

ELON UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL *of* LAW

To: Elon Law Students

From: Professors Catherine Dunham, Steve Friedland, & Erin Fitzgerald

Date: August 2024

Re: Advising Information for Students Interested in Criminal Law and Civil Litigation

The following guidance regarding course selection and sequencing may be helpful for students who are interested in pursuing careers in criminal law or civil litigation. These careers include law practice as prosecutors or criminal defense attorneys, civil plaintiff or defense attorneys, judicial clerks, law enforcement officers such as FBI agents, and lawyers practicing before other courts or in administrative settings.

We recommend these courses because they enhance the skill sets you will need to succeed in these and related careers. Please note that not all of the courses are offered every year and many have enrollment caps. To make the best course plan, review all scheduling materials and discuss available courses and sequencing with your faculty advisor.

I. Essential Courses

The following courses are **essential** for lawyers in a criminal law or civil litigation practice. Students interested in these subjects should engage fully in **all** of these courses, as they are the prerequisites to all other courses in these areas of the law.

Civil Procedure (required)

Criminal Law (required)

Criminal Procedure (elective)

Evidence (required)

Legal Method and Communication (required)

Trial Practice and Procedure (elective)

II. Residency Placements

In addition, students should participate in a litigation-based Residency. Residency placements that can offer a relevant litigation experience include courts or District Attorney and Public Defender offices on both the federal and state levels. Litigation experience is also available at most private firms. Students interested in civil litigation specifically may look for residency placements in firms that have lawyers who specialize in personal injury litigation (plaintiff or defense), family law, or commercial and business litigation.

Information about private firm practice areas is typically available from the Residency Director and online. Please note that any litigation-based placement can be instructive, even if the practice area is not a student's first choice. Participating in the Humanitarian International Law Clinic or Guardian Ad Litem Clinic also exposes participants to litigation-based experiences.

III. Priority Courses

The following courses are **very important** for lawyers in criminal law or civil litigation practices. Students interested in these subjects should take as many of them as possible (to the extent offered and subject to enrollment limitations).

Criminal Law Priority Courses	Civil Litigation Priority Courses
Client Interviewing & Counseling	Civil Pre-Trial Litigation
Criminal Pre-Trial Practice	Client Interviewing & Counseling
Negotiations	Complex Civil Litigation
	Negotiations
	Conflict of Law
	Remedies

IV. Beneficial Courses

The following courses are **important** for lawyers in criminal law or civil litigation practices. Students interested in these areas should take as many of them as possible (to the extent offered and subject to enrollment limitations).

Criminal Law Beneficial Courses	Civil Litigation Beneficial Courses
Advanced Evidence	Administrative Law
Advanced Legal Research	Advanced Evidence
Family Law	Advanced Legal Research
Guardian Ad Litem Clinic	Appellate Practice
Immigration Law	Employment Law
Judicial Process	Family Law
Juvenile Law	Intellectual Property
Prisoners' Rights	Judicial Process
Scientific Evidence	Judicial Writing

V. Co- and Extra-Curricular Activities

It is useful for students to participate in these co- and extra-curricular activities to enhance procedural knowledge and advocacy skills:

Criminal Law Society
Elon Law Review
Moot Court Board
Mock Trial Team
The Innocence Project