

CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION FACILITIES:

GUIDE TO BUILDING OR RENOVATING CLINICAL SPACE

Version 2.0
May 15, 2001

© 1998, 2001
J. Alexander Tanford
Professor of Law, Indiana University - Bloomington
tanford@indiana.edu
tel: 812/855-4846
fax: 812/855-0555

These materials may be freely downloaded, copied and distributed, provided that no fee is charged and the materials are properly attributed to the author.

Thanks to David Chavkin, Arlene Kanter, Vanessa Merton, Bob Dinerstein, Paris Baldacci and Jonathan Hyman for sharing their experiences, insights and building plans.

Please send comments, suggestions for improvements and copies of plans, cost sheets, and so forth on your own clinical building projects to me at the above address so that I can keep this site updated.

To return to the CLEA home page, click [here](#) .

PART ONE: STEP-BY-STEP PLANNING GUIDE

A. PREPARE A BACKGROUND DOCUMENT

A background document will prove immensely valuable, as it will help you focus on the space needs of the clinic -- plus, it will impress the hell out of the architect when he or she finally shows up, because it's the first thing an architect will ask for.

1. WRITE A NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF YOUR CLINIC(S)

- a. What is its purpose, scope and educational mission?
- b. With what other departments and agencies does it interact?
- c. Who are all the full and part-time personnel who work with the clinic?
- d. Describe student activities -- pay particular attention to need for confidentiality; irregular hours
- e. Describe instructor-student critique -- pay particular attention to need for privacy, videotape

2. WRITE A DESCRIPTION OF CLINIC-RELATED STUDENT ACTIVITIES

- a. Externship programs
- b. Simulation lawyering process courses -- interviewing, counseling & negotiation
- c. Simulation ADR courses
- d. Simulation trial practice courses

3. WRITE A DESCRIPTION AND CRITIQUE OF YOUR EXISTING FACILITIES

a. Describe the physical area currently occupied by the clinic(s).

1. Number and size of offices and work areas for staff
2. Number and size of meeting and conference rooms
3. Number and size of client waiting areas
4. Size of library
5. Number and size of student work areas
6. Size and location of message and mail area
7. Number and size of separate computer or copier rooms
8. Number and size of storage areas
9. Number and size of bathrooms.
10. Kitchen or social space
11. Number of parking places for staff, students and/or clients

b. Describe the physical area currently devoted to simulation and other clinic-related activities

1. Do you use a courtroom for simulation exercises?
2. Seminar rooms for class meetings or depositions
3. Rooms used for classroom component
4. Separate office space for externships or other clinic-related projects

c. Describe which existing physical facilities work well.

d. Describe which existing facilities do not work well and give a reason

e. Describe additional physical requirements for the clinic which are not being met.

f. Speculate about how the clinic(s) and related activities are likely to change over the next twenty years.

4 ATTACH RELEVANT ABA ACCREDITATION STANDARDS 701-03

The ABA accreditation standards on facilities construction are pretty vague and are not specific to clinical facilities, but some university administrator up the line will want to see them. Here they are:

Standard 701. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.

A law school shall have physical facilities and technological capacities that are adequate both for its current program of legal education and for growth anticipated in the immediate future.

Interpretation 701-1:

Inadequate physical facilities are those which have a negative and material effect on the education students receive. (August 1996)

Interpretation 701-2:

Adequate physical facilities shall include:

- (1) suitable class and seminar rooms in sufficient number and size to permit reasonable scheduling of all classes and seminars;*
- (2) suitable space for conducting its professional skills courses and programs, including clinical, pretrial, trial, and appellate programs;*
- (3) an office for each full-time faculty member adequate for faculty study and for faculty-student conferences, and suitable office space for part-time faculty members;*
- (4) space for co-curricular, as opposed to extra-curricular, activities as defined by the law school; and*
- (5) suitable space for all staff, equipment, and records which shall be in proximity to the individuals and offices served (August 1996)*

Interpretation 701-3:

To obtain full approval a law school shall conduct its program in an adequate and permanent facility owned by it or its parent institution. The facilities shall be completed and occupied by the law school. Completion is required; just plans or construction in progress is not enough. Leased facilities may be sufficient for provisional approval but not for full approval. (May 1977,- July 1977,- August 1977,- August 1996)

Interpretation 701-4:

A law school's physical facilities should be under the exclusive control and reserved for the exclusive use of the law school. If the facilities are not under the exclusive control of the law school or are not reserved for its exclusive use, the arrangements shall permit proper scheduling of all law classes and other law school activities. (August 1996)

Standard 702. LAW LIBRARY.

The physical facilities for the law library shall be sufficient in size, location, and design in relation to the law school's programs and enrollment to accommodate the law school's students and faculty and the law library's services, collections, staff, operations, and equipment.

Interpretation 702-1:

A law library shall have sufficient seating to meet the needs of the law school's students and faculty. (August 1996).

Standard 703. RESEARCH AND STUDY SPACE.

A law school shall provide, on site, sufficient quiet study and research seating for its students and faculty. A law school should provide suitable group study rooms.

Interpretation 703-1:

A law school which does not provide study seating for at least 50 percent of its larger division enrollment presumptively does not comply with this Standard. An important factor to be considered is whether seating meets user demand. (August 1996).

Interpretation 703-2:

Group study rooms should be available whenever the law library is open. (August 1996)

B. INITIAL PLANNING

1. ESTIMATE GROSS AMOUNT OF SPACE NEEDED FOR CLINIC ACTIVITIES

a. Square Footage Requirements for Primary Clinic Activities

1. *Number of students.* How many students is the clinic designed to serve? Is this number likely to increase or decrease over the next 20 years?
2. *Square feet per student.* You will need a minimum of 100 square feet per in-house student (that accounts for clinical faculty, secretaries, file storage, interviewing space, and minimal bathrooms). At this rate, space is cramped, students share work tables, and clinical faculty may have to share office space, but it's workable. Small clinics really need slightly more space per student (150 square feet); large clinics can get by with 100-130 square feet per student). Ideally, a well-equipped clinic facility should have about 150-175 square feet per student plus additional square feet for secondary and related clinic activities.

b Add Additional Gross Space for Secondary and Related Clinic Activities

1. *Externship programs.* If you have an externship program, the amount of additional space required will vary considerably. At a minimum, add 200 square feet for an office to house the coordinator, files, etc.
2. *A classroom/seminar room.* This is usually desirable, especially if the clinic is not immediately adjacent to the law school. Add a minimum of 500 square feet for a 20-person seminar room (cramped but workable).
3. *Do you need a courtroom?* Add approximately 600 square feet for a basic courtroom, 700 square feet for a courtroom with a jury box, and 1000 square feet for a courtroom with jury box and audience seating.
4. *Client needs.* Do you need child care or client waiting facilities? Add 300 square feet for a small child care area with its own bathroom; 100 square feet for client seating area.

c. Add Additional Square Footage for Mechanical & Electrical Room

Where will the mechanical and utilities room be? For a small clinic integrated into the main law school building, heating, air conditioning, the main electrical panel, sewer cleanouts, and

telephone and computer connections will probably be part of the main law school mechanical system, and no additional space is needed. If you are building an addition or a free-standing clinic, you will need approximately 500 additional square feet for a mechanical-utilities-janitorial room. You may also be able to use this space for old file storage.

2. HOW MANY SEPARATE AREAS WILL YOU NEED?

- a. How many different clinics & programs will be housed in the facility?
- b. If you have more than one clinic, will they be separate or integrated? Each clinic can have its own defined space, or clinics can share space. Do you want students from different clinics to share working space, computers, telephones, etc; or do you want a separate space for each clinic's students?
- c. Do externship and simulation programs need their own separate area?
- d. If you decide on separate defined spaces, do you want a single entrance and reception area for all clinics, or separate reception areas?
- e. Where will you put faculty offices? The offices can be centrally located so that faculty are proximate to each other, or decentralized so that each faculty member has an office adjacent to his or her clinical program. Do you want faculty offices to be in or adjacent to the main law school faculty office area?
- f. Space for files, copying, libraries, computers and secretarial support raise the same centralized/decentralized issue. Will case files be stored together, or does each clinic need its own file room? Does each clinic have its own secretary or receptionist, or are they shared? Will they share a library?
- g. Does the clinic need its own bathrooms or can it use nearby existing facilities in the law school?
- h. What about client space? Do you want a waiting room and/or child care area? Assuming you need some kind of client area, this again raises centralized/decentralized issues. Will one waiting area suffice, or does each clinic need its own area?

3. HOW WILL PEOPLE MOVE FROM ONE AREA TO ANOTHER?

- a. Students will need to get from their work area to computers, telephones, libraries, file rooms, copy machines, interview rooms, classrooms, and so forth. Is the design set up so that they can move easily from one space to another?
- b. Clients will need to get from a parking space to a receptionist to a waiting room without intruding on student work areas.

4. SITE SELECTION

a. How will clients get to the clinic?

You want to anticipate client parking places and locations on bus lines. You want to avoid making clients wander through the law school to find the clinic. You should consider whether it is feasible to locate the clinic near its client population.

b. How will students get to the clinic?

Students will be trying to get to the clinic from three different places -- from home, from the law school, and back from the courthouse. If they have driven their cars, where will they park? Imagine a student with an armload of books trying to get from Gift & Estate Tax to the clinic in the worst imaginable weather (hurricane, blizzard).

c. How will students/staff get to the courthouse, administrative agency, or other relevant location?

The clinic should be located walking distance to the sites at which students will be practicing, or you must give thought to a location that provides convenient transportation (student cars or public). If the only feasible option is student cars, they will need a place to park.

d. Security.

The location of the building must provide reasonable security for the students, especially for those who work at night.

e. Accessibility

You will undoubtedly have both students and clients with disabilities. Locating the clinic on the second floor of a building without an elevator is probably a bad idea.

f. Symbolism

Where the clinic is located in relation to other law school activities raises symbolic issues -- clinics hidden away in basements or removed several blocks from the law school may not appear to be part of the mainstream of law school life. A clinical wing attached to the law building with attractive spaces for law students to use when studying for exams (or better yet, house the coffee bar in the entrance to the clinic) will elevate the clinic's status within the school.

5. WHAT PROFESSIONALS SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

- a. An architect, at the earliest opportunity. The architect will worry about everything except video and computer technology.
- b. If you are going to install videotaping equipment, involve an audio-video design engineer from the beginning. They can be found at any commercial video distributor and at most university offices of technical services and support.
- c. Get the law school's computer systems administrator involved at the earliest possible stage.

C. DETAIL PLANNING: WHAT TO DO BEFORE THE ARCHITECT ARRIVES

1. Estimate the number of students per semester, the number of students likely to be using the building at any one time, the number of faculty and attorneys, the number of secretaries, and the number of any other staff (paralegal, social worker) who will be using the facility and write this all down. Further break this list down by estimates of the numbers involved in each separate clinical program. If you are including space for pretrial or trial simulations, estimate the numbers

of non-clinical students who will be using it.

2. Prepare a list of student activities (e.g., read files, interact with supervising attorney, interview witness, negotiate with other lawyers, do research, use a computer, interact with fellow clinic students, meet in working groups, review videotapes). Think about spaces for each of these activities.

3. How should student work space be allocated? In general, you will probably need some individual carrels or quiet working space in addition to a primary work area built on an open-table model where students can collaborate, brainstorm and learn to work together. A series of small cubicles/offices/ carrels takes up more space and is less flexible than larger shared work space. Large spaces facilitate brainstorming but may inhibit productive individual work.

4. How will students find privacy to interview clients or make confidential phone calls?

5. Do you want rooms reserved for special purposes, such as depositions, interviewing, class meetings, or mock trials, or do you prefer multi-purpose rooms?

6. Are there rooms that will require the faculty to be able to unobtrusively monitor student lawyering work? Video-taping or one-way mirrors? In general, videotaping seems preferable because the supervisor need not be present during the interview and the student may look at him or herself.

7. Where will the supervisor and student review and critique videotapes?

8. Estimate current and future needs for files -- active and closed. Where will they be stored? How often do you need access to closed files? What kind of security is needed?

9. How are student documents produced? Do you need your own computers and printers?

10. Where will students (and attorneys) eat lunch, drink coffee and socialize? If there is no coffee shop across the street or lunch room in the adjacent law building, you may need to think about adding a small kitchen. What about a water cooler?

11. Will students or clients be arriving with coats or books, and if so, where will they put them? Do you need to put in space for lockers or a coatroom?

12. What will you need in the way of chalkboards, mailboxes, bulletin boards, and message centers?

13. If the facilities include rooms set aside for complex simulations (negotiation, mediation, depositions, trials), do you want those rooms equipped with videotaping capacity? The answer is yes if possible. Videotaping capacity can be as simple as installing a single \$500 camcorder in a corner of the room or as complicated as a 4-camera remote controlled mini-studio and 8-microphone audio system costing \$100,000. Try to get some idea of what your AV budget is likely to be.

14. What is the maximum number of clients (with associated lovers, friends and children) who will be in the clinic at one time waiting? Do you want a separate waiting room?

15. Will you need your own library, or will the students use the law school library? If you have your own library, can it be combined with the conference room or student work areas? Will the library need Westlaw/Lexis terminals and CD-ROM towers?

16. Think of the clinic in areas. Try to do an area diagram like the one in the University of Chicago materials. Conceptualize the various activities that go on: Interviewing, reception, faculty offices, secretary, file room, student work space, library, depositions, mock trials. Which areas should be near which other areas? E.g., library near students, files near secretary, reception near secretary, etc.

17. What goes into faculty offices?

....a. What kinds of furniture -- desks, chairs, table, bookshelves, filing cabinets.

-b. What kinds of wiring connections -- phone, computer, fax?
 -c. Will rooms need to be soundproofed for confidential conversations?
 -d. Will faculty review videotapes there? If so, does each office have its own TV and VCR?
- A good example of this kind of planning can be found in the Pace clinical plan. (Don't try to do this room by room yet -- the Architect will help that process. But s/he will need to know what kinds of connections need to be available to attorneys, students etc).
- 18. Do you need space for visiting faculty?
 - 19. Go to the law school library with a tape measure, and measure the number of feet of shelf space it will take to hold the books and series you want in the clinic library.
 - 20. If the clinic will be displaced during renovation, where will you go?
 - 21. How will you make the clinic humane? Artwork, carpeting, plants, etc.

D. AFTER THE ARCHITECT ARRIVES

He or she will take over and will guide you through the remaining detailed planning.

PART TWO: SAMPLE BUILDING PLANS

A. CLINIC FLOOR PLANS

To give you some sense of what other law schools have done recently, click on these links:

1. [Rutgers - Newark](#) (30,000 square feet)
2. [University of Chicago](#) (15,000 square feet)
3. [Chicago-Kent College of Law](#) (10,000 square feet)
4. [American University - Washington College of Law](#) (9,000 square feet)
5. [Syracuse University College of Law](#) (7,000 square feet)
6. [Indiana University-Bloomington School of Law](#) (2,000 square feet)

B. COURTROOM PLANS

If you intend to include a trial courtroom in your clinical facility, the best way to do it is to tour several local courthouses until you find a courtroom you like, and then copy it. For comparison, you can follow these links to four courtroom plans.

1. [Frank Lloyd Wright's courtroom](#) design for San Rafael, California.
2. [Modified Frank Lloyd Wright courtroom](#) to include space for exhibit and media displays.

3. [Kimberling Trial Courtroom](#) , Indiana University in Bloomington.
 4. [Prototypical formal courtroom](#) , electronically equipped.
-

PART 3: AUDIO-VIDEO SYSTEMS

A. EXPENSIVE VIDEOTAPING SYSTEMS

You can follow these links to comprehensive video equipment purchase plans for clinics at [Pace](#) , [Syracuse](#) , and [Washington University](#) . It will give you a sense for how complicated and expensive such a system can be, but much of the specific equipment listed is too old for the plans to be directly useful. Video cameras and the like have changed dramatically every five years for the last 25 years. The lists may be useful for another purpose -- if you give one of these lists to your architect or campus electronic media consultant it will give them an idea about the scope of a good clinical video installation. You may not know what an Extron Computer Scan Converter, a Black Burst generator, or a PZM microphone is, but your electronics consultant will.

Another potential problem is that these plans call for systems that would cost \$85,000-100,000. Shocked? For those of us whose Deans and campus budget officers would fall on the floor laughing if we proposed spending such sums, I present a cheapskate alternative that still ain't cheap.

B. TANFORD'S CHEAPSKATE VIDEO SYSTEM

1. TO EQUIP AN INTERVIEW ROOM SO YOU CAN MAKE VIDEOTAPES

- a. Ordinary VHS Camcorder ----- \$650
- b. Wall mount ---- \$50

2. TO EQUIP AN OFFICE OR MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM SO YOU CAN PLAY BACK A VIDEOTAPE

- a. 20" TV --- \$200
- b. 4-head VHS deck -- \$120
- c. Table to put it on ---- \$50

3. TO EQUIP EITHER A COURTROOM OR A MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM TO VIDEOTAPE STUDENT TRIALS, NEGOTIATIONS, DEPOSITIONS, ETC.

- a. Two commercial CCD cameras @ 900 --- \$1800
- b. Two 6-60 mm zoom lenses w/ remote control units --- \$800
- c. Two wall-mounted pan/tilt units with remote control --- \$3000
- d. Two 9" TV monitors --- \$300
- e. Video mixer/split screen special effects generator --- \$2000

- f. 20" Video program monitor -- \$400
 - g. Two PZM microphones w/ phantom power supply --- \$300
 - h. Four generic microphones with 2 floor stands and 2 table stands -- \$600
 - i. Audio mixer/amplifier -- \$ 400
 - j. Speaker --- \$50
 - k. Two VHS recorders -- \$350
 - l. Rack-mount and shelving -- \$1000
 - m. Miscellaneous cables and things I've forgotten --- \$1000
- TOTAL \$12,000

4. TO EQUIP A CLASSROOM FOR PLAYING VIDEOTAPES

- a. Two 27" TVs --- \$900
- b. Video (VHS) player -- \$120
- c. Wall mounts --- \$200
- d. Really long coaxial cable to interconnect TVs -- \$50

5. VIDEO SYSTEM INSTALLATION ROUGH DIAGRAM

To see what the installation diagram looked like at Indiana, click on these links:
[rough AV plan](#)
[control room console](#)

PART FOUR: FURNITURE

The following is a typical furniture schedule for a 40-student, 5-faculty clinic. Prices are based on what Syracuse actually paid in 1997 and my estimates, and assumes everything is bought new. You will obviously need to adjust up or down for your own clinic needs.

1. Student work space

- a. 26 modular workstations @ 1500..... \$39,000
- b. 26 student chairs @300 7800
- c. Four 4-drawer lateral files @625 2500

2. Courtroom

- a. 24 chairs for courtroom @300 \$7200
- b. Two 24x96 counsel tables @600 1200
- c. Two 24x60 clerk tables @400 800
- d. Judge's chair 400
- e. Portable chalkboard 200

3. Three interview rooms

- a. 9 chairs @300 \$2700
- b. 3 tables or desks @400 1200

4. Five faculty offices

- a. 5 Desks with returns @1100 \$5500
- b. 5 desk chairs@350 1750
- c. 10 lateral 4-drawer cabinets@625 6250
- d. 10 guest chairs @300 3000

5. Secretary's office

- a. Workstation \$2000
- b. Chair 365
- c. Storage cabinet 320
- d. 2 lateral 4-drawer file cabinets @625 1350
- e. 2 tables @300 600

6. Library

- a. 8 chairs@300 \$2400
- b. Two 30x96 tables @800 1600
- c. 10 30x72 bookshelf units@200 2000

7. Seminar/classroom

- a. 20 chairs@300 \$6000
- b. Two 30x60 tables @450 900
- c. Two 30x96 tables @800 1600
- d. Portable chalkboard 100

8. Waiting room

- a. 3 easy chairs@700 \$2100
- b. 2 occasional tables@400 800
- c. 2 task chairs @300 600

9. Miscellaneous

- Five 24x60 tables @400 \$2000
- Wastebaskets and recycling containers 500

TOTAL \$105,000

PART 5: ACCESSIBILITY

The ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities covers accessibility issues for renovating existing space. It can be found at numerous locations on the web:

<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/racheck.pdf>

<http://www.adaptenv.org/publications/checklist-pdf.pdf>

<http://www.no-barriers.org/checklist.html>

<http://www.ada-infonet.org/Documents/AdaDoc.htm>

To return to CLEA home page, click [here](#) .