

## Civil Litigation & Dispute Resolution Courses

Civil litigators – also known as trial lawyers – represent clients in civil lawsuits, which can be resolved through arbitration, mediation, trial, or settlement. They spend much of their time on pre-trial matters such as investigating facts, researching law, drafting pleadings, engaging in discovery, negotiating with opponents, participating in mediation, filing motions, writing briefs, and preparing cases to be tried. Although most cases are resolved through some form of settlement, the pre-trial process aims to gather and organize the information that will be needed should a trial be necessary. In addition, litigators must have the confidence and skills to try a case to a judge or jury or s/he will not be able to adequately represent the client's interests.

### *FOUNDATION COURSES – INTRODUCING THE BASIC CONCEPTS:*

Alternative Dispute Resolution  
Civil Procedure  
Evidence  
Torts  
Trial Advocacy or Trial Techniques  
Professional Responsibility (required)

[Note that Evidence is a prerequisite for Trial Advocacy/Trial Techniques I as well as for some of the clinics and trial teams. Students interested in a litigation specialty should take Evidence as soon as possible.]

### *RECOMMENDED COURSES – BASIC ELECTIVES FOR LITIGATORS:*

#### **Procedure Courses:**

Appellate Advocacy  
Complex Litigation  
Conflict of Laws  
Depositions  
Expert Witness in Civil Litigation  
Federal Courts  
Law and Social Science  
Negotiation  
Pre-Trial Practice & Advocacy  
Texas Pre-Trial Procedure  
Texas Trial & Appellate Procedure

#### **Courses Combining Substantive Law & Procedural Issues:**

Immigration Practice & Advocacy  
Patent Litigation  
Police Misconduct Litigation  
Securities Litigation and Enforcement

### *CLINICS*

Many of the law school clinics help students develop litigation-related skills in addition to other

important lawyering skills such as interviewing, advising, counselling, negotiating, and fact-investigation, that will be important in any litigation practice.

Civil/Consumer Clinic

Child Advocacy Clinic

Criminal Clinic

Judge Elmo B. Hunter Legal Center for Victims of Crimes Against Women

Van Sickle Family Law Clinic

Actual Innocence Clinic

Tax Clinic

#### *RELATED COURSES*

In addition to an understanding of litigation processes, trial lawyers must also understand the areas of law involved in their cases. Students should therefore consider substantive courses in litigation-intensive areas. See the Guides for other areas for lists of basic courses in various fields.

#### *EXTERNSHIPS*

A large number of externship opportunities are with federal or state judges, government agencies, district attorneys, and public defenders, most of which involve exposure to litigation activities. Students interested in litigation should strongly consider taking the Federal Judicial Externship Course and/or doing a litigation-related externship within the Government & Public Interest Externship.

#### *PUBLIC SERVICE PLACEMENTS*

Many of the Pre-Approved Public Service Placements allow participating students to acquire litigation skills and experience while also providing community service.

#### *STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS*

Board of Advocates

Moot Court Board

#### *FACULTY*

Here are some of the full-time faculty members who teach or have an interest in this area:

Hillel Bavli

Anthony Colangelo

Ruth Cross

Bill Dorsaneo

Chris Jenks

George Martinez

Natalie Nanasi

Chante Prox

Meghan Ryan

Mary Spector

Diane Sumoski

David Taylor

Beth Thornburg