

RACE & LAW CLINIC

OVERVIEW

The Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race & Justice at Harvard Law School is a law school center that seeks to reimagine civil rights and racial justice for the 21st century. The Institute's advocacy work is anchored in its Race & Law Clinic, which offers HLS students the opportunity to do hands-on litigation and advocacy in a variety of civil rights areas. The aim is to develop, teach, and practice a movement-oriented lawyering and advocacy approach that builds toward a renewed and effective civil rights regime designed to address present and future conditions.

SEMESTER(S) OFFERED	Spring
CLINICAL COURSE COMPONENT	Race & Law Clinical Seminar
COURSE CREDITS	2 classroom credits
CLINICAL CREDITS	2, 3, or 4 clinical credits
LOCATION	HLS
REGISTRATION TYPE	By Application (due Oct 17, 2025)

TYPES OF CASES/CLIENTS/PROJECTS

As an interdisciplinary clinic and center, students will be exposed to emerging theories and methods in law, policy, social science, and community organizing, including how to communicate them to a legal audience and beyond. The work of the clinic is conducted in partnership with law firms, advocacy and community organizations, civil rights organizations, other legal clinics, and more. Clinic projects may include a focus on the future of equal protection, racial equality, and anti-discrimination law; racial representation and electoral reform and democratic structures; and race and technology.

SKILLS

Clinic students will work on every aspect of the clinic's litigation and advocacy strategies, which may include litigation tasks such as investigations, meeting and retaining clients, engaging in lay and expert discovery, briefing and arguing dispositive motions, pre-trial preparations and trial practice, and appellate processes; advocacy tasks such as amicus briefs, model legislation, legislative testimony, and policy advocacy; technical assistance tasks such as developing relationships with communities and community organizations, providing education, resources, and other support to communities, and attending coalition meetings; and strategy tasks such as brainstorming and designing campaign strategies, producing strategy memoranda, and developing briefing materials for strategic partners, all in service of developing innovative and pragmatic approaches for building a durable civil rights regime for the 21st century.

Brief writing	Appellate litigation	Interviewing clients
Legal research and writing	Collaboration with partner orgs	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

Each day and week looks different at RLC. Below we provide you with an example of what a day could look like for you.

Morning	Afternoon	Evening
10:00 - 11:00 am: Case update & strategy meeting with clinical instructor(s) and fellow students 11:00 am - 12:30 pm: Draft outline of amicus brief with student team	1:15 - 2:30 pm: Brief team update and feedback meeting with clinical instructor(s) and other students 2:30 - 3:00 pm: Meet with clinical instructor for weekly 1-on-1 and 3:15 - 3:45 pm: Draft agenda for co-counsel later in the week	3:45 - 4:30 pm: Zoom with a client to sketch out strategy for upcoming discovery 4:30 - 6:30 pm: Work on case memo looking at a specific area of law to inform litigation strategy in a case