



CONCENTRATION IN CRIMINAL LAW AND INNOCENCE GUIDANCE DOCUMENT & APPLICATION

Overview

Texas Tech University School of Law is one of the few law schools in the country to offer a Concentration in Criminal Law and Innocence. This innovative program is founded upon experiential learning, innovative coursework, and research and writing in and around criminal justice reform issues as well as real cases in which the innocence of a convicted defendant is at issue. The Concentration is designed for students enrolled in the School of Law who have an interest in pursuing either a prosecutorial or criminal defense practice upon graduation. The program consists of a curricular concentration, a substantial written project, and an experiential component which provides the student an opportunity to deepen his or her knowledge in the area of criminal law, work with a faculty mentor, and gain invaluable practical experience. The award of the Concentration in Criminal Law and Innocence is noted on the student's final transcript.

Concentration Program Requirements

The Concentration in Criminal Law and Innocence Program requires that the student complete:

- (1) a planned course of study including specific courses,
- (2) a criminal-law related externship or clinical experience, along with participation in law school-sponsored criminal law events, and
- (3) the writing requirement which may also satisfy the upper level writing requirement for graduation.

Completion of the program leads to the awarding in Criminal Law and Innocence which will become part of the student's permanent transcript.

As detailed below, admission to the Concentration program is through application only and must be approved by the Director.

Admission to the Program

In order to make the best use of the resources available, admission to the program is at the discretion of the Director. Most students apply for admission at the same time they register for courses at the end of their first year. The student must be in academic good standing in order to apply for admission to the program. Second-year students who have taken enough qualifying courses to complete the Concentration can apply if they have already completed one of the core

courses with a grade of “C” or better.

Application

The application must include a written statement (250 words) of why the student wishes to pursue the Concentration in Criminal Law and Innocence, a transcript, and the names of two current faculty references. All applicants will be interviewed by the Director.

Each student admitted into the Concentration must meet with the Director in order to plan a course of study. This plan must be signed by both the student and the Director before a student can be eligible for pre-registration for courses in the Concentration in Criminal Law and Innocence. Once a student has an approved plan of study, he or she is then responsible for keeping track of his or her own progress towards meeting the requirements of the Concentration and must meet with the Director at the end of each year to review his or her progress in the program.

Completion

In order to be designated as having “completed” the Concentration in Criminal Law and Innocence, a student must do the following during his or her graduating semester before submitting an intent to graduate: 1) meet with the Director to review his or her completion of each aspect of the Concentration; 2) bring the completed form (attached), a current unofficial transcript, a copy of the completed and faculty-approved student writing project, and evidence of successful completion of the experiential component of the Concentration. The Director will then certify the completion of the program, and the student will be awarded a notation on his or her transcript upon graduation.

Course Requirements

As part of the requirements of 90 hours of course work for students in the School of Law, course work will take a minimum of **18 hours** that count toward the Concentration.

The specific courses which meet the requirements of the Concentration are listed below. Since not every course is offered every year and since new courses are offered on a regular basis, there is no guarantee that every course listed will be available.

However, once a student is enrolled in the Concentration, the Law School will make every possible effort to make sure that enough courses are available for the student to meet the requirements. For this reason, the current Director (or his or her designee) (“The Director”) has the discretion to waive any requirement in this brochure and, on adequate notice, to make substitutions.

However, students must pass Criminal Law (first-year required course) and Criminal Procedure (advanced required course). Additionally, we highly recommend that the student make every effort to take Texas Criminal Procedure. The Directors will work with each individual student to identify the group of courses that best match the student’s goals and interests.

Courses:

- Appellate Advocacy
- Capital Punishment Seminar
 - Correctional Health Law
 - Crimes in I.P. and Info. Law
 - Current Topics in Criminal Procedure
 - Cybersecurity Law
 - Discovery
 - Human Rights
 - Juvenile Law
 - Law & Bioterrorism
 - Law Office Management
 - Law Office Technology
 - Law & Science Legal Research
 - Mental Disability Law
 - Military Criminal Justice
 - Narrative Law
 - National Security Law
 - Non-Profit Organizations
 - Supreme Court Seminar
 - Texas Criminal Procedure
- Texas Juvenile Law
 - Trial Advocacy
- Any newly offered criminal law-related elective (subject to change each year and approval by program director)

GPA Requirement

The student must maintain a 2.8 average in the core and elective courses taken toward credit for the Concentration.

Experiential Requirement

Since the goal of the Concentration in Criminal Law and Innocence is to prepare students for practice in a criminal law setting, no student may receive the Concentration without practical work experience. This experience may be either through the Law School's Externship program (note specifications below), one of the criminal law-related clinical programs or another work experience approved in advance by the Director.

Given that externships in criminal law are subject to the real world time constraints of working attorneys and the right of other law students to participate in the Externship program, there is no guarantee that any student will be able to receive any particular placement through the Law School's Externship program, including the full semester out-of-town externships. Therefore, a student pursuing the Concentration who wishes to satisfy his or her practicum requirement through the Law School's Externship program should enroll in the Externship program at the earliest opportunity with the understanding that he or she may not be able to receive an externship placement in any specific semester. Credits from the Externship program or criminal law-related clinical programs will count toward the 14-hour minimum requirement.

Writing Requirement

Students seeking the Concentration in Criminal Law and Innocence must complete a scholarly research paper on a subject related to criminal law in (1) any course listed above as long as the paper is criminal law-related, (2) a directed research project with a member of the program's faculty.

In order to be certified by one of the Directors as complete, this paper must:

1. Be a minimum of 25 pages in length, double-spaced and in twelve-point font with one-inch margins.
2. Be thoroughly edited for grammar, contain a substantial number of footnotes, (which do not change the page length requirements) and be formatted according to Blue Book specifications.
3. Include citation to at least one criminal law journal.
4. Contain a thesis or problem in the law, which is addressed by the paper. It may not merely be a "book report" style paper about the law.
5. An initial draft of the paper must have been reviewed and commented on by the professor and the final draft must receive a passing score from the professor (according to the individual professor's standards set forth in class or the project).

With the permission of the professor under whose supervision the paper is written, it may also be used to satisfy the requirements of the Law School's Upper Level Writing Requirement, if consistent with these requirements, or any individual course. However, just because a paper satisfies the requirements of a particular course or the Law School's Writing Requirement does not mean that it will automatically satisfy the requirements of the Concentration in Criminal Law and Innocence Program.

Students should consult with one of the Directors early in the process if they have any questions.

Completion of the Program

Before the period for course registration is closed in the semester in which the student intends to graduate, he or she must submit a report to the designated Director indicating how he or she has met the requirements of the Concentration.

No student may receive the Concentration without the approval of the Director, and the Director retains the discretion to drop a student from the Concentration program for failure to comply with any of the requirements or for other good cause.

The Director shall also have authority to modify, waive or reconfigure the Program Requirements where necessary to promote equity and fairness in the event of unforeseen complications or exigent circumstances.

Directors of the Criminal Law and Innocence Concentration

Professor Tracy Pearl
Associate Professor of Law
(806) 834-7055
Email: tracy.pearl@ttu.edu

Professor Brie Sherwin
Associate Professor of Law
Director, Dual Degree and Concentration Programs
(806) 834-5181
Email: brie.sherwin@ttu.edu

who can recommend you.

Please fill out the Plan of Study below and then attach a Statement of Interest, detailing in 250 words or less why you are interested in pursuing this Concentration.



Concentration Plan of Study

Please list the classes you propose to take that meet the Concentration's requirements. Please also list when you plan to take them.

Please complete a projected schedule for completing the program:
(This projected schedule is to assist you in designing your program of study and to assist in planning for course scheduling. This is only a projection. You may change this schedule.)

Post-1L Summer: _____
(Course work or intern/extern/clerk)

Second Year
First Semester: _____

Course	Hours

Second Semester: _____

Course	Hours

Post-2L Summer: _____
(Course work or intern/extern/clerk)

Third Year
First Semester: _____

Second Semester: _____

Course Hours

Course Hours

Once you have completed this form, please email either Professor Tracy Pearl or Professor Brie Sherwin to schedule an appointment for admission to the Concentration in Criminal Law and Innocence before the deadline to enroll in the program.

Bring **two** hard copies of this completed form with you to the interview. Please keep a hard copy of this application with you until you graduate.

ENROLLMENT

Signature of Director

Date: _____

Signature of Law School Registrar

Date: _____

**COMPLETION
OF
CONCENTRATION IN CRIMINAL LAW AND INNOCENCE**

- Transcript indicates that student has completed the Course Requirements while maintaining the required GPA in those courses.

- Student has satisfactorily completed the Experiential Requirement

- Student has satisfactorily completed the Written Requirement

Signature of Director

Date: _____

Signature of Law School Registrar

Date: _____