

# THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

## Resolution

### **Approving a Proposal for a Graduate Level Certificate in Public Interest Law (CIP Code 22.0299) in the School of Law**

WHEREAS, the School of Law at The University of Alabama currently offers a collection of courses in Public Interest Law to upper-level students in the School of Law; and

WHEREAS, the Graduate Level Certificate in Public Interest Law will formally recognize a set of courses for individuals interested in obtaining public interest law and providing legal assistance for low-income and under-represented populations; and

WHEREAS, this Certificate will prepare individuals for careers in law practice with a focus on public interest; and

WHEREAS, this Certificate builds on the widely recognized skill and expertise of the current faculty and on current course offerings; and

WHEREAS, students completing the Public Interest Law Certificate will be required to not only complete courses in Public Law but also be required to complete 50 hours of public service;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama that it grants initial approval of and permission to submit to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) a proposal for a Graduate Level Certificate in Public Interest Law (CIP Code 22.0299) in the School of Law at The University of Alabama.

October 3, 2016

Chancellor Ray Hayes  
The University of Alabama System  
500 University Boulevard East  
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35401

Dear Chancellor Hayes:

I am pleased to endorse the recommendation from Interim Provost Kevin Whitaker and Dean Mark Brandon for approval of a Graduate Level Certificate in Public Interest Law (CIP Code 22.0299) offered through the School of Law. The Public Interest Law Certificate will recognize the efforts of law school students who have taken a set of courses in public interest law and have spent volunteer hours in public service with low-income and underrepresented populations.

If you approve of this proposed graduate certificate, I would appreciate you forwarding this request to the Board of Trustees at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Stuart R. Bell  
President

Enclosure

c: Interim Provost Kevin Whitaker  
Dean Mark Brandon



# Form for the Submission of Non-Degree Programs (Baccalaureate, Graduate Certificates) at Senior Institutions

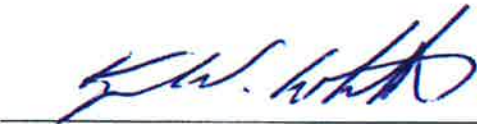
Institution Name: The University of Alabama School of Law

Non-Degree Program/Certificate Title: Certificate in Public Interest Law

CIP Code: 22.0299

Award Level: Graduate Level

1. Please provide (attach) a Description of the Non-Degree/Certificate program.
2. Please provide (attach) a list all courses in the Non-Degree/Certificate program
3. Please provide (attach) a rationale for the program.



10/3/16

Signature of Institution's Authorized Representative

Date

Interim Provost

Title

The University of Alabama

Institution

## **Attachment No. 1: Description of the Non-Degree/Certificate program.**

The Certificate in Public Interest Law is a graduate level certificate within the Law School's J.D. program that is intended to prepare law students for engagement in public interest work once admitted to the practice of law.

In order to receive the certificate at graduation, students must fulfill the following requirements. (All academic requirements are satisfied by taking courses open to all students in the existing J.D. curriculum.)

**A. Academic Coursework (20-21 hours total):**

1. Public Interest Lawyering – LAW 821 (2 hours); and,
2. Poverty Law – LAW 769 (2-3 hours); and
3. One four-hour clinical course offered at the Law School (4 hours); and
4. Twelve (12) additional credit hours taken from a list of regularly available public interest related courses.

**B. Public service:**

50 hours of legal or non-legal volunteer service on behalf of a community service or public interest organization.

There are no formal application or admissions requirements to the Public Interest Certificate program. Students simply complete the general requirements and are awarded the certificate upon graduation. The Public Interest Institute keeps track of individual compliance with program requirements.

Instruction will take place in traditional classroom settings and field placements. This is a resource-neutral proposal that will not require any additional hiring, reassignment of duties, purchase of materials, library resources, etc. Students will be able to fulfill the requirements of the program during the regular course of their J.D. program without any need to extend the normal three-year period of study.

We anticipate that 15-20 students will complete the certificate program each year going forward.

## Attachment No. 2: **Courses in the Non-Degree/Certificate Program**

### A. **Required Courses**

- Poverty Law - LAW 769 (2-3 Hours)
- Public Interest Lawyering - LAW 821 (2 Hours)

### B. **Elective Courses**

- Academic Year Externship - LAW 795 (2 Hours)
- Administrative Law - LAW 683 (2-3 Hours)
- Adoption Law - LAW 838 (1-3 Hours)
- Advanced Constitutional Law: Equal Protection - LAW 630 (Hours vary)
- Alternative Dispute Resolution - LAW 705 (2-3 Hours)
- Capital Litigation - LAW 774 (2-3 Hours)
- Children's Rights - LAW 635 (2-3 Hours)
- Civil Rights Legislation - LAW 726 (2-3 Hours)
- Clinics - LAW 665 (Hours vary)
- Consumer Protection - LAW 628 (3 Hours)
- Criminal Procedure – Post-Conviction Proceedings - LAW 751 (1-3 Hours)
- Criminal Procedure – Pre-Trial - LAW 735 (2-3 Hours)
- Criminal Procedure – Trial - LAW 790 (2-3 Hours)
- Disability Law - LAW 607 (1-3 Hours)
- Education Law - Law 792 (2 Hours)
- Elder Law - LAW 695 (2-3 Hours)
- Election Law - LAW 613 (2-3 Hours)
- Employment Discrimination - LAW 721 (2-3 Hours)
- Environmental Law I (NEPA, Air, and Water) - LAW 702 (2-3 Hours)
- Environmental Law II (Toxins and Hazardous Waste) - LAW 771 (2-3 Hours)
- Family Law I - LAW 674 (1-3 Hours)
- Family Law II - Law 756 (2-3 Hours)
- Gender and the Law - LAW 633 (2-3 Hours)
- Immigration Law and Policy - LAW 655 (2-3 Hours)
- International Environmental Law Seminar - LAW 763 – (1-3 Hours)
- International Human Rights Law - LAW 819 (1-3 Hours)
- Juvenile Justice - LAW 791 (2-3 Hours)
- Labor Law I - LAW 676 – (2-3 Hours)
- Law and Religion - LAW 719 (2-3 Hours)
- Lawyers and Social Change Practicum - LAW 843 (2-3 Hours)
- Legislation - LAW 693 (2-3 Hours)
- Mediation Law - LAW 779 (2-3 Hours)
- Mental Health Law Seminar - LAW 834 (2 Hours)
- Public Health Law - LAW 757 (1-3 Hours)

- Public International Law - LAW 710 (2-3 Hours)
- Race and the Law - LAW 652 (2-3 Hours)
- Select Problems in Criminal Law: Punishment - LAW 624 (Hours vary)
- Sentencing Seminar - LAW 793 (2 Hours)
- Sexuality and the Law - LAW 632 (2-3 Hours)
- Spanish for Lawyers - LAW 822 (2 Hours)
- Special Problems in Constitutional Law: First Amendment Seminar - LAW 764 (1-3 Hours)
- Special Problems in Constitutional Law: First Amendment Survey - LAW 764 (1-3 Hours)
- Special Problems in Constitutional Law: Race and the Law - LAW 764 (1-3 Hours)
- Summer Externship - LAW 634 (5 Hours)
- Workplace Law - LAW 631 (1 - 3 Hours)

### Attachment No. 3: **Rationale for the Program**

The University of Alabama School of Law is committed to providing its students with the opportunity to practice law in the public interest. Achievement of this institutional goal is entrusted to the School's Public Interest Institute whose mission is as follows:

- A) To provide students with a concentration of public interest related academic coursework, meaningful volunteer opportunities, and career counseling.
- B) To expose students to the need for legal assistance among low-income and under-represented populations.
- C) To foster a lifelong commitment to pro bono legal services and a capacity to be leaders in public interest law.

The certificate will provide recognition of a student's commitment to public service and knowledge of the demands of public interest law practice. The proposed Law School-based public interest certificate will be unique on the UA campus and within the UA System.

The certificate program will pursue the following outcomes; we will evaluate program success using these measures:

**Outcome No. 1:** Students in Public Interest Lawyering (LAW 821) will successfully analyze a specific legal problem typical in public interest law practice and articulate ways in which a public interest lawyer could address the problem. **Measure:** Students will draft a comprehensive legal document that effectively resolves a public interest related legal problem. A rubric will be applied to these documents in order to evaluate student performance in that exercise.

**Outcome No. 2:** Students will gain meaningful practical experience in performing critical functions expected of public interest lawyers 1) in voluntary public service or pro bono activities sponsored by the Public Interest Institute, or 2) courses offered by the Law School's Clinical Programs **Measure:** Students will write reflection papers responding to detailed instructions upon completion of projects. A rubric will be applied to these papers to assess the effectiveness of such projects in conferring meaningful and practical experiences for the student.

**Outcome No. 3:** Students will be able to search for and locate appropriate post-graduate employment opportunities and draft persuasive and compelling application materials for such opportunities. **Measure:** Students will complete exercises testing their ability to find and secure public interest activities. A rubric will be applied to these assignments in order to evaluate the student performance

**Outcome No. 4:** Law graduates with public interest certificates will engage in public interest practice either full-time, part-time, or on a pro bono basis. **Measure:** Three years after graduation, the Public Law Institute will send a survey to each student who received a public interest certificate. The survey will ask whether and how that graduate has participated in public interest law activities.