

The First Amendment Clinic at the University of Virginia School of Law is hiring a legal fellow for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years. The expected start date is August 17, 2020. This is a full-time position for a two-year term (though exceptional candidates who are only available for the 2020-2021 academic year will be considered).

**About the Clinic:** After a two-year hiatus, the Clinic re-launched in fall 2019 as a partnership between UVA Law and the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, and is one of the oldest programs of its kind among major U.S. law schools that works to promote free expression, free press, and the free flow of information and ideas in a democratic society.

The Clinic provides direct representation for journalists as well as amicus support in state and federal courts in First Amendment and media law cases. In the coming years, the Clinic will increase its direct representation of local journalists in public records, court access, and defamation cases.

The fellow will report to and work closely with Reporters Committee attorneys Gabe Rottman and Jennifer Nelson, who administer the Clinic. The position is ideal for an entrepreneurial attorney willing to help shape the growth of the Clinic's important work.

**Responsibilities:**

- Help research and develop cases for the Clinic, including the development of relationships with the local journalism community to provide information about the legal resources offered by the Clinic;
- Provide training for local journalists on open records laws, Virginia defamation law, and other media law and First Amendment topics;
- Assist with day-to-day management of the Clinic's docket to ensure that all applicable deadlines are being met;
- Provide supervision to the Clinic's ten students, including work product feedback and mentoring;
- Participate in all aspects of state and federal litigation, including motion practice, brief writing, and hearing/oral argument preparation; and
- Assist the clinical directors in developing the curriculum of the Clinic's seminar component (consisting of a weekly two-hour seminar). Topics include substantive discussion of First Amendment doctrine as well as effective client representation and case management. Opportunities exist for the fellow to lead class discussions on these topics.

The ideal candidate will have litigation experience, preferably in matters involving freedom of information, defamation, and court access, though demonstrated interest in media law may be shown in other ways (i.e., prior work as a journalist, extended course work on the subject, or prior clinical work).

**Required Qualifications:**

- A J.D. and admission in at least one U.S. jurisdiction (Commonwealth of Virginia, or eligibility to waive in, is strongly preferred), or awaiting bar exam results/admission in at least one U.S. jurisdiction at the start of the fellowship term;

- A strong academic record and impeccable legal research and writing skills;
- Excellent communication skills; and
- A demonstrated interest in First Amendment and/or media law.

**Preferred Qualifications:**

- 1-3 years litigation experience;
- General interest in academia — prior teaching experience is a plus;
- Experience in docket management; and
- Post-law school judicial clerkship, fellowship, or litigation experience with a law firm or public interest organization is strongly preferred, although recent law school graduates with exceptional credentials will be considered.

The position will be based in Charlottesville, Virginia. The fellow must be able to attend the weekly seminar at UVA Law, scheduled to take place on Friday afternoons at the law school in a socially-distanced classroom.

Please provide a resume, law school transcript, and cover letter explaining how your professional experience relates to the anticipated responsibilities for the position. Applications may be submitted to Samantha Espinosa ([sespinosa@rcfp.org](mailto:sespinosa@rcfp.org)). We will consider applications immediately, and on a rolling basis until the position is filled. We expect to close the process by July 31.

The salary for this position is \$68,000 per year with fully paid health insurance, paid time off, 401k and other benefits.

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