

# LAWS50116 Public Interest Law in Practice

<b>Credit Points:</b>	12.50																																	
<b>Level:</b>	5 (Graduate/Postgraduate)																																	
<b>Dates &amp; Locations:</b>	2013, Parkville This subject commences in the following study period/s: July, Parkville - Taught on campus. Taught on campus and through a clinical placement at a host organisation.																																	
<b>Time Commitment:</b>	Contact Hours: 3 days of pre-placement orientation, 12 days of clinical placement, 10 hours of further classes. Total Time Commitment: 180 hours.																																	
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	<p>Permission is required from the subject coordinator before enrolment. Students will be selected through a competitive application process. Further details on how to apply for a place will be available late in the preceding academic year.</p> <p>At a minimum, students will need to have completed the subjects below to be eligible for enrolment in Public Interest Law in Practice:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Subject</th> <th>Study Period Commencement:</th> <th>Credit Points:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>LAWS50023 Legal Method and Reasoning</td> <td>Not offered 2013</td> <td>12.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LAWS50024 Principles of Public Law</td> <td>Not offered 2013</td> <td>12.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LAWS50025 Torts</td> <td>November</td> <td>12.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LAWS50026 Obligations</td> <td>Not offered 2013</td> <td>12.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LAWS50027 Dispute Resolution</td> <td>Not offered 2013</td> <td>12.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LAWS50028 Constitutional Law</td> <td>Semester 2</td> <td>12.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LAWS50029 Contracts</td> <td>Not offered 2013</td> <td>12.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LAWS50030 Property</td> <td>Not offered 2013</td> <td>12.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LAWS50031 Legal Theory</td> <td>Not offered 2013</td> <td>12.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LAWS50032 Administrative Law</td> <td>Not offered 2013</td> <td>12.50</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Subject	Study Period Commencement:	Credit Points:	LAWS50023 Legal Method and Reasoning	Not offered 2013	12.50	LAWS50024 Principles of Public Law	Not offered 2013	12.50	LAWS50025 Torts	November	12.50	LAWS50026 Obligations	Not offered 2013	12.50	LAWS50027 Dispute Resolution	Not offered 2013	12.50	LAWS50028 Constitutional Law	Semester 2	12.50	LAWS50029 Contracts	Not offered 2013	12.50	LAWS50030 Property	Not offered 2013	12.50	LAWS50031 Legal Theory	Not offered 2013	12.50	LAWS50032 Administrative Law	Not offered 2013	12.50
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<b>Corequisites:</b>	None.																																	
<b>Recommended Background Knowledge:</b>	None.																																	
<b>Non Allowed Subjects:</b>	None.																																	
<b>Core Participation Requirements:</b>	The Melbourne Law School welcomes applications from students with disabilities. It is University and Law School policy to take all reasonable steps to enable the participation of students with disabilities, and reasonable adjustments will be made to enhance a student's participation in the School's programs. The inherent academic requirements for the study in the Melbourne Law School are: The ability to attend classes and actively engage in the analysis of complex materials and debate; The ability to read, analyse and comprehend complex written legal materials and complex interdisciplinary materials; The ability to clearly and independently communicate in writing a knowledge and application of legal principles and interdisciplinary materials and critically evaluate these; The ability to clearly and independently communicate orally a knowledge and application of legal principles and interdisciplinary materials and critically evaluate these; The ability to work independently and as a part of a group; The ability to present orally and in writing legal analysis to a professional standard. Students must possess behavioural and social attributes that enable them to participate in a complex learning environment. Students are required to take responsibility for their own participation																																	

	and learning. They also contribute to the learning of other students in collaborative learning environments, demonstrating interpersonal skills and an understanding of the needs of other students. Assessment may include the outcomes of tasks completed in collaboration with other students. Students who feel their disability will prevent them from participating in tasks involving these inherent academic requirements are encouraged to contact the Disability Liaison Unit: <a href="http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/disability/">http://www.services.unimelb.edu.au/disability/</a> .
<b>Contact:</b>	Melbourne Law School Student Centre Email: <a href="mailto:law-studentcentre@unimelb.edu.au">law-studentcentre@unimelb.edu.au</a> (mailto:law-studentcentre@unimelb.edu.au) Tel: +61 3 8344 4475
<b>Subject Overview:</b>	<p>Public Interest Law in Practice provides a practical, clinical experience in which students support lawyers in public interest organisations in the delivery of legal services to the community. Students will undertake 12 days of clinical placement with a partner organisation in the community or government sector. On placement, and under expert supervision, students will utilise the legal knowledge and skills acquired during their degree to undertake work on real legal issues and with real clients, and in doing so, will be exposed to the realities of public interest legal practice. The placement will either be in an intensive format for the Winter Intensive offering, or through regular, scheduled attendances throughout semester for the semester-long offering.</p> <p>Prior to commencing with their host organisation, students will participate in three days of intensive classes to prepare for their placement, including learning new legal practice skills and about specific areas of law where relevant. This will be complemented by classes during the placement period. In these classes, students will reflect on their ongoing clinical experience as well as engage with scholarship relevant to public interest law practice in Australia. This combination of practical placement and academic support will allow students to consider and reflect on the broader contexts in which legal issues arise, the lawyer's role and relationship with the delivery of justice and contemporary developments in professional practice.</p> <p>A central component of the subject is that students critically reflect on their practical experience of public interest lawyering. The reflection serves several purposes. Firstly, it gives students the opportunity to consider how the issues and ideas raised in the scholarship on public interest lawyering are reflected in their practical experience of this area of law. On an individual level, it also provides students with the opportunity to reflect on their own use of legal skills, knowledge and approach to practice and consequently build on these skills, knowledge and competencies.</p>
<b>Objectives:</b>	<p>A student who successfully completes this subject will have a sophisticated insight into, and be able to reflect critically and meaningfully on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li># The practical and technical skills and ethical awareness needed to practise effectively in the public interest sector, including in the areas of research, advocacy, communication, file management and organisation;</li> <li># The ethical questions which arise from practising public interest law;</li> <li># The scope, composition, capacity, limits and challenges of the legal assistance sector in Australia;</li> <li># Historical and theoretical perspectives on the concept of public interest law in an Australian and global context;</li> <li># The techniques of public interest lawyering and the differences between public interest lawyering and other forms of lawyering;</li> <li># The effectiveness of the public interest law movement in Australia, including as a source of social change; and</li> <li># The capacity of law and lawyers to create social, economic and political change.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment:</b>	Attendance at all induction and clinic sessions and satisfactory performance on placement (hurdle requirements); Research assignment (4,000 words) (60%); Short written reflective exercises (2,000 words in total) (40%).
<b>Prescribed Texts:</b>	Specialist printed materials will be made available from Melbourne Law School.
<b>Breadth Options:</b>	This subject is not available as a breadth subject.
<b>Fees Information:</b>	Subject EFTSL, Level, Discipline & Census Date, <a href="http://enrolment.unimelb.edu.au/fees">http://enrolment.unimelb.edu.au/fees</a>

**Generic Skills:**

Upon successful completion of the subject, students will have developed and demonstrated the following skills:

- # Interpersonal and communication skills to gather information, understand interests and context, and convey complex legal concepts to a non-legal audience (including clients) in a way that is useful and effective;
- # Cognitive skills in understanding the significance of the interrelationship of facts and law, and an appreciation of the place for legal and non-legal responses to clients' problems;
- # Cognitive and technical skills relating to the generation and provision of legal advice and information attuned to clients' needs;
- # Ability to learn from encountering different perspectives, and to recognise the extent to which students' own beliefs, values and experiences inform their understanding of the purpose and relevance of legal practice within the community context;
- # Skills required for effective workplace performance, such as communication, time management, and office organisation;
- # Ability to work cooperatively and professionally in a public interest law organisation; and
- # Ability to engage in high-level analysis and critical reflection on the range of challenging questions arising in the field of public interest law.