

ENTREPRENEURSHIP LEGAL CLINIC GITTIS CENTER FOR CLINICAL LEGAL STUDIES

The Entrepreneurship Legal Clinic (ELC) is the transactional practice group within the Gittis Center's "teaching law firm," where upper level law students engage in the supervised practice of law in a professional setting. The ELC engages motivated students with a wide-range of real legal issues faced by for-profit and non-profit ventures drawn largely from the greater Philadelphia region. Our goal is to provide the legal analysis that enables our client entrepreneurs to transform their passions and ideas into viable businesses and institutions that enhance our community, while providing our students with a unique opportunity to develop and enrich their professional capabilities. Live-client experience introduces students to the relationship between substantive law and "lawyering," as well as the importance of financial and other non-legal factors essential to consider in guiding and counseling business clients.

WHAT ARE THE COURSE COMPONENTS?

- 1. Seminar. Each week, all ELC students meet for two 80-minute seminars. Seminar topics survey themes relevant to transactional lawyering and may include drafting, negotiation, client communications, financial literacy, copyright and trademark, and professional responsibility. Guest speakers, case studies and simulation exercises are featured in a number of seminars. In addition, the seminar devotes time to discussing student-client issues.
- 2. Supervisory Meetings. Each ELC student has a regular weekly meeting with the ELC faculty to discuss progress on client cases. The meetings offer students opportunities to discuss legal questions, review drafts of documents, explore ethical implications, identify client management issues and discuss the student's evolving understanding of the role of a transactional lawyer.
- 3. Client Work. Each ELC student is assigned 2-3 client matters throughout the semester. Assignments accommodate, where possible, particular areas of student interest or expertise. Client work is the largest time component of ELC participation and includes interviewing and advising clients, transactional planning, managing client communications, researching issues, and drafting correspondence and legal documents. The Gittis Center provides students with work space that includes computer workstations with electronic research capacity and video-equipped space for client meetings, as well as professional support staff.
- **4. Community Workshops.** Mid-semester, each ELC student will work with a team of colleagues to prepare and present one community workshop conducted in the evening at the Law School on a legal topic affecting entrepreneurs.

HOW IS THE COURSE GRADED?

The ELC offers 6 credits. The course is graded without a curve. Accepted students are expected to work approximately 15 hours per week through the semester (including class preparation and attendance). Final grades take into account class attendance and participation, quality of work product including client work, class assignments and workshops, success in collaboration, project management and client management, adherence to clinic operating procedures and demonstrated professionalism, diligence, effort, resourcefulness and reflectiveness.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF AN ELC STUDENT COUNSELOR IN CLIENT REPRESENTATIONS?

While all client work is performed under careful faculty supervision, ELC students assume primary responsibility for all matters affecting their clients. As an ELC student you will:

Manage client relationships – taking responsibility for all forms of client communication including arranging
meetings and conference calls with your clients, developing a sophisticated understanding of your clients and their
businesses through interviews and other communications, and managing client expectations

- Apply legal analysis to real client problems identifying legal issues and risks raised by your clients' business plans and consider an array of approaches for resolving and mitigating them
- Develop transactional lawyering skills developing a realistic plan for achieving a definitive conclusion to your clients' problems, then working with your client, your ELC colleagues and your faculty supervisor to execute your plan by researching legal issues, summarizing your research in memoranda, drafting and negotiating contracts and other written instruments, and counseling your client
- . Make a measurable economic difference in the Philadelphia business community

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

Our most effective ELC students are characterized by high levels of commitment, motivation, intellectually curiosity, and empathy. We encourage you to register for the ELC if you are committed to client service and eager to hone your professional capabilities by experiencing the nuanced challenges and rewards of transactional lawyering.

HOW DO I ENROLL?

Registration for the ELC is part of the regular Law School course registration. The ELC enrolls a limited number of randomly-selected upper level students each semester. Due to the popularity of the course, enrollment is usually limited to 3L and occasional LLM students, however, 2L students are eligible for enrollment as well. There are no formal prerequisites for the course, however the substantive law of Corporations, Tax, Secured Transactions, Intellectual Property, and related business law courses inform much of the client work encountered in the ELC, and prospective LLMs are required to complete an interview and submit a writing sample prior to being deemed eligible for enrollment through the registration lottery.

For more information about the ELC, stop by the Gittis Center for Clinical Legal Studies, located on the ground floor of Silverman Hall, call 215.898.8044, or email elc@law.upenn.edu.