

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS LEGAL CLINIC  
HOUSING ADJUDICATION CLINIC**

Prof. David Romantz  
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**COURSE NUMBER & NAME:** 0501 – Housing Adjudication Clinic

**GRADED CREDIT HOURS:** Four (4) hours of graded credits; satisfies the upper-level skills requirement.

To enroll, a student must have completed at least one-half of the legal studies (45 hours) required for graduation and be in good academic standing.

The Housing Adjudication Clinic is limited to four (4) students in the spring 2017 semester.

**PREREQUISITES (Required):** Professional Responsibility & Administrative Law; students may enroll in Professional Responsibility concurrently with the Clinic.

**PREREQUISITES (Recommended):** Evidence & Constitutional Law

**RELATION TO BAR EXAM SUBJECTS:** Constitutional Law, Evidence; Professional Responsibility; Property/Landlord-Tenant; Contracts.

**Course Description**

A student who enrolls in the University of Memphis Housing Adjudication Clinic will have the unique opportunity to study law and lawyering from the standpoint of the administrative hearing officer rather than that of direct client representative. Under the supervision of Professor David Romantz, clinic students will work as adjudicators assigned to investigate, research, hear, deliberate, and issue written opinions involving participants in the Memphis Housing Authority's Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Program who have challenged adverse decisions affecting their public housing assistance. To complement their work as adjudicators, clinic students will participate in a classroom seminar and case rounds session designed to survey public housing law, explore administrative law and procedure, provide adjudication training, and consider the factual circumstances, legal questions, and issues of ethics and professionalism arising in the cases over which they will preside.

### Why enroll in the Housing Adjudication Clinic:

Students in the Housing Adjudication Clinic will gain all-important exposure to administrative practice and procedure. Through concurrent service as hearing officers, Housing Adjudication Clinic students will also continue to enhance the critical skills in research and writing, communication, problem-solving, strategy, decision-making, and persuasion that prepare them to address the multidimensional needs of clients and serve the legal community in other capacities. Important values informing these skills will be fostered through a continuous critique of the justice system, ongoing dialogue about lawyers' ethical and professional responsibilities, discussion about the importance of providing legal services in the low-income community and an enduring commitment to public interest lawyering, and a survey of demographic and cultural differences as manifested in the public housing context.

### Time Requirements:

The Housing Adjudication Clinic will meet for **two (2) hours** of regularly scheduled classroom time **each week**. Extra **orientation sessions** may be scheduled during the first three weeks of classes to ensure proper introduction to the Housing Adjudication Clinic's work and instruction in office procedures and public housing law. In addition to the orientation and weekly classroom sessions, clinic students will sit as hearing officers one afternoon each week during the semester. Prof. Romantz anticipates scheduling hearings each **Wednesday afternoon from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.** during the semester.

The weekly classroom sessions will be scheduled in consultation with the clinic students **before** spring registration. With a four-student cap, Professor Romantz anticipates finding a time to meet that avoids other course conflicts.

### Special Project:

Clinic students collectively will select a special project that benefits the Memphis Housing Authority, landlords, or tenants. For example, to further develop presentation and advocacy skills, clinic students could plan and deliver a housing-rights workshop to a local community group or public school. Whatever students choose, the special project is an important way to contribute and connect the Law School to the community.