Overview of the USPTO Law School Clinic Certification Program

Office of Enrollment and Discipline
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Law School Clinic Certification Program

• Allows students in a participating law school’s clinic program to practice before the USPTO under the strict guidance of a Law School Faculty Clinic Supervisor
  – The OED Director grants participating law students limited recognition to practice before the USPTO in patents/trademarks.

• Participating in the program gives real-world experience to clinic students while providing IP pro bono services to the community

• Benefits for students, schools, the USPTO, and entrepreneurs and inventors seeking legal representation
History of the program

- Pilot program from 2008 to 2014
- H.R. 5108 sponsored by two U.S. Representatives
- Signed into law on December 16, 2014
  - Required the establishment of regulations for application to and participation in the program
    - 37 CFR §§ 11.16 (admission) & 11.17 (participation)
    - Notice of Proposed Rulemaking issued December 16, 2015
    - Final Rule published May 27, 2016
Participating law school requirements

- ABA accredited law school
- Must provide services pro bono to the public
- Must have protocol for seamless representation of clients
- Must have approved Faculty Clinic Supervisor
- Must comply with reporting requirements
Benefits to USPTO and inventors

• Impact for inventors
  – Opportunity to work with experienced patent practitioners/faculty clinic supervisors and law students
  – Benefit from IP pro bono services
  – May benefit from expedited review of his/her applications by the USPTO

• Impact for the USPTO
  – Increased participation in the patent system by increasing patent application filings
  – Improved patent quality
  – Supplements pro se (filing on your own) assistance efforts
Current nationwide coverage
Nationwide coverage cont.

Arizona
- Arizona State University
- Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law
- University of Arizona
- James E. Rogers College of Law

California
- California Western School of Law
- Lincoln Law School of San Jose
- Thomas Jefferson School of Law
- University of California, Irvine School of Law
- University of California, Los Angeles School of Law
- University of San Diego School of Law
- University of San Francisco School of Law

Colorado
- University of Colorado Law School

Connecticut
- University of Connecticut School of Law

District of Columbia
- American University, Washington College of Law
- Howard University School of Law
- The George Washington University School of Law

Florida
- Florida International University College of Law
- University of Miami School of Law

Idaho
- University of Idaho College of Law

Illinois
- Northwestern Prebaker School of Law
- University of Illinois Chicago School of Law

Indiana
- Indiana University Maurer School of Law
- Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law
- University of Notre Dame Law School

Louisiana
- Southern University Law Center
- Tulane University Law School

Maryland
- University of Maryland School of Law

Massachusetts
- Boston College Law School
- Northeastern University School of Law
- Suffolk University Law School
- Western New England University School of Law

Michigan
- University of Detroit Mercy School of Law
- University of Michigan Law School
- Wayne State University Law School

Minnesota
- Mitchell Hamline School of Law
- University of St. Thomas School of Law

Missouri
- Washington University in St. Louis School of Law

Nebraska
- University of Nebraska College of Law

New Hampshire
- UNH Franklin Pierce School of Law

New Jersey
- Rutgers Law School

New York
- Brooklyn Law School
- Fordham University School of Law
- New York Law School
- Syracuse University College of Law

North Carolina
- North Carolina Central University School of Law
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Law

Ohio
- Case Western Reserve University School of Law
- University of Akron School of Law

Oregon
- Lewis & Clark Law School

Pennsylvania
- University of Pennsylvania Law School

Puerto Rico
- University of Puerto Rico School of Law

Rhode Island
- Roger Williams University School of Law

Tennessee
- University of Tennessee College of Law
- Vanderbilt Law School

Texas
- Baylor Law School
- South Texas College of Law Houston
- Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law
- Texas A&M University School of Law

Washington
- Seattle University School of Law
- University of Washington School of Law

Virginia
- George Mason University, Antonin Scalia Law School
- Liberty University School of Law
- University of Richmond School of Law
States with a clinic in the program
29 states, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico

- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New York
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Puerto Rico
- Rhode Island
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Virginia
- Washington
Program overview

- Currently, 61 law schools are in the Program from all across the United States
Finding and contacting a participating law school
Additional information

• Questions regarding the program may be directed to the Office of Enrollment and Discipline:
  – Phone: 571-272-4097
  – Email: LawSchoolInformation@uspto.gov

• See Frequently Asked Questions for more information:
  – Law School Clinic Certification Program FAQs