



OPEN SOCIETY JUSTICE INITIATIVE

Standards for Law School Clinics Receiving Support from the Open Society Justice Initiative

The Open Society Justice Initiative (Justice Initiative) uses law to protect and empower people around the world. The Justice Initiative seeks to promote human rights, foster professionalism and a sense of public service among lawyers, and strengthen civil society and the rule of law. To accomplish this, the Justice Initiative provides technical support to law school based clinics and helps them obtain start up funding. The Justice Initiative has developed the following standards for law school based clinics seeking our support:

Experiential component: clinics must provide law students with opportunities to work on actual court cases or otherwise assist real clients with their legal problems through one or more of the following models:

In-house live-client clinics are operated entirely by the law school and allow students to work directly with real clients under faculty supervision.

Externship clinics faculty teaching the classroom component work closely with NGOs and government agencies, which, in turn, provide students with opportunities to work with real clients on real cases.

RESEARCH CLINICS

Streetlaw clinics train students to conduct presentations and lead discussions about legal issues in high schools, prisons, and other settings.

Clinics must give students as much responsibility and client contact as possible while providing close supervision and guidance. Activities students engage in can include brief advice and counseling, group presentations, court representation or other advocacy, and preparing court submissions.

Integration of knowledge, skills, and values: Clinics must include a classroom component that combines the teaching of substantive law with skills training. Opportunities for reflection on professional and societal values that arise in the experiential and classroom components should be provided throughout the clinic experience.

Subject matter of clinical work: While clinics are increasingly choosing to specialize in one particular area of the law, this is not a requirement for support from the Justice Initiative. However, the Justice Initiative will only support clinics that serve low income and/or disadvantaged* clients and that promote human rights and empower marginalized communities. The Justice Initiative does not support clinics that charge clients a fee for legal services or place students with attorneys receiving compensation for cases students work on with them.

Credit for clinical work: The law school must either provide course credit to students participating in the clinic and teaching credit to faculty teaching in the clinic and supervising student work prior to receiving support from the Justice Initiative or delineate the steps it plans to take to provide such credit in the future.

* The term "disadvantaged" includes refugees, minorities, and other individuals or entities who cannot afford quality legal assistance to protect their rights and interests.