

Rutgers Community Development Clinic

4 credits (three writing credits)

Limited enrollment: 4

The Rutgers Community Development Clinic provides legal representation and related technical assistance to non-profit organizations and small businesses in Camden. Clinic students work under the supervision of clinic faculty in representing clients, including providing legal and technical advice, drafting organizational and transactional documents, interacting with government agencies and financial institutions, and negotiating deals. In appropriate instances, students will collaborate with counterparts in community planning and business development in providing services to clients. Representative areas of legal work include: non-profit and small business corporate structure and governance (including choosing form of entity, preparing certificates of incorporation and bylaws, etc.), shareholder agreements, tax exempt status and other tax issues, zoning and land use, eminent domain, legislative and policy advocacy, real estate and financial transactions (real estate closings, small business loans, etc.), and negotiation and drafting of contracts such as leases and partnership and joint venture agreements. The overall focus of the Clinic's representation, whether for nonprofit or business clients, is revitalization of Camden communities and promotion of new economic opportunities for Camden's citizens.

The Rutgers Community Development Clinic is a four-credit, one semester, limited enrollment course including both a weekly seminar and direct work with clients. Students may extend their clinical experience, thereby becoming involved in more complex matters, by registering for a second semester in the two-credit Advanced Community Development Clinic.

The Clinic seminar will address key skills necessary to represent clients in the matters assigned to clinic students, such as: interviewing, counselling, negotiating, drafting, and resolving ethical issues that arise in the context of representing organizations, and will include simulations where appropriate. Some classes will feature guest speakers with special knowledge of Camden's community development needs, unique vision in the field of community revitalization, or expertise in substantive law areas involved in community development legal representation. Other classes will be roundtable discussions of concrete issues that commonly arise in students' cases.

Initially, a primary focus of the Clinic will be on providing service to clients in and around the Fairview Village neighborhood of Camden under the auspices of the University's Rutgers Fairview Neighborhood Project ("RFNP"). Through the RFNP, a joint effort of the Rutgers School of Law – Camden, the Walter Rand Institute for Public Affairs and the William G. Rohrer Center for Management and Entrepreneurship, the Community Development Clinic is also part of a larger commitment by Rutgers University to stabilization and revitalization efforts in Fairview Village. Fairview Village is one of our nation's first garden communities. It was designed and built by the federal government in response to the need for housing for World War I era workers at the nearby New York Shipbuilding Corporation. Completed in 1919, it is set on

225 acres and consists of 1,000 well-built brick buildings containing two, three and four homes under one roof, as well as some single homes and some retail and commercial space. Fairview's essential community infrastructure is retrograding badly. Rutgers-Camden will assist Fairview and the Greater Camden Community with urban revitalization through the RFNP in a one-stop center located at 1206 Yorkship Square in Fairview, to facilitate access to an array of Rutgers services: business development (start-up and legal), community planning, and community legal assistance. Clinic students with matters related to the RFNP will often meet with clients at the one-stop center or at client locations, and will attend other community meetings in Fairview.