

**Declaration Form of Intention to Pursue Criminal Law Certificate**

*To be filed with the Registrar before the end of the student's fourth semester*

*Learning Goals:* Through the required doctrinal and procedural courses, students will gain a command of substantive and procedural criminal law. In the skills courses, students will learn about professionalism and legal ethics for the criminal law practitioner and develop the ability to speak and write clearly as advocates. Students will demonstrate an ability to engage in detailed legal research and writing by an in-depth exploration of an aspect of criminal law to satisfy the writing component of the certificate. Each certificate recipient will meet at least three times with the faculty coordinator: first, for a discussion and signing of the declaration form, next for a review and critique of the required writing submission, and lastly for the final approval of the certificate. These meetings will provide an opportunity for mentoring and discussions about career goals and professionalism.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Year: \_\_\_\_\_

*In order to receive the Criminal Law Certificate, students must earn at least 18 credits with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 from the following courses and satisfy the writing requirement as outlined below.*

**Doctrinal Requirements (10-11 credits)**

- REQ7140 Criminal Law (3 credits)
  - LIT7210 Evidence (4 credits)
  - CRI7262 Constitutional Criminal Procedure (3 credits)
- or*
- CRI7307 Criminal Practice & Procedure (4 credits)

**Skills/Experiential Requirements (8-16 credits)**

- CRI7350 Criminal Law Clinic **or** a part-time externship **or** a full-time SIP in a prosecutor's or defender's office **or** a part-time or full-time judicial externship where 50% or more of the student's time is spent on criminal matters (6-13 credits depending on whether placement is part-time or full-time).
- and*
- LIT7220 Trial Practice (3 credits)
- or*
- LIT7318 Intensive Trial Practice (2 or 3 credits depending on whether the student is selected to compete in the Texas Young Lawyers' Assoc. Trial Competition)

**Writing Requirement (0-3 credits)**

- A substantial written work on a criminal law topic approved by the Faculty Coordinator of the Criminal Law Certificate. This requirement may be satisfied by any of the following:
  - A law review note submitted and approved to satisfy the AWR requirement
  - An AWR written in conjunction with a criminal law seminar or other class
  - An AWR written as part of an Independent Research Project
  - An AWR written to satisfy the AWR requirement but not otherwise for academic credit
  - A substantial written work that would satisfy the AWR requirements if submitted as an AWR

*I intend to pursue the Certificate in Criminal Law. I have read the learning goals and requirements and understand them. I understand that careful planning is necessary to ensure that I meet all of the requirements for the certificate by the expected date of graduation. I understand that all work in support of the certificate must be completed prior to graduation. I understand I must resubmit this form to the Faculty Coordinator for final approval upon completion. I understand I can only pursue one certificate at VLS.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Coordinator's Initials

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Coordinator's signature and date upon completion, subject to final review by the Registrar.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date