Poverty Law: Housing and Government Benefits Law
Course No. LAW 6220
University of Minnesota School of Law

Fall 2024

Adjunct Professors:

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Course Structure and Focus:

This is a practice-based class and does not primarily focus on theory.

The course also involves covering separate the substantive poverty law topics of government benefits and housing. This class focuses primarily on Minnesota law. Professors reserve the right to amend or edit the syllabus or schedule at any time during the semester.

This class satisfies the Experiential Learning requirement for students under the Clinic/Simulation category.

A passing grade in this course satisfies the Experiential Learning Requirement under Law School Academic Rule 5.5, which requires work that is primarily experiential in nature; integrates doctrine, theory, skills, and legal ethics; and engages students in performance of at least two professional skills.

Website:

Visit the class website at www.povertylaw.homestead.com for materials and updates. The website serves poverty law courses at the UOM Law School. This class will not use TWEN or Canvas.

Office Hours:

Professors are available before or after class period and also available by appointment, and available by email.

Course Time:

Thursdays 1:25 p.m. to 4:25 p.m. Mondale Hall Room 3.

No class, Thursday, November 28 (Thanksgiving)

Last class will be held on Tuesday, December 3, 1:25 p.m. to 4:25 p.m. Mondale Hall Room 3.

Prerequisites:

There are no prerequisites for Poverty Law.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will learn selected topics in Poverty Law and learn how to advise low-income persons facing various legal issues. Completion of Poverty Law will assist students in clinical work, as well as work in legal aid offices and *pro bono* work.

Here is the list of faculty-approved Learning Outcomes that apply to this course. Students completing this course will be able to:

1. Identify, research, and analyze legal issues, including the ability to:

    i. Locate, interpret, and synthesize relevant legal authorities
    ii. Gather and assess relevant facts
    iii. Identify, and provide critical analysis of, competing positions and options
    iv. Understand the interaction between law and public policy
    v. Recognize when consultation, collaboration, or referral is advisable or required

2. Communicate orally and in writing, including the ability to:
    i. Present analysis and engage in legal dialogue, negotiation, and argument
    ii. Communicate with the appropriate tone and sophistication for the relevant audience
    iii. Communicate directly, with organization, focus, purpose, and clarity
    iv. Tailor communication and advocacy to applicable format restrictions and comply with procedural requirements

3. Provide client-oriented legal service, including the ability to:

    i. Demonstrate broad knowledge of the law and the legal system of the United States
    ii. Listen to and engage with clients to identify client objectives and interests
    iii. Advocate for clients
    iv. Counsel clients by assessing, developing, and evaluating creative options to meet client goals

4. Collaborate, including the ability to:

    i. Work in a team
    ii. Respect diverse views and perspectives and work effectively across difference
    iii. Understand issues relating to equity and inclusion

5. Conduct themselves professionally and ethically, including the ability to:

    i. Know and comply with rules of professional conduct
    ii. Be honest and candid with clients, lawyers, institutions, and others
    iii. Respond effectively to criticism and other feedback
    iv. Identify and minimize biases
    v. Understand the importance of pro bono and other forms of law-related public service
    vi. Seek and use resources where necessary to address personal challenges

Course Grade:

Students will complete two papers with a maximum page limit of ten pages. See Class schedule for subjects and time deadlines. The first paper will count for 50% of your grade, and the final paper will count for 50% of your grade. Final grades may be increased or reduced 1 point based upon class attendance and participation. Students must work independently on assignments and may not consult with others.

Poverty Law is a 3-credit course.

Incomplete Grades:

If a student is unable to complete the course requirements, please make arrangements with the instructors prior to the final day of class. The "incomplete policy" of the University of Minnesota School of Law will be followed.

Graded Assignments - Papers:

Two open-book issue-spotting problems will be assigned during the semester. Each student will turn in a maximum of ten pages double-spaced paper with one-inch margins, and 12-point Times New Roman font, answering the problem. Please use only materials assigned in class and in the handouts.

Late Assignments:

We have a strict policy on late papers to mirror the reality of the practice of law. If you turn in a paper late without discussing it with the Dean of Students in advance, the professor can either reduce the grade or not give a grade at all.

Late Registrations:

If you are not on the class list, you must see the Registrar for admission to the class.

Attendance and Class Participation:

Attendance is required at every class. Attendance sign in sheets will be provided at every class. Students will be expected to abide by the Academic Rules. Rule 1.1 indicates that regular attendance and adequate preparation are required. Law School policy also prohibits unauthorized use of laptop computers during class, including, but not limited to, playing games, reading or writing e-mal, and internet surfing. If a student misses a number of classes, the professors reserve the right to reduce the student's grade.

This course is scheduled as an in-person course. If situational factors arise, such as personal illness of the instructor, the class may be held synchronously via Zoom or recorded for later viewing.

While makeup work for legitimate absences is part of University policy, faculty and instructors choose how to accommodate absences based on their course. In this course, excused absences will be handled as follows:

- Students are expected to obtain notes from a classmate of class material missed.
- With advance notice, we intend to record the class session and make it available only to those who have a legitimate absence.

Textbooks and Class Materials:

Class materials are available on line at http://www.povertylaw.homestead.com/Reading.html. Slides from classroom lectures will be posted at the above link.

Reading assignments are in the class schedule, available on line at http://www.povertylaw.homestead.com/Schedule.html.

Handouts:

Handouts will be provided in some of the classes. If you are not going to be in class, please arrange with another student to get handouts for you. Because the instructors do not have office space on campus, it is difficult for instructors to carry handouts each week for multiple classes.

Class Recordings:

We will record class sessions by request in the event of a student's absence. Please e-mail the professors prior to class to report your absence and request that the session be recorded. Any recordings will be shared with the entire class.

All recordings provided to students are governed by the Law School's class recording policy, which requires that they may be used only for the academic benefit of enrolled students and may not be redistributed. The policy is available on the Academic Policies website, under Classroom Environment and Use of Electronic Devices.

Cell Phones and Pagers

Please put cell phones and pagers on vibration or silent mode. Please do not answer phones or pagers during class. If you need to make other arrangements, talk with the professors.

Honor Code:

Students enrolled in the course are expected to at all times comply with the Law School's Honor Code and Academic Rules, as well as the University's Code of Student Conduct.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools:

Artificial intelligence (AI) language models, such as ChatGPT, and online assignment help tools, such as Chegg®, may not be used for course assignments except as explicitly authorized by the instructors. The following actions are prohibited in this course:

- Submitting all or any part of an assignment statement to an online learning support platform;
- Incorporating any part of an AI generated response in an assignment;
- Using AI to brainstorm, formulate arguments, or template ideas for assignments;
- Using AI to summarize or contextualize source materials;
- Submitting your own work for this class to an online learning support platform for iteration or improvement.

If you are in doubt as to whether you are using an online learning support platform appropriately in this course, we encourage you to discuss your situation with us.

Any assignment content composed by any resource other than you, regardless of whether that resource is human or digital, must be attributed to the source through proper citation. (Examples of citing content composed by digital tools are presented in: https://libguides.umn.edu/chatgpt).

Unattributed use of online learning support platforms and unauthorized sharing of instructional property are forms of scholastic dishonesty and will be treated as such.

Resources for Students:

Accommodation Support:

For degree-seeking law students in need of academic accommodations related to a disabling condition, please connect directly with the Law School's designated Access Consultant from the University's Disability Resource Center. https://disability.umn.edu/current-students/law-students

Classroom and/or testing accommodations may be available. For questions about accommodation implementation at the Law School, connect directly with our Student Affairs team at lawdos@umn.edu. Any accommodations for testing on blind-graded exercises should be directed to Student Affairs and not to your instructor so that we can maintain blind grading and protect your privacy.

Personal or Health-Related Challenges:

The University of Minnesota Law School is committed to promoting emotional and psychological wellness for all students.

Many resources are available to students facing personal or health challenges that may impact their academic success. Consult with the Office of Student Affairs at lawdos@umn.edu for specific information and referrals for your situation, or connect directly with these supports:

- Law Student Support & Well-Being Resource Guide
- Student Life website
- University Mental Health website
- Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers

Student Affairs has advisors available to discuss resources every day of the week, both in-person and virtually, at https://lawdos.appointments.umn.edu/index.php.