

## **Area of Concentration in Criminal Prosecution & Defense Practice**

The Criminal Prosecution and Defense Practice area of concentration offers advanced training in trial advocacy skills and constitutional theory, and “hands on” practical experience essential to becoming a capable practitioner in the criminal justice area.

To graduate with a Concentration in Criminal Prosecution and Defense Practice, students must meet these requirements:

1. Meet with the Managing Director of the Criminal Justice Programs early in the second year.
2. Submit the **Application for Area of Concentration in Criminal Prosecution and Defense Practice** before registration for the fourth trimester begins. Proposals submitted after the fourth trimester will be considered; however, completing a Concentration requires good planning. Thus, the earlier a student submits a Proposal the more likely it is the student will successfully complete the Concentration.
3. After completing the requirements for the Concentration and receiving grades for all the courses, students must submit to the Managing Director the following forms: the **Certificate of Completion** and the **Supervisor’s Certification of Completion of Requirement**. A Supervisor’s Certification is required for the pro bono and practical work experience requirements, and for the practical writing requirement, if that requirement is not fulfilled as part of a course. Students often fulfill the practical writing requirement during the pro bono or practical work experience requirement. These forms must be signed by your supervising attorneys. The forms are attached to this document. Please submit all Certificates in one package after recording your grades for all required courses.

**Overview of Requirements.** Students who wish to have their transcript show “Criminal Prosecution and Defense Practice” as an area of concentration must earn a minimum grade of B- or higher in each of the five required courses selected from the courses in Groups A through C below. The area of concentration will carry an Honors distinction where the combined average of the grades for the five required courses is B+ or higher. Students must also satisfy the major research paper, practical writing, pro bono, and practical work experience requirements set forth below.

**Professional Development Activities.** Students are encouraged to actively participate in national, community, and/or school-sponsored organizations, which address criminal justice issues. Suggested organizations include: Amnesty International; American Civil Liberties Union; National Legal Aid & Defender Association; National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers; National District Attorneys Association; California Attorneys for Criminal Justice; California Public Defenders Association; Death Penalty Focus; the ABA’s Criminal Justice Section, and its Section on Individual Rights & Responsibilities; and California Western’s Association of Trial Lawyers of America Chapter, the Criminal Law Society, and the Public Interest Law Foundation

The Managing Director of the Criminal Justice Programs shall make all decisions concerning whether a student has satisfied the requirements for the Concentration.

## **I. Required Courses.**

Students must take the basic required bar courses, which include Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure I, Evidence, Constitutional Law I, and PR. Students must also take Trial Practice or Trial Skills Training for Distinguished Advocates or Appellate Skills Training for Distinguished Advocates.

Five additional courses are required. Students must take at least one practicum or experiential learning core course and two substantive courses. The remaining two required courses may be selected from experiential learning, substantive courses, or closely related courses. A list of all courses can be obtained from the AOC Director.

## **II. Major Research Paper**

Students must complete a major research paper in the area of criminal justice to satisfy the Concentration requirement. The paper must be written in conjunction with a scholarly writing seminar, unless for good cause shown, the Managing Director otherwise approves an alternative arrangement. The topic of the research paper must be pre-approved by the Managing Director.

## **III. Practical Writing Requirement**

Students must also complete a practical writing requirement. This requirement can be satisfied by completion of one of the courses marked with a "+". The requirement may also be satisfied by writing an appellate brief or a memorandum of points and authorities involving an issue of criminal law or procedure, which was submitted to a court during an internship, clerkship, or pro bono program and certified by the student's immediate supervisor as being equal in quality to the work of a competent practitioner. The appellate brief or memorandum of points and authorities must reflect substantive research and writing and not work that was substantially taken from other briefs or memoranda.

## **IV. Pro Bono Requirement.**

Students must complete a minimum of 50 hours of pro bono work in the criminal justice field with a public or private program approved by the Managing Director.

## **V. Practical Work Experience Requirement**

Students must complete an approved program of practical work experience in the criminal justice field. This requirement can be met by an internship or comparable work experience (280 hours) approved by the Managing Director with an approved agency such as a District Attorney's Office, the Criminal Division of a City Attorney's Office, the Criminal Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Criminal Division of an Attorney General's Office, a Federal Defender Office, a Public Defender Office, an Alternate Public Defender Office, a judicial clerkship with a criminal judge, or other public agency or private criminal defense law firm approved by the Managing Director.

## **VI. Professional Development Activities (Optional)**

Students are strongly encouraged to develop ties to the criminal justice community by actively participating in at least one national, local, and/or school organization, which focuses on criminal justice issues.