



Lewis & Clark Law School

Public Interest Law

Certificate in Public Interest Law

Updated August 2016



Public interest law encompasses many different substantive areas, and is not confined to any single political ideology. It is the practice of law on behalf of both individuals and organizations not typically served by the for-profit-bar. For this certificate, public interest law includes work for civil legal services organizations, non-profit organizations, government agencies, and other similar entities to advance concepts of justice, fairness, and the well being of the general public.

Overview

Students qualify for a certificate by satisfying six requirements

- **3 Level One courses:** students must take all three
- **3 Level Two courses:** students choose from a wide variety of courses
NOTE: courses used for any other certificate will not count
- **5 Level Three credits:** students choose from various applied skills courses
NOTE: courses used for any other certificate will not count
NOTE: no more than 4 credits for Level Three can count from a single course
- **Paper:** “Capstone” paper focused on public interest law
- **GPA:** at least a 2.7 grade point average in courses used to qualify for Certificate
- **Pro bono work:** at least 50 hours of pro bono work, as defined below

Other considerations

- **Topical focus:** Students can earn a Certificate notation of a topical focus
- Only one criminal or environmental course may be used for this Certificate.

Certificate Requirements and Restrictions

A. Course Requirements.

To obtain the certificate, a student must fulfill the following course requirements:

Level One

All of the following courses:

Administrative Law

Constitutional Law II

Evidence

Level Two

Three (3) of the following courses. You may take all 3 courses from one topical area, or you may take a mixture from multiple topical areas.

NOTE: courses used for any other certificate *will not count* for this requirement

MISCELLANEOUS

Federal Courts

Oregon Local Government Law

Nonprofit Law Seminar

HEALTH, DISABILITY, AND AGING

Elder Law

Health Law & Policy Seminar

CIVIL RIGHTS

Capital Punishment Seminar

Civil Rights Litigation

Comparative Constitutional Law

Environmental Justice

Race and the Law Seminar

Religion and the Law Seminar

Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity Seminar

CONSUMER LAW

Bankruptcy & Debtor/Creditor

Consumer Law

Secured Transactions

FAMILY AND JUVENILE LAW

Children and the Law Seminar

Contemporary Issues in Family Law Seminar

Family Law

Family Mediation Seminar

Juvenile Justice Seminar

Law and Education Seminar

INDIAN LAW

Federal Indian Law

Federal Indian Law in Current Era Seminar

Native American Natural Resources Law

INTERNATIONAL LAW AND IMMIGRATION

Immigration Law

International Criminal Law Seminar

International Human Rights Seminar

Public International Law

Transformative Immigration Law Seminar

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

Employment Discrimination

Employment Law I

Labor Law

Law of Global Labor Markets Seminar

Unrepresented Nations and Peoples

Workers' Compensation

Environmental and criminal courses: see special provisions below

Level Three

Five (5) Credits of the following courses.

NOTE: courses used for any other certificate *will not count* for this requirement

NOTE: no more than *four (4)* credits for Level Three can count from a single course

Advanced Legal Research

Advanced Legal Writing Seminar

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Legal Practicum: Environmental Justice / Civil Rights

Mediation/Negotiation Skills Seminar

Moot Court: Appellate Advocacy

Moot Court: Client Counseling

Moot Court: Jessup International Law Competition

Moot Court: Mock Trial

Moot Court: NALSA

Oregon Pleading and Practice

Small Business Legal Clinic

Street Law Seminar

Tax Clinic

Trial Advocacy

Externship - must be a Public Service or Non-Profit Externship. Only (3) *three* academic credits from your Externship can count towards the certificate. Externship credits do not count towards this Certificate if you are also using them to fulfill requirements for another Certificate program. You must get prior approval from the administrator for the Externship Program and the Executive Director of Public Interest Law

Environmental and criminal courses: see special provisions below

Topical Focus for Certificate

Students earn a Certificate notation of a topical focus by:

- taking 3 courses from a single Level Two category, or
- taking 2 courses from a single Level Two category *and* fulfilling the paper requirement with a paper in the focus area written independently of the two focus courses.

Courses Not Otherwise Listed

Course credit may be allowed, in the discretion of the Program Director, for one course not otherwise listed in the Certificate Description. To request that an unlisted course apply, petition the Director by including the course syllabus and a statement of how the course is substantially relevant to public interest law or how it may be relevant to your particular public interest focus; *a conclusory statement that the course is relevant to public interest law, standing alone, will not suffice*. The petition should be submitted while the student is enrolled in the course; students petitioning after the course has ended may have difficulty with documentation.

Transfer Credits

Course credit may be allowed and applied to a topical focus, in the discretion of the Program Director, for one transfer course, of up to three (3) units of credit, taken at another law school. While the credit earned at another law school may be applicable to the certificate, the grade earned will not apply to the GPA for the certificate. Using transfer credit also fills the allowance for an unlisted course.

SPECIAL PROVISIONS REGARDING ENVIRONMENTAL AND CRIMINAL COURSES

In addition to the courses listed for Level Two and Level Three, students may take *one* (1) course from the following list toward *either* the Level Two or the Level Three requirement:

Environmental and Criminal Law Courses that may count toward Level Two

Animal Law Fundamentals	CJ: Criminal Procedure I
Animal Law Seminar	CJ: Litigating Federal Habeas Corpus Cases Seminar
Animals and Agriculture: Law and Policy Seminar	CJ: Advanced Topics: Sentencing
CJ: Criminal Law and Psychology Seminar	CJ: Victims in Criminal Procedure
CJ: Criminal Law I	Clean Air Act
CJ: Criminal Law II	Clean Water Act

Climate Change

Crimes Against Animals: Law & Policy

Environmental Enforcement

Environmental Law

Environmental Litigation

Food, Agriculture and Environmental Law
Seminar

Forest Law & Policy Seminar

Hazardous Waste Law

International Environmental Law

Land Use Planning

Ocean & Coastal Law

Public Lands and Resources Law

Sexual Assault Seminar: Victim Rights,
Remedies & Realities

Water Law

Wildlife Law

Environmental and Criminal Law Courses that may count toward Level Three

Advanced Animal Law Clinic

Animal Law Clinic

Legal Practicum: Animal Law Legislation

Legal Practicum: Criminal Law

Legal Practicum: Environmental / Natural
Resources

Legal Practicum: Environmental Enforcement

Legal Practicum: Western Resources Legal
Center

CJ: Crime Victim Litigation Clinic (National
Crime Victim Law Institute)

CJ: Criminal Justice Reform Clinic (I & II)

Trial Advocacy

Earthrise Law Center

Environmental/Animal Law Advocacy

International Environmental Law Project

B. Writing Requirement.

To obtain the certificate, a student must complete one paper that involves substantial independent research and, in addition, satisfies the following criteria:

- The paper must concern one or more topics focusing on public interest law.
- The paper must satisfy the criteria for the “Capstone” writing requirement. If the criteria are met, it is immaterial whether the student actually uses the paper to fulfill the “Capstone” writing requirement.

NOTE: a paper used for any other certificate *will not count* for this requirement

Students should plan ahead in determining how to meet the writing requirement. The student has the burden of ensuring that the paper topic and scope meet the Certificate requirements. If there is any doubt, the student should initiate a consultation among the student, the supervising faculty member, and Program Director early in the paper process.

C. Grade Point Requirement.

To obtain the Certificate, a student must maintain a grade point average of B minus (2.70) or better in courses taken and selected as qualifying for the Certificate. This requirement is subject to change depending upon any changes in the grading system or required mean that might be adopted by the faculty.

D. Pro Bono Requirement.

To obtain the Certificate, a student must perform 50 hours of pro bono work (legal volunteer work done without pay or school credit) before they graduate. Pro Bono work can be completed during the school year or during the summer. Pro Bono hours **MUST** be reported to the Program Director, and must be verified by the pro bono employer.

For the Public Interest Certificate, *pro bono work is defined* in the following way:

- Assisting public service organizations in work directly related to the delivery of legal services to indigent individuals; or
- Assisting attorneys employed by organizations, to which donations qualify as deductions under state or federal tax laws (typically 501(c)(3)'s); or
- Law-related work for federal, state, or local government, including government agencies, courts, and judges but not including law enforcement; or

- Assisting attorneys directly related to the delivery of legal services to indigent individuals or non-profits, where the retainer agreement specifies the attorney or attorneys are performing the work pro bono; and
- All work by the student is performed without remuneration of any kind, either monetary or for credit. Work performed by a student under a stipend, partial stipend, or work-study is NOT eligible under the Program. Hours volunteered for an organization after a stipend has been used or after full Clinic hours have been completed DO count as pro bono. Volunteer work for on-campus organizations (i.e. PILP, EJA, etc) does NOT qualify as pro bono.

Students should plan ahead in determining how to meet the pro bono requirement. The student has the burden of ensuring that their pro bono work meets the Certificate requirements. If there is any doubt, the student should initiate a consultation with the Program Director early in the process.

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Law School

Portland, Oregon