may be consulting with multiple attorneys and staff persons, and may even be assigned to a project involving a partnership between different organizations. However, you have been assigned a single point-person for supervision who should coordinate all assignments, review all work products, and provide CAP your final evaluation and recommended grade.

- **Mid-Semester Meeting:** We ask that you and your supervisor hold an in-person mid-semester meeting by **March 17**.
  - At this meeting, your supervisor will likely provide general feedback about your work and performance.
You and your supervisor should discuss general directions for the rest of the semester and make any necessary adjustments to the timeline mapped out at the beginning of the term. (You will have already had a meeting with Jessica by March 10, which should help you flesh out if/how you should raise any concerns you have with your clinical supervisor.)

- Evaluation: As described in more detail in the “Course Information” section, at the end of the term, we will ask your supervisor to complete a brief evaluation of you and provide a recommended grade as well as meet with you for a final feedback and exit session.

General Tips

A few general tips to keep in mind during your clinical work:

- All of your supervisors have agreed to spend the time and effort necessary to provide you quality supervision. However, during your interactions with your supervisors also remember that many non-profit and government agencies are under-funded and under-resourced. Moreover many attorneys are over-worked and under-paid. Working within these constraints is obviously difficult so your supervisor and the other attorneys and staff members in the office will greatly appreciate your patience and flexibility.

- Your placement organization has agreed to find adequate work space for you at their office. However, please be aware that you may have to share work space with other attorneys, law students, and interns.

- While your clinical project is important (CAP would not have agreed to work with the placement organization unless we believed the work would be meaningful), your supervisor may have many additional priorities. Again, please be patient as your supervisor tries to juggle competing tasks.

- There will likely be unpleasant aspects of your clinical work. For instance, you may accompany your attorney to court and end up spending a significant amount of time waiting in the hallway for your case to be called. Your supervisor may say she will review and edit your written work by a certain date and does not do it because an unexpected crisis arises. Rather than writing these experiences off as negative ones, use them as learning experiences about the profession.

Changes in Clinical Project Assignments

CAP has worked with your clinical placement organization to develop appropriate clinical projects for you. However, we realize that organizations’ priorities and needs change over time. Because we are committed to having you work on projects that are of importance to your supervising organization, we are flexible and the clinical projects assigned to you may deviate from the ones described in our prior discussions with the organizations. However, if
projects change significantly from those already agreed upon (as described in “Clinical Placements & Projects” Memorandum we distributed via email on 1/12/06), please call Jessica to discuss the changes.

Meetings with CAP

Schedule a meeting with Jessica by March 10th to discuss your clinical experience to-date and your plans and hopes for the rest of the term. This is also a good opportunity to discuss any issues you are having at your placement and strategies for approaching your clinical supervisor about how to make improvements over the rest of the term.
PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

General Nature and Goals of Your Presentation and Packet

The idea is to educate other students about the nature of your organization, its strategy for achieving change for children, and how your specific project(s) fit within that strategy. Additionally, we hope your presentation provides you the opportunity to reflect on your clinical experience so far as well as the chance to brainstorm with and get feedback from your peers about difficult issues you and/or your organization are confronting. And finally we hope that the combination of presentations provides an opportunity to learn vicariously from the combination of placements and think about the pros and cons of different approaches to promoting change.

Oral Presentation

Each of you will have approximately 20 - 25 minutes to present, followed by 20 - 25 minutes for Q&A and discussion. Your presentation should include: (1) a description of the nature of your organization and its strategy for change (e.g., how does it see its mission, what do you see as pros and cons of its approach, how is it staffed, what are its sources of financial support, what are the satisfactions and frustrations of working there for you and the staff generally); (2) overview of your work there; (3) specific issue you are working on which you think is interesting for the class and/or which would provide a useful brainstorming opportunity (e.g., students engaged in direct service work may choose to highlight particular ethical difficulties in representing children/parents and students doing policy/research work may choose to flesh out a difficult strategic issue, policy agenda, or legislative initiative facing their organization). You should not view this presentation as a time in which you have to “teach” your classmates about a technical area of the law related to children, nor should you simply reiterate the information in your presentation packet. Assume that the class has read your packet and focus on the questions or issues posed in that packet.

In most cases, it will make sense to incorporate your clinical supervisor into your presentation, assuming they are interested and available. However, in some cases, it may be more valuable for you to present without your supervisor being present. We will discuss these issues when you meet individually with Jessica.

If you require any A/V support (e.g., if you are planning a PowerPoint presentation), please notify us – email Ashley at aumbro@law.harvard.edu AND copy Jessica at jbudnitz@law.harvard.edu when you email your presentation materials so we can ensure that the room is properly equipped.

Presentation Packets

To accompany your presentation, please prepare a packet of materials which we will distribute to the other students prior to your talk. Presentation packets are due by noon the Wednesday prior to your assigned presentation so that we can make them available.
to the other students well in advance of your presentation. Students should email their assignment packet to Ashley at aumbro@law.harvard.edu AND copy Jessica at jbudnitz@law.harvard.edu. In the subject line of the email, please write: Clinical Presentation Packet for Month X, Date Y. We greatly prefer submission electronically; however, if you have documents only in hard copy version (e.g., an organization’s brochure), you should drop off a copy of the entire packet with Ashley in Pound 417.

Please include an overview memo (1-3 double-spaced pages) which provides: (1) a description of your organization; (2) a very brief description of your work this term; (3) a discussion of the specific issue(s) you will be raising in your presentation for class discussion; and (4) a list of attachments.

Your entire packet, including your overview memo and accompanying attachments, should be roughly 15-20 pages. You will want to include materials that will enable the group to engage in the issues you present for discussion, as well as background information on your placement organization (e.g., brochure, mission statement, a summary of recent activities and/or reports, a recent newspaper article featuring the organization). Materials will vary depending on the nature of your work. Students engaged in direct service work may choose to include information from the client’s file (redacted) such as client history, evaluations, court papers, etc. which will help define issues you will be addressing in your presentation. For policy and research work, you may decide to include a draft of a strategy memo you wrote, a press release you helped create, a research memo you provided to your supervisor, an excerpt of a report you are writing, etc.

Confidentiality

Please be aware of and respect confidentiality issues and discuss these with your supervisor prior to submitting your packet of materials. Given the range of placement organizations there is a particular risk of conflicts and confidentiality problems. Be sure to redact the names and any other identifying information of any clients involved in your projects.

Preparing For Your Presentation

As you begin planning your presentation and accompanying materials, you should at least touch base with Jessica, including on the issue of whether your clinical supervisor will/should be present. In most cases, it will make sense to meet with Jessica at least one week before your presentation materials are due (which is 2 weeks before your presentation).