**OVERVIEW**

The Animal Law & Policy Clinic operates as a public interest law firm working to advance the interests of animals through litigation, legislation, administrative rulemaking, policy initiatives, organizing, and similar legal advocacy avenues. Students gain direct experience with a broad range of laws—such as the Endangered Species Act, the Animal Welfare Act, and the Freedom of Information Act—and develop critically important strategic thinking and analytical skills. They learn how to juggle multiple projects and work with co-counsel and are given significant responsibility over their projects.

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| **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED** | Fall or Spring |
| **CLINICAL COURSE COMPONENT** | Animal Law & Policy Clinical Seminar |
| **COURSE CREDITS** | 2 classroom credits |
| **CLINICAL CREDITS** | 3, 4 or 5 clinical credits |
| **LOCATION** | HLS; 1607 Massachusetts Ave, 3rd Floor |
| **REGISTRATION TYPE** | Helios |

**TYPES OF CASES/CLIENTS/PROJECTS**

Students typically work in pairs as lead counsel and co-counsel on two cases or other projects (e.g., policy initiatives, legislative drafting, commenting on rulemakings, drafting petitions for rulemaking, drafting discovery and amicus briefs) each semester. Instructors assign projects at the beginning of the semester after surveying students’ case preferences. The Clinic’s clients are typically animal-protection or environmental non-profits and may also include individual advocates or scientists.

Students working on litigation projects may develop standing analyses, draft briefs and motions, prepare discovery, and interview clients and witnesses. For example, this semester students are drafting a brief in *Rise for Animals v. Vilsack*, a case pending in federal court challenging the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s implementation of a secret policy to limit its oversight of animal experimentation by certain labs. Students working on policy projects may prepare petitions for rulemaking or comments on federal actions that impact animals. For example, in 2022, the Clinic worked alongside organizations, including the Center for Biological Diversity, to submit a listing petition to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to reclassify the Florida manatee as endangered.

The Clinic also pursues a variety of think-tank style research projects to incubate novel ideas and approaches to animal legal advocacy. This work typically involves both legal research and investigations using records requests, witness interviews, and other investigative techniques.

Our Clinic also emphasizes the importance of media coverage in animal protection cases. We have a dedicated Communications Director who handles all media outreach—both traditional and social media—and advises students about how to interact with the press. For example, last fall the San Francisco Chronical covered a Supreme Court amicus brief co-authored by a Clinical fellow and student in *National Pork Producers Council v. Ross*, a case considering the constitutionality of a California ballot initiative banning the sale of meat from pigs farmed in a "cruel manner.”

**SKILLS**

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| Brief writing | Trial Court and Appellate litigation | Interviewing clients |
| Legal research and writing | Collaboration with partner organizations | Drafting reports and policy papers |
| Strategizing cases | Preparing comments | Oral presentations |
| Policy and advocacy work | Trial preparation | Administrative hearings |
| Working with experts | Fact investigation | Community Education |

**TYPICAL WORK SCHEDULE**

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| **Morning**  | **Afternoon**  | **Evening**  |
| **8:30 - 8:45 am:** Walk to the clinical office space on campus **8:45 - 10:00 am:** Review facts and case history in wildlife trafficking FOIA case **10:00 - 11:00 am:**Conduct onboarding interview with wildlife trafficking FOIA client**11:00 am - 12:15 pm:**Litigation strategy meeting with supervisor and student co-counsel   | **12:15 - 1:15 pm:**Clinical staff meeting with vegan lunch **1:15 - 2:30 pm:**Read briefing documents in elk case **2:30 - 4:00 pm:** Participate in moot with elk case litigator **4:00 - 5:00 pm:**Prepare memo on circuit case law for wildlife trafficking FOIA case   | **5:00 - 5:45 pm:**Analyze agency’s management documents for threatened species **5:45 - 6:30 pm:**Work on outline of petition to reclassify threatened species as endangered **6:30 - 6:45 pm:** Walk home  |