



GENERAL PRACTICE PROGRAM

Experience matters. Vermont Law School's General Practice Program (GPP) bridges the gap between what JD students learn in the traditional classroom and what they need to know as effective lawyers working on matters of consequence. The GPP complements our standard three-year curriculum, giving students the professional skills to use their substantive legal knowledge as confident practitioners.

OUR PROGRAM



Classes are structured to simulate a law firm with professors acting as senior partners, overseeing student associates as they conduct a broad range of activities—representing clients through divorce proceedings, conducting title searches and real estate closings, drafting commercial contracts, handling employment grievance cases, producing wills, and preparing for civil and criminal court appearances. The level of interaction GPP students have with practicing attorneys, the comprehensive nature of the courses, and the length of the program set it apart.



Vermont Law School's General Practice Program was awarded the prestigious 2007 **E. Smythe Gambrell Professionalism Award**. The award is given by the American Bar Association in recognition of projects contributing to the understanding of professionalism among lawyers.

The GPP is a two-year, four-semester program that allows second- and third-year JD students to experience what a practicing lawyer does on a daily basis. Students gain exposure to the professional legal culture through interactions with GPP faculty, student colleagues, and mentors. The class size limit of 16 students promotes significant individual guidance from professors and facilitates discussion and teamwork. Students learn and practice a variety of skills: drafting, counseling, interviewing, mediation, negotiation, oral argument, and pretrial preparation. Students also confront and resolve ethical issues in their roles as attorneys.

The General Practice Mentorship Project pairs students in their first year of the GPP with carefully selected local practitioners who serve as mentors for the entire academic year. Students and mentors are invited to meet at least three times during the year for conversation about issues of practice and professionalism. In addition,

students must observe a total of three professional events, with or without their mentors, including court and administrative proceedings, client meetings, or bar association events.

OUR CURRICULUM

Each semester consists of one to four components totaling four credit hours. The components, taught by a mix of regular faculty and experienced practitioners, may include:

- **GPP I, Fall Second Year**—Domestic Relations
- **GPP II, Spring Second Year**—Commercial Transactions, Environmental Problem-Solving, International Intellectual Property, Real Estate Transactions
- **GPP III, Fall Third Year**—Criminal Law, Employment Law/Pre-Trial Litigation, Representing Entrepreneurial Business
- **GPP IV, Spring Third Year**—Advanced Transactions, including Bankruptcy, Disability Discrimination, Estate Planning, Landlord-Tenant, Mediation, School Law

For complete and current descriptions of courses, visit www.vermontlaw.edu/gppcourses.

Students have the option of participating in an experiential or clinical program, such as the South Royalton Legal Clinic, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic, Semester in Practice, or Mediation Clinic during the third or fourth semester in lieu of GPP III or GPP IV components.

A General Practice Program Certificate is awarded to students who successfully complete all four semesters of the program, in addition to their JD degree.

"The General Practice Program takes in students and turns out skilled and confident professionals."
—Professor Susan Apel, Director of the General Practice Program

"The General Practice Program really set me apart from other associates and enabled me to hit the ground running."
—Greg Shelton JD 1997, formerly Associate Attorney, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, currently Senior Legal Counsel, Physio-Control, Redmond, Washington



"The GPP helped me narrow down the type of legal career I wanted to have and the type of firm where I wanted to start my career, and it also helped me get an interview and eventually a job with one of the firms that I had targeted."

—Andrew Clopman JD 2009, Associate, Devore & Devore, PA

OUR FACULTY

Susan B. Apel, Director of the General Practice Program and Professor of Law

Cathryn C. Nunlist '90, Assistant Director of the General Practice Program and Associate Professor of Law

Gary T. Brooks, Adjunct Professor of Law

Jennifer Emens-Butler '95, Adjunct Professor of Law

Catherine Feeney, Adjunct Professor of Law

Clara Gimenez '03, Adjunct Professor of Law

Oliver R. Goodenough, Professor of Law

Eric Janson, Adjunct Professor of Law

Martha L. Judy, Associate Professor of Law

Eric Lopez '95, Adjunct Professor of Law

Randall Mayhew, Adjunct Professor of Law

Jason Okai, Adjunct Professor of Law

Susanne Terry, Adjunct Professor of Law

Maryann Zavez '86, Professor of Law

APPLYING TO THE GPP

Students apply to the GPP at the end of their first year and are notified of their acceptance prior to registration for second-year classes. Application consists of a résumé, current GPA, and a written statement of interest, describing how the GPP fits in with the student's personal and professional goals and what qualities and experience the student can bring to the program.

Any student who plans to practice law or who prefers active, experiential learning to lecture style, who enjoys working as a team, and who wants to gain practical skills in a number of areas of law would benefit from the GPP experience. For details, see www.vermontlaw.edu/gpp.

Students who complete the General Practice Program gain a high level of interaction with faculty, exposure to key areas of law, many opportunities to acquire and develop skills needed by practicing attorneys, increased self-confidence in performing legal research and transactions, and the knowledge that they can offer pertinent experience to law firms.

"My experience in the GPP has aided me tremendously in my post-graduation employment. It has given me confidence in my legal writing, research, and analytical skills as well as my ability to interview clients and draft legal memorandum and court documents."

KRISTIN ROSS JD 2009, ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY,
VAN DORN & CURTISS, PLLC

"We now have three GPP graduates in our office."

RODNEY MCPHEE JD 1990, HIRING PARTNER, KENLAN,
SCHWIEBERT, FACEY & GOSS, PC



TO CONTACT US

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Law for the community
and the world

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