



LAW SCHOOL PRO BONO PROGRAM

I. Pro Bono Program Goals and Definition of Student Pro Bono Service

Raising awareness of access to justice concerns and supporting Pro Bono service reflects a shared community value and it is an institutional priority. ABIII graduates recognize the character, values, and professionalism necessary to serve society as lawyers, including the importance of Pro Bono work, service, and access to justice for underserved communities. To support this learning outcome, the Law School maintains a voluntary Pro Bono Program. The goals of the Pro Bono Program are to: (1) support and encourage student awareness of their professional obligation to engage in Pro Bono service, (2) provide hands-on learning opportunities for students through approved Pro Bono service opportunities, and (3) promote, encourage, and recognize Student, Staff, and Faculty participation in Pro Bono service.

The Pro Bono Program focuses on the promotion and development of professional legal values and the delivery of free legal services to underserved persons, communities, and organizations. Service in the Pro Bono Program is limited to law-related service that meets an access to justice need. It does not include non-legal volunteer work, and it does not include service for which any compensation or academic credit is received.

Students are encouraged to render at least fifty (50) hours of student Pro Bono service during their law student career. Law Student Pro Bono service is defined as:

Supporting or (if authorized by a jurisdiction's Rules of Professional Conduct and Student Practice Rule) rendering law-related services with no compensation or expectation of compensation and with no receipt of academic credit to:

- (1) persons of limited means or
- (2) charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental and educational organizations in matters that are designed primarily to address the needs of persons of limited means
- (3) individuals, groups or organizations seeking to secure or protect civil rights, civil liberties or public rights, or charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental and educational organizations in matters in furtherance of their organizational purposes, where the payment of standard legal fees would significantly deplete the organization's economic resources or would be otherwise inappropriate.

II. Inclusion of Pro Bono Service in the 1L Introductory Program, and in Staff and Faculty Orientation

To reflect the Law School community's shared commitment Pro Bono service, the Oath administered to incoming Law Students includes a pledge to engage in Pro Bono services. The Introductory Program for new Law Students includes a Pro Bono Service and Access to Justice

component. Orientation programs for new Students, including transfer Students, and orientation programs for Staff, and Faculty include information about the Pro Bono Program and how to enroll and participate in the Program.

III. Requirements and Recognition

A. Pro Bono Program Enrollment

Students, Staff, and Faculty can participate in the Program by completing a Pro Bono Program pledge form. The pledge form includes: 1) a description of the Pro Bono Program's purpose and goals; 2) a definition of qualifying Pro Bono Service; 3) the hour goals to be eligible for institutional recognition; 4) an agreement to log hours in a database designated by the Pro Bono Coordinator, in a form and on a schedule designated by the Pro Bono Coordinator; and 5) an agreement to provide follow-up information and feedback about the participant's experience with the Program.

B. Service Recognition

Students, Staff and Faculty enrolled in the Pro Bono Program are eligible for institutional recognition.

1. Student Pro Bono Service

a. Hours Required for Recognition

Students who complete at least fifteen (15) hours of Pro Bono service during their first year in Law School (from the first day of a student's first year of Law School to the day before the first day of the student's second year of Law School) receive a "Dean's First Year Student Pro Bono Recognition" certificate.

Students who complete at least fifteen (15) hours of Pro Bono service during their second year in Law School (from the first day of the student's second year of Law School to the day before the first day of the student's third year of Law School) receive a "Dean's Second Year Student Pro Bono Recognition" certificate.

Students who complete at least twenty (20) hours of Pro Bono service during their third year in Law School (from the first day of the student's third year of Law School to the last day of final exams of the student's last semester of Law School) receive a "Dean's Third Year Student Pro Bono Recognition" certificate.

Students who complete at least fifty (50) hours of Pro Bono service during their Law School career (from the first day of Law School to the last day of final exams of the student's last semester in Law School) receive a notation on their Law School transcript that they completed the Law School Pro Bono Service Program requirements.

Students who complete at least one hundred fifty (150) hours of Pro Bono service during their Law School career (from the first day of Law School to the last day of final exams of the student's last semester in Law School) receive:

- A "Pro Bono Honors" notation on their Law School transcript

- An announcement during the graduation ceremony and a notation in the graduation ceremony materials that the student is graduating with “Pro Bono Honors”

Student Pro Bono recognition certificates, transcript designations, and honors designations are official confirmation and recognition of a student’s commitment to Pro Bono service, and may be referenced and included in employment applications materials.

b. Application to Current Students and Transfer Students

Students whose law school career began before the adoption of this Program and transfer students who engaged in Pro Bono service at another Law School are eligible to participate in the Program and receive transcript and graduation recognition.

Students in this category may participate in the Program by completing a Pro Bono Pledge form and submitting verification to the Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor of: (1) the number of hours of Pro Bono service completed, (2) the type or nature of Pro Bono service provided; and (3) contact information for the lawyer or legal services provider who supervised the student’s Pro Bono service. The Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor will review student submissions to ensure the Pro Bono service complies with the goals of the Program and the Program’s definition of Pro Bono service. The Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor will verify the hours and type of service with the lawyer or legal services provider who supervised the student’s Pro Bono service. With the Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor’s authorization, students in this category may record Student Pro Bono hours completed before the adoption of the Program or at another Law School and will be eligible to receive Student Pro Bono Recognition certificates on the same terms as other students.

2. Staff and Faculty

Staff and Faculty are encouraged to participate in the Pro Bono Program and are eligible for recognition by the Dean at the Dean’s discretion.

In consultation with the Staff and Faculty, the Dean will develop and publish Staff and Faculty Pro Bono service recognition guidelines no later than the last day of the Spring Semester of every year.

IV. Staffing

A. Pro Bono Coordinator

The Program is administered by a Pro Bono Coordinator under the direct supervision of a Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor. It is the Faculty’s intent that the position be filled by an AmeriCorps Service Member whenever possible. The Pro Bono Coordinator position description is developed by the Dean and the Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor in consultation with the Faculty and the Student Bar Association, and in collaboration with any participating partner agencies or organizations.

B. Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor

The Pro Bono Coordinator is supervised by a Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor. The Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor is a full-time member of the Faculty. The Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor is appointed by the Dean in consultation with the Faculty. The position description for the Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor is developed by Dean in consultation with the Faculty.

For workload purposes, the Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor designation is allocated 50 workload hours each semester, including summer semester. Fulfilling the Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor responsibilities is part of the designated Faculty member's job for which the faculty member is compensated and allocated workload credit. It is, therefore, not considered Pro Bono service.

V. Oversight and Assessment

The Dean, the Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor, the Pro Bono Coordinator, and a Student representative appointed by the Student Bar Association meet at least quarterly to set goals and priorities for the Pro Bono Program, and to assess the Program's effectiveness. The quarterly meetings are announced at least one week prior to the meeting and are open to Students, Staff, and Faculty. The Faculty Pro Bono Supervisor submits a written report of the quarterly meeting to the Faculty within two (2) weeks of the meeting.

APPENDIX A – REVISED STUDENT OATH

Additions to the current ABIII Oath in italics:

Today I begin my professional legal career as a member of the Alexander Blewett III School of Law community. As a student, I pledge to seek knowledge and understanding of the law and the role of the law and lawyers in society. I pledge to strive to develop the professional skills and the character and values necessary to fulfill the role of a lawyer. *I pledge to work to increase access to justice for underserved people and communities.* I understand that as a lawyer I will be a representative of clients, an officer of the legal system, and a public citizen with special responsibility for the quality of justice. As a student and as a lawyer, I pledge to pursue the truth, to promote justice, *to serve the community,* and to uphold the principles of honesty, integrity and civility.