



Looking Within: Exploring Inter-Clinic Collaborations

2023 AALS Clinical Law Conference

Toby Guerin - University of Maryland Carey School of Law

Sara Gold - University of Maryland Carey School of Law

Sara Cressey - University of Maine School of Law

Melina Healey - Touro University Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center

Erika Lee - California Western School of Law



Inter-clinic collaborations

When two or more clinics within the same law school clinical law program collaborate or coordinate their delivery of services.

Overview of Inter-clinic Collaborations



Maine

Lawyering Skills for Clinical Practice Course

- Maine Law has five clinical programs: the General Practice Clinic, Prisoners Assistance Clinic, Youth Justice Clinic, Refugee and Human Rights Clinic, and Rural Practice Clinic
- New clinic students in all five clinics must take Lawyering Skills as a corequisite with their first semester in the clinic.
- The course teaches core lawyering skills that students in all clinics need, including client counseling and interviewing, fact investigation, and developing a theory of the case, among many others.
- Course is intentionally interactive, providing many opportunities for breakouts and simulations that allow students in different clinics to share ideas.

Other Inter-Clinic Collaborations Include:

- Special Immigrant Juvenile Status cases - state court predicate order & immigration application
- Case rounds - mixing clinics to gain fresh perspective on questions or issues



Maryland

Eviction Prevention Project (EPP) (2020-2021)

- Public Health Law, Medical-Legal Partnership, Mediation, and Fair Housing Clinics, and social work students
- Legal and social services and supports to improve short- and long-term outcomes for families facing housing crisis due to COVID-19
- Virtual quick-hit “brief advice” sessions
- “Know Your Rights” community education workshops



Maryland

Outcomes (2020-2021 academic year):

- 22 virtual brief-advice sessions (advising clients on legal issues such as FTPR and habitability complaints, and providing guidance on applying for rental assistance and resources for food and clothing, free medical care, transportation, and assistance with energy bills).
- EPP served a total of 98 families from 25 different schools, represented five of these clients in District Court proceedings, referred at least two clients to outside legal services organizations, and referred two clients to the community mediation center.
- Educated approx. 100 low-income tenants about their legal rights, eviction process, defenses against eviction, and mediation as alternative to litigation to resolve disputes.
- Policy-level solutions related to eviction diversion, homelessness prevention, access to legal counsel, limiting public access to information related to landlord-tenant court filings, and preventing serial eviction filings.

Maryland

Advantages: Excellent Client Service and Rich Student Learning Opportunity

“[A]ll of my experiences working inter-professionally with social work students ... and even other [law school] clinics has taught me to approach a client’s issues/concerns holistically . . . we learned the scope of each other’s work and set expectations for each other, allowing for a seamless and productive client experience. We shed the notions of hierarchy and power dynamics to make room for open dialogue and collaboration so we could provide the best advice and resources for our clients.”

Touro: Universal Assessment



Student Learning/Performance
Assessment

<https://forms.gle/8N55BERfMLfXeLLr9>



Clinical Course Evaluation

https://tourocollege.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/previewId/f8c555a1-aa89-41ac-bd4a-ebbdec4f131c/SV_egIm0M6Vmu4116S?Q_CHL=preview&Q_SurveyVersionID=current

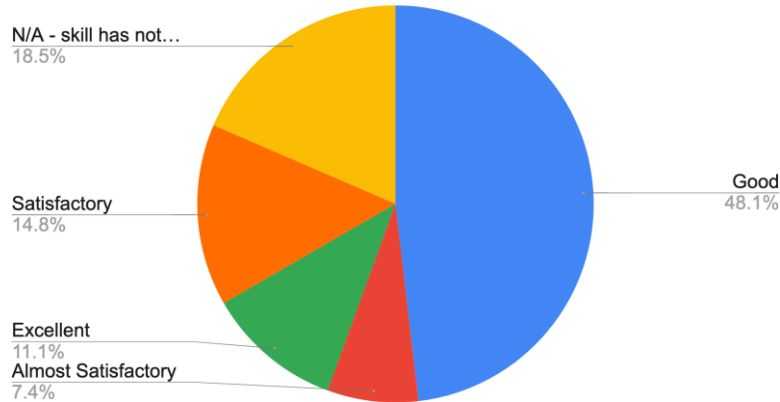


Assessing the Student

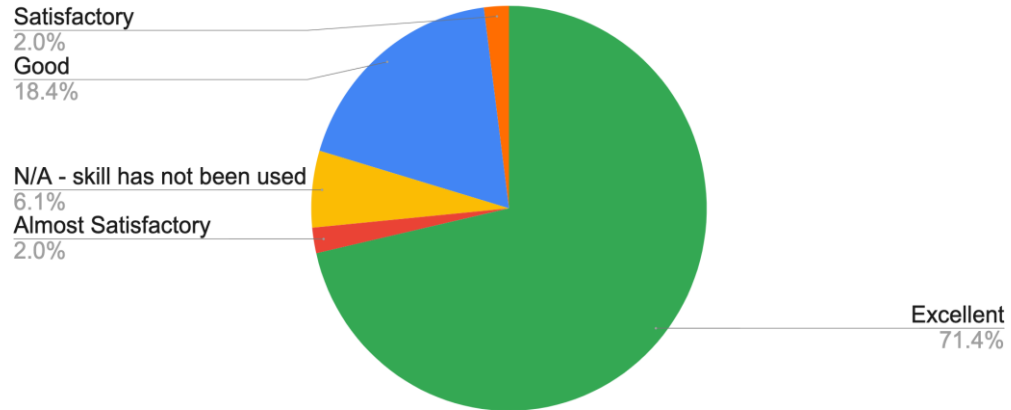
- Clinic faculty convene to develop common tool
- Multiple assessors (for us, peer, self, faculty, social work, and client) using same or similar tools.
- Simulations that duplicate practice and plug gaps in missing experiences.

Prepares notes to memorialize supervision meeting and identify next steps

Faculty



Student



Clinic taught me to develop a case theory based on the facts and law of a case

1 (disagree)	2	3	4	5 (strongly agree)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Clinic taught me to interview and counsel clients

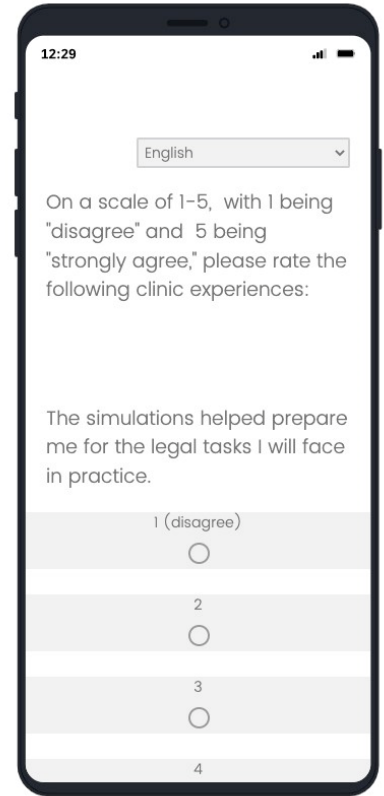
1 (disagree)	2	3	4	5 (strongly agree)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Clinic taught me to manage my time effectively

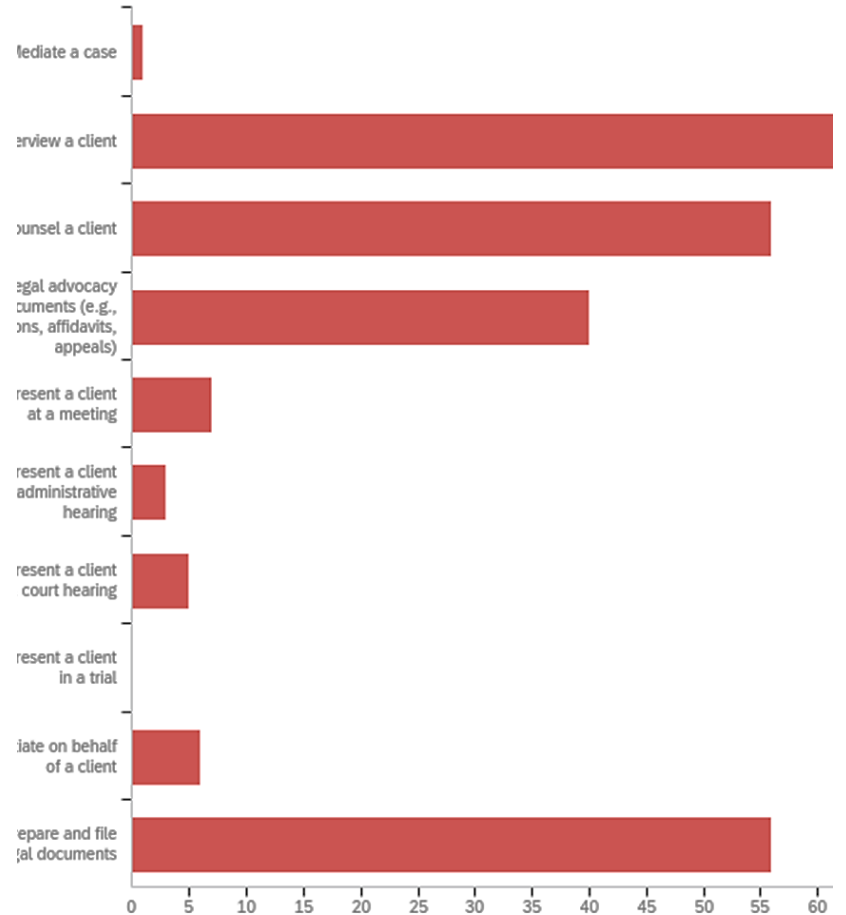
1 (disagree)	2	3	4	5 (strongly agree)
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



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I was able to personally do the following on real cases (chose all that apply)





California Western

New Media Rights and the Community Law Project

- Workshop presentations to local high school classes at two different schools about media and privacy law
 - Institutional/clinic benefits: leaning into existing contacts/relationships, overlapping student participation and enrollment, direct referrals
 - Client benefits: early exposure and guidance, potential engagement/representation
 - Student benefits: honing interpersonal communication skills, speaking/presenting to a non-lawyer audience



Challenges: Assessment



Challenges: Conflicts of Interest

Single-Firm Model of Clinical Law Program

“While attorneys are associated in a firm, none of them shall knowingly represent a client when any one of them practicing alone would be prohibited from doing so “ MD Rule 19-301.10

Collaboration between Mediation and Direct Client Representation Clinics

- Role of mediator as neutral
- Ethical standards for mediators

-MODEL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR MEDIATORS Standard (AM. ARBITRATION ASS'N, AM. BAR ASS'N & ASS'N FOR CONFLICT RESOL. 2005)

-MD. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR COURT-DESIGNATED MEDIATORS

Mediation Clinic could not serve in the role of neutral in the same matter in which another member of a firm provided legal representation or advice



Challenges: Coordination and Scheduling

Coordination between clinics and supervisors

- Need buy-in from participating faculty members
 - Consistent implementation of tools (e.g., common grading rubric)
 - Consistent messaging to students (e.g., in supervision meetings)
- Timing/scheduling challenges
 - e.g., SIJS cases - timing of predicate order process wrapping up, capacity of immigration students
 - Coordinating combined supervision meetings for students in different clinics
 - Coordinating case rounds



Challenges: Student supervision

Questions
