Sex Crimes Practicum
Litigating and Analyzing Timely Topics

The Sex Crimes Practicum offers students the chance to work on relevant and pressing litigation and policy-oriented projects related to sexual crimes. Students assist a practicing attorney on real casework and ongoing policy and research projects covering topics such as the Federal Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act, collateral consequences, and sex offender registration.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
This one-semester, variable-credit practicum is offered in the Fall Semester. Taken in conjunction with the Sex Crimes seminar (JD 947), the Practicum offers a limited number of students each semester an opportunity to get involved in real-world casework and impactful projects aimed at reforming how sexual offenses are dealt with in the criminal justice system. Students can earn one or two credits for their participation in the Practicum.

The Practicum is led by Eric Tennen (LAW’01), a partner at the Boston-based law firm Swomley & Tennen LLP. Students’ work varies in scope and content based on students’ interest and the number of students enrolled. They may assist with pending cases in different stages of progress in both the civil and criminal arenas, including at registration hearings, in civil commitment trials, or at the criminal appellate level, by gathering documents, preparing client defenses at hearings, assisting in legal research and writing legal memorandums, and drafting motions and briefs. Policy and research projects may cover the identification and tracking of constitutional challenges to civil laws, evaluation of state-level implementation of federal law, and analysis of state policies.

Most Practicum work is self-directed. Students meet six times throughout the semester to engage in group discussions regarding their case and project status. The semester culminates with a final written report or other written work-product and an oral presentation to the group.

We warmly welcome all applicants and remind students that Boston University policy prohibits discrimination against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, military service, pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition, or because of marital, parental, or veteran status, and acts in conformity with all applicable state and federal laws. This policy extends to all BU Law academic programs.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS
Students in the Practicum have an opportunity to work in close collaboration with a practitioner and to observe and participate in real-life legal experiences, while developing essential lawyering skills that can be applied to any field of practice, such as legal research and writing, issue spotting and problem solving, strategic thinking, and taking initiative. Students learn substantive law related to sexual crimes, including constitutional and criminal law, and are exposed to trial practice as well as civil and criminal procedure. Recent projects include:

- evaluating state-level implementation of the Federal Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act;
- analyzing state policies related to sex offender community registration; and
- tracking litigation that challenges the constitutionality and validity of civil laws that impose restrictions on individuals who have been convicted of sex crimes.

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