

Enrollment is limited and consent of the instructor is required. Interested students must complete an on-line application and submit a resume and unofficial law school transcript to Professor Cunningham at [cdcunningham@gsu.edu](mailto:cdcunningham@gsu.edu). The course is open to any student who has completed the first year curriculum. 2L students will be able to have significant clinic responsibility for their domestic violence case including witness interviewing, investigation and negotiations with opposing counsel. Fundamentals will probably not be offered again until Spring 2015. Interested students, including current 1Ls, are encouraged to register interest now for Spring 2015 using the link on the course home page: <http://law.gsu.edu/ccunningham/FLP/>

## Fundamentals of Law Practice

Law 7336/87910

Course Website:

<http://law.gsu.edu/ccunningham/FLP/>

Semester: Spring 2014

Day: Wednesday

Time: 1:15 pm - 4:00 pm

Room: 653

Course not currently scheduled for Fall 2015

### Student Comments from Prior Semesters

"This has been one of the most awesome experiences I have ever had. I have been on military combat training missions, and this class provides the same level of excitement."

"This will be one of the memorable classes of all time."

"One of the most valuable things that I have received educationally in law school."

"The practical experience is what I wanted ... and it was exactly what I received."

"Overall a great experience. I would definitely recommend it, and in fact already have."

"What makes this class so great is that you're doing REAL work – helping real people with real problems."

"The practical aspect of this course is amazing."

"I saw a new vision for what being a practicing lawyer can be."

"Fieldwork observation was awesome."

"I would MOST CERTAINLY recommend this course to others. I cannot explain how valuable this course is !!!!!!!!"

Clark D. Cunningham

W. Lee Burge Professor of Law & Ethics

Tiffany Williams Roberts

Adjunct Professor of Law and Deputy Director,

National Institute for Teaching Ethics & Professionalism

### Syllabus

### Resources

Register Interest in Spring 2015

Fieldwork Preference Form

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## Course Description

Students learn about the fundamentals of legal practice through observing the work of a solo or small firm practitioner (the "fieldwork attorney"), simulating the case management activities of a small firm, and engaging in real-life client representation.

The course grade is calculated as follows: 40% Fieldwork Report, 30% Course Portfolio (including class participation), 30% client representation case work.

The course is open to any student who has completed the first year curriculum; there are no other course prerequisites. However, enrollment is limited and consent of the instructor is required following completion of the application requirements in order to register for the course. Priority for Spring 2014 will be given to students who apply by October 18, 2013. Interested students must complete an on-line application and submit a resume and unofficial law school transcript to Professor Cunningham at [cdcunningham@gsu.edu](mailto:cdcunningham@gsu.edu)

This course is currently only offered once per year. Spring 2014 is the first time that it has been offered during the day. The next offering will probably be in Spring 2015, in the evening if there is sufficient demand from part-time students. Students who are interested in taking the course next academic year are encouraged to Register Interest in Spring 2015.

Although the course includes a substantial clinical component, it does not count against the maximum number of clinical or externship hours.

**Client Representation Case Work:** Students will work in teams of two (or sometimes more) representing persons seeking Orders of Protection against domestic violence from the Cobb County Superior Court, located in downtown Marietta. Eligible third year students will be certified for courtroom practice under the Third Year Practice Rule and may have the opportunity to conduct direct and cross examinations and closing arguments. Students not eligible for Third Year Practice certification may take the lead for their team in interviewing clients and witnesses, conducting factual investigation, and negotiating with the

opposing party. Student performance will be evaluated against the requirements of the Georgia Rules of Professional Conduct and as to students' effective use of case management practices in the conducting of their case. This is intended to be a very short-term but possibly intensive clinical experience. Students must be able to arrange their schedule (1) to attend court twice during the semester on Tuesday: one day to observe court procedures and the other day for their own hearing and (2) to meet their client at Legal Aid of Cobb County in Marietta on the Tuesday preceding the court hearing.

**Fieldwork Requirement:** The major writing assignment in this course is a report in which the student provides a description of the realities of the fieldwork attorney's practice and answer the following questions, with reference to specific examples and quotations drawn from the field work:

1. What is it like to be a solo practitioner or a member of a small firm?
2. What is required to start and sustain a small firm or solo practice?
3. What knowledge, skills, and professional qualities should a law student aim to acquire to prepare for entry into small firm or solo practice?
4. How can law school better assist law students to acquire such knowledge, skills and professional qualities?

The student is required to schedule at least the following interactions with the field placement attorney:

- a. An initial in-person interview;
- b. At least one follow up visit during which the student observes the attorney at work; and
- c. Attorney review of and feedback on an initial and any subsequent report drafts.

The instructor is responsible for arranging the fieldwork placement and will endeavor to place the student with an attorney in a practice area of interest to the student. Students should NOT attempt to arrange their own placement in advance, although students are invited to submit names of possible placement attorneys. The fieldwork placement cannot be with a current or past employer or a family member. In prior semesters part-time students with regular full-time jobs were able to complete the fieldwork requirement and similar efforts will be made to accommodate part-time students this semester.

**Course Portfolio:** Students will have free access to a leading, web-based case management software called Clio ([www.goclio.com](http://www.goclio.com)) and are required to use this software throughout the semester to record all the time expended for the course and to use the other features of the software for time and task management for their fieldwork and case work. Students will compile a printed portfolio of all their work in the course from the Clio data base (excluding their client representation case work, which is separately evaluated) and be graded based on their competent and thorough use of the software and the diligence of their course work as recorded in Clio.

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## Required Materials

**No materials to be purchased**

**The following materials will be distributed at no cost:**

Robert C. Smith, *Patient-Centered Interviewing: An Evidence-Based Method* [Paperback Edition] Lippincott Williams & Wilkins  
ISBN: 0781732794 [to be returned at end of course]  
Law Practice Management (State Bar of Georgia)  
Materials on Georgia Legal Ethics  
Manual for Clio Case Management Software  
Domestic Violence Manual (GSU College of Law) [to be returned at end of course]

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## General Information

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Clark D. Cunningham Office: Law School 442 Phone: (404) 413-9168 Fax: (404) 413-9225 E-mail: <a href="mailto:cdcunningham@gsu.edu">cdcunningham@gsu.edu</a> Faculty Assistant: Karen P. Butler Room 402 (404) 413-9082 <a href="mailto:kpbutler@gsu.edu">kpbutler@gsu.edu</a>	Tiffany Williams Roberts, Deputy Director National Institute for Teaching Ethics & Professionalism (NIFTEP) Office: Law School 462 Phone: (404) 413-9178 Email: <a href="mailto:twroberts@gsu.edu">twroberts@gsu.edu</a> Law Firm Website: <a href="http://www.tiffanywroberts.com">www.tiffanywroberts.com</a>
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