

**LAW 756-006
2017-18**

STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM

Student Attorney Name: _____ Semester _____

INSTRUCTIONS

This form is a tool for evaluating your own learning and skill development. The criteria below are important in both achieving your learning goals and building the habits that will help make you successful lawyers and professionals. Although we will formally review your responses to these forms twice a year – once at the end of the Fall semester and once at the end of the Spring – they form the basis of much of our teaching and feedback throughout the year, and are critical to work in the clinic and in law generally.

To fill out the form, use the descriptions within the attached Student Self-Assessment Rubric as a guide when evaluating your own performance. Then, use the text box under each assessment criteria for a narrative assessment of your own performance. As part of your narrative assessment, include examples from cases, seminar discussion, and supervision. Include reflections on how you will either improve or maintain your skills, any barriers you anticipate, and how you plan to overcome them.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

1. Reflectiveness

A critical quality/skill for professionals is the ability to be reflective about one’s work. Understanding why you took certain actions, why you achieved or failed to achieve particular results, and how you might have done things differently are key to self-evaluation and improvement. When assessing your own reflectiveness, you may ask yourself questions like: Was I reflective about the lawyering tasks in which I engaged as well as the legal system(s) in which I operated? Was I reflective about the interpersonal relationships I have developed/fail to develop? Did I allow my reflections to interact with and enhance my performance? If I was not sufficiently reflective about my work, what obstacles prevented me from being more so? Do I have a sense of my overall strengths and weaknesses, and have those changed throughout the semester/year?

REFLECTIVENESS	Novice	Advanced Novice	Competent	Proficient	Mastery
Formal reflections and/or other written assignments were timely, showed thoughtful reflection of themes/skills, used examples, and did not offer vague or abstract statements.					
Student was reflective and open to debriefing about collaboration, the learning process, lawyering, and educational goals.					
Student was reflective and open to debriefing about individual clients, cases, and systemic challenges affecting clients.					

Comments/Examples/Thoughts Moving Forward:

2. Organizational Skills/Planning and Follow-up

The key to flexibility is pre-planning and organization. Attorneys who smoothly and successfully respond to sudden shifts in their cases are those who are the best prepared. In assessing organization and preparation, think through the following: How well did I plan for various case tasks or meetings and was I timely? How well did I implement tasks? Did I keep electronic and paper files appropriately and were they contemporaneously updated? If I had difficulty following through on certain tasks, do I know why the difficulty arose and have I learned how to overcome those difficulties in the future? Did I meet all relevant internal and external deadlines in my cases and class, and, if not, why? Did I understand how to set realistic timelines and the impact of not meeting both internal and external deadlines?

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS/PLANNING AND FOLLOW-UP	Novice	Advanced Novice	Competent	Proficient	Mastery
Weekly pre-supervision memos were submitted on time, showed thoughtful planning, and raised relevant, interesting questions of law					

Weekly post-supervision memos were submitted on time, reflected the discussion during supervision, and outlined next steps and weekly tasks as well as team assignments of those tasks					
Met all deadlines set by the team, a supervisor, a client, or outside parties and/or properly managed expectations when those deadlines could not be met. Responded timely to client inquires.					
Understood, planned for, and met deadlines established by law, policy, or procedure relevant to my cases.					
Managed LegalServer case file including timely creation of new client files, coordination with admin staff on new intakes and conflict checks, uploading documents and entering case notes timely, and meaningfully organizing files and sub-files.					

Comments/Examples/Thoughts Moving Forward:

3. Level of Work

As with the development of any skill, professional growth requires dedication, focus, and hard work. When thinking through how hard you worked, think through: Did I put in the time necessary to achieve my goals and those of my clients? Were there barriers to my ability to spend the time necessary for clinic work, and, if so, how successful was I in overcoming them? Did I go “the extra mile” when needed? Were there periods during the year when my level of work waned? If so, why and how can I avoid this issue in the future? With time, did I become more efficient in carrying out necessary work? What helped improve my efficiency?

LEVEL OF WORK	Novice	Advanced Novice	Competent	Proficient	Mastery
Fulfilled weekly office hours with clinic partner. If unable to do so, had a good reason and coordinated coverage with partner.					

Managed scheduling conflicts successfully, ensuring availability for meetings with clinic partner, supervisor, client or outside parties, in addition to seminar.					
Presentations of legal, systemic, or factual issues, whether with a supervisor, in rounds, to a client, or to other external actors/parties reflected prior preparation—issue clearly identified, presentation was succinct, knowledge of relevant case facts and law, etc.					

Comments/Examples/Thoughts Moving Forward:

4. Research, Writing and Developing Legal Arguments

Legal Knowledge is more than understanding the content of a specific law. It includes knowing how laws interact with each other, how regulations, case law, and policy statements influence legal strategy, and how facts influence legal analysis. When evaluating your own legal knowledge, assess: Was I thorough and systematic in my legal and factual research? Did I understand what constituted persuasive authority and was I able to distinguish different levels of persuasiveness? Did I understand the relationships among the relevant federal and state statutes and regulations? Did that understanding allow for creative legal and factual arguments? What impediments stymied my creativity and have I figured out ways to overcome these impediments? Was I able to write clearly and succinctly in all writing contexts? Did my legal writing improve over time?

RESEARCH, WRITING AND DEVELOPING LEGAL ARGUMENTS	Novice	Advanced Novice	Competent	Proficient	Mastery
Understood relevant legal, regulatory, and policy authority. Used that knowledge and the facts available to identify the universe of potential legal arguments and construct the best legal argument for my client, irrespective of whether I believed the client would win.					
For all written output, researched relevant areas of law, considered clinic partner and supervisor comments, and incorporated changes. Each subsequent draft showed					

improvement writing quality and presentation of substantive legal arguments.					
Allocated sufficient time to exchange multiple drafts with clinic partner and supervisor before submission deadline					
Used my knowledge of legal arguments to effectively counsel client on advocacy options.					

Comments/Examples/Thoughts Moving Forward:

5. Collaboration

Though much of law school is a solitary endeavor, once in practice, collaboration is vital. Even solo practitioners have communities of lawyers on whom they rely and with whom they collaborate, so it is important to assess: How well did I work with my partner, my supervisor, my client, and others with whom I came into contact? If I was involved in a group project, how well did I function in that setting? What are my strengths and weaknesses as a collaborator, and how can I maximize the former while minimizing the latter? Did I discern any differences between my ability to work with my partner (horizontal collaboration) and my ability to work with my supervisor (vertical collaboration)? If we co-counseled with an outside lawyer (e.g., from another clinic or from an outside entity), was I able to collaborate effectively with these entities, and, if not, why not? Did I explore the ways in which working collaboratively differs from working alone, and was I effective in adapting my individual approach to group work?

COLLABORATION	Novice	Advanced Novice	Competent	Proficient	Mastery
Met at least weekly with partner to discuss case task list					
Attended all meetings with supervisor, client, and third parties with my clinic partner					
Developed a joint-working style/system that effectively managed cases, work products, client interactions, and communication between partners and/or with other teams in a cross-clinic collaboration.					
If/when conflict arose with clinic partner (and/or with other teams in a cross-clinic collaboration), discussed the matter with					

partner(s) and attempted to work through conflict in constructive way prior to seeking assistance from supervisors					
--	--	--	--	--	--

Comments/Examples/Thoughts Moving Forward:

6. Relationship with Clients

Managing client relationships and providing them the information necessary to meaningfully participate in decision-making can be one of the most difficult pieces of client-centered lawyering. When assessing your lawyer-client relationships, think through the following: Did I keep my client sufficiently informed of developments in the client’s case? Did I respond promptly to e-mail, telephone, fax, and mail inquiries? Did I provide the appropriate level of assurance (neither too much nor too little) to my client? Did my clients appear to have confidence in my abilities? Was there a clear delineation of responsibility between me and my client regarding case-related tasks? If I was having difficulty connecting with a client, was I able to (1) recognize potential barriers (e.g. socioeconomic status, race, gender, disability, past involvement with the legal system, etc.), and (2) overcome them? If not, why not, and could I have done anything differently? Did the nature of the case influence my relationship with my client? If so, why?

RELATIONSHIP WITH CLIENTS	Novice	Advanced Novice	Competent	Proficient	Mastery
Counseled clients with the proper balance between comfort/empathy and attention to the facts/law in the case.					
Met the client in person, and where a parent/guardian was exercising the rights of a child, met the child. Showed flexibility in where and when to meet the client.					
Recognized differences/similarities between self and client (race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic status, education, prior engagement with legal systems) and evaluated how those differences/similarities did or did not influence representation.					
Managed client’s expectations regarding the work on the case and revisited case goals/progress/case theory with client at several points during the representation. Understood the					

scope of legal representation for each client and where needed, communicated that information to my client.					
---	--	--	--	--	--

Comments/Examples/Thoughts Moving Forward:

7. Professional Responsibility/Ethics

Professional responsibility covers ethical dilemmas arising both in and outside of the Rules of Professional Conduct. It implicates professionalism in all interactions regarding your client’s case. When assessing how you managed your ethical obligations and professional interactions, consider: Did I understand the professional obligations placed on lawyers (including student lawyers)? Did I handle issues of professional responsibility appropriately? Did I research applicable rules of professional conduct when needed? How did I handle ethical issues not covered by the rules of professional responsibility (e.g. when a child disagrees with the educational goals of a parent with legal decision-making rights, when a non-party violates their own legal/ethical obligation in a way that benefits your client, etc.)? Did I develop appropriate professional relationships with other actors in the systems in which our cases arose —opposing counsel, expert witnesses, school officials, hearing officers, judges, court clerks, etc.? Did I deal appropriately with frustrations caused by some of these interactions? Did I stand my ground when necessary? If I had difficulty with any of these interactions, why did I have those difficulties and what might I have done to decrease them?

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY/ETHICS	Novice	Advanced Novice	Competent	Proficient	Mastery
Actively assessed cases for issues of professional responsibility in cases, discussed these issues with clinic partner and supervisor, and researched them where necessary.					
In initial client interview(s), defined scope of confidentiality and lawyer-client relationship with attention to the rules of professional responsibility. When necessary, counseled client regarding additional potential issues related to ethics/professional responsibility.					
Exhibited professionalism in interactions with other actors in the system including responding promptly to inquiries where legally required or strategically important. Pushed					

back with other actors where necessary to advance or protect my client's interests.					
---	--	--	--	--	--

Comments/Examples/Thoughts Moving Forward:

8. Class Participation Including Seminar, Simulations, and Rounds

Our time together as a class enriches both skills development and an understanding of the role of a lawyer in a variety of settings. It is also an opportunity to troubleshoot cases with peers, engage deeply with underlying themes of representation, and delve into assumptions that may impact representation. As the clinic itself operates as a mini-law firm, your engagement in class also reflects an approach to working in a professional setting, so please assess: Did I attend class regularly and was I punctual? If I was not in attendance or on time, did I have a reasonable explanation and did I share that information with my professors? Did I do the assigned readings and participate fully in seminar discussions? Did I meaningfully incorporate the readings into my comments during class? Did I engage and support my colleagues in discussion during rounds? Did I surf the web or otherwise hide behind my laptop? Did I prepare for and execute all work related to simulations, including thoughtfully and timely completing written reflection questions or assignments?

CLASS PARTICIPATION – SEMINAR, SIMULATION, ROUNDS	Novice	Advanced Novice	Competent	Proficient	Mastery
Attended class regularly and was timely. When absent or late, I contacted professors in advance with reasonable justification and, where possible, took steps in the future to avoid similar issues with tardiness or absence.					
Completed the assigned readings and participated regularly and meaningfully in seminar discussions.					
Participated regularly and meaningfully in rounds. Volunteered to facilitate and volunteered a problem or case presentation.					
Demonstrated respect for professors and classmates while participating in or listening to classroom discussions. Did not surf the net regularly or hide behind laptop.					

Submitted thoughtful, timely reflections and written assignments. Engaged with supervisors regarding simulation preparation and debriefs.					
---	--	--	--	--	--

Comments/Examples/Thoughts Moving Forward:

9. Systemic Understanding

Another part of developing your professional identity as a lawyer is to see the “big picture” in terms of the larger web of systems in which both you and your client operate. Potential barriers on a systemic level can come in many shapes and sizes. Identifying and finding ways to tackle them are hallmarks of good lawyers. Consider: Did I develop an understanding of the positive and negative ways in which legal systems and society interacts with disability? Was I able to go beyond case-specific analysis and draw broader conclusions about these issues? Was there opportunity to test out these tentative understandings in my individual case representation, broader systemic work, or discussions in seminar/rounds? If not, why not? Was I aware of the complex relationship between disability and other identifies/statuses/systemic issues (gender, sexual orientation, race, immigration status, socioeconomic status, etc.)? Did this awareness and skill development affect my work in the clinic?

SYSTEMIC UNDERSTANDING	Novice	Advanced Novice	Competent	Proficient	Mastery
Identified some of the systemic or institutional barriers for my clients specifically and potential clients generally.					
Identified intersectionality issues and understood ways in which disability interacted with, and presented similar and different challenges to those with other historically marginalized identities					
Improved understanding of the content of disability laws in their how they are developed and how they are implemented/interpreted by a variety of actors.					

Comments/Examples/Thoughts Moving Forward:

10. Skill Improvement/Growth

Identify specific, concrete ways in which your performance or understanding improved over the course of the semester or year, and think about how you plan to continue or expand that growth. If you started at a high level in one or more areas of evaluation, were you able to grow or maintain that effort throughout the year or did you backslide? If your skills waned, why do you think that happened and how might you address it in the future? In areas where you identified weakness initially, were you able to grow your skills and if not, why not? How will you continue to grow them?

SKILL IMPROVEMENT/GROWTH	Novice	Advanced Novice	Competent	Proficient	Mastery
Regularly sought out feedback from clinic partner and was open to receiving and providing constructive feedback.					
Regularly sought out feedback from supervisors and was open to constructive feedback.					
Identified different advocacy/techniques/styles for presenting information or making a persuasive argument in multiple, varied settings					
Showed growth in lawyering skills and values. Challenged self to take on projects that would test/hone skills on which I wanted to improve rather than those I identified as natural strengths.					

Comments/Examples/Thoughts Moving Forward: