CHILD & FAMILY LAW EMPHASIS AREA REQUIREMENTS

UMKC School of Law Emphasis in Child and Family Law

The UMKC School of Law Emphasis in Child and Family Law prepares students to serve these pressing and unique legal needs. The program prepares students to serve the whole family -- from infants to elders -- and maintains a unique collaborative and interdisciplinary framework. The emphasis program requires that students master the basic doctrine and legal theories involved when the legal system interacts with families. In addition, however, students undertake study exposing them to the perspectives of other disciplines such as psychology and social work. Students study the unique ethical dilemmas of this area of law in specialized workshops and gain hands-on experience in representing children and families in the program’s clinical components. Finally, all students in the emphasis complete an in-depth capstone research and writing project.

Students who qualify for and successfully complete the credential requirements in the Child and Family Law program should be in an excellent position to pursue and succeed in careers serving children, families, and elders, whether in private or government practice or in other leadership roles.

Admission Requirements

Students may apply after completing their second semester (or 29 credit hours). Students who are close to completing the hourly requirements may petition for early admission for good cause shown.

An application form will be available and must be submitted by the deadline announced by the Child and Family Law Faculty. Decisions as to whether a student will be admitted to the Emphasis in Child and Family Law will be made in the semester in which the student applies.

Procedure and Criteria for Selection:

The Child and Family Law Faculty will select the students to be admitted to the program. Criteria to be considered may include previous general academic performance in law school, previous academic performance in courses seen as particularly relevant to the emphasis area, level of interest in serving children or families, and ability to identify an advisor willing to advise and supervise the student.

No student shall be admitted to the Child and Family Law program unless he or she has a grade-point average of 2.6 or above in all law school classes previously taken.

The Child and Family Law Faculty is authorized to make appropriate adjustments in the deadlines for part-time students or other students whose schedules do not substantially conform to the six semester paradigm.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from this program will:

• Students will demonstrate mastery of core doctrinal knowledge within emphasis area
• Students will demonstrate mastery of skills necessary for objective legal analysis.
• Students will demonstrate mastery of the skills necessary for effective legal research in the emphasis area.
• Students will demonstrate mastery of legal writing within the field.
• Students will demonstrate mastery of the duties of attorneys as members of the legal profession.
• Students will demonstrate ability to work with people in a professional environment
• Students will demonstrate competency in professional work habits
• Students will demonstrate entry-level proficiency in lawyering skills especially relevant to the emphasis area.

Important Note: Because the School is committed to keeping up with changes in the practice of law, the requirements for emphasis areas may change during the course of a student’s enrollment at the School. The requirements at the time a student is granted admission into the emphasis area are the requirements that govern completion of the student’s emphasis requirements. For possible revised requirements that will take effect with the next academic year, http://law.umkc.edu/academics/emphasis-areas/family-children.

General Requirements

Of the 15 hours required for the emphasis, the student must complete
Child & Family Law Emphasis Area Requirements

• The basic family law course (three credit hours).
• The Child & Family Services Clinic
• At least two courses from a list of core curriculum (listed below)
• The remainder of the required credit hours from other core curriculum courses or a list of elective courses (listed below).

Prerequisite Course
All students in the emphasis must take Family Law. Because this foundation course is a prerequisite for most other courses in the emphasis, students accepted for the emphasis will be given a priority in enrollment in the course.

Core Courses
Students must take at least two courses from the classes listed below:

• Children in the Law
• Juvenile Offenders & The Law
• Family Violence
• Gender and Justice
• Elder Law

Clinical Component
All students in the Child and Family Law program must successfully complete the Child & Family Services Clinic.

Elective Courses
• Mediation
• Journal of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers
• Dispute Resolution and Lawyers
• Elder Law For Estate Planners
• Disabilities and the Law
• Immigration Law and Process
• Education Law: Government & Legal Aspects of Education
• Independent Study (if approved by Child and Family Law advisor on the basis that the course of study relates directly to the emphasis area)
• All Journals Staff (if approved by Child and Family Law advisor on the basis that the student's note or comment relates directly to the emphasis area)
• Fact Investigation
• Legal Aid Clinic
• Internship
• Guardian Ad Litem Workshop
• Familty Law Clerkship
• Estate Planning & Drafting
• Leadership in Disability Studies: A Multidisciplinary Approach
• Miniterm courses designated as family law courses. In the past, these have included: Poverty Law, Violence Against Women Act, Law & Human Trafficking and Family Law and Film

Any other law school course if, before beginning the course, the student obtains written approval from the Child and Family Law Faculty. Such approval shall not be granted unless the Child and Family Law Faculty find that, in light of the student's other courses and the student's goals in the emphasis study, the course will advance the student's study of Child and Family Law to an extent equivalent to other Child and Family Law electives.

Courses may be added or deleted from the lists contained in the sections above with approval of the Child and Family Law Faculty and the Law School faculty.

Graduation Requirements
For a student to be recognized as having graduated with an Emphasis in Child and Family Law, students must have

• timely completed all emphasis requirements
• received the approval of a member of the Child and Family Law faculty of the student's portfolio, and
• earned a 3.0 grade point in emphasis course work (required and elective courses).
This grade-point average shall be computed considering all Required and Elective Courses in the emphasis taken by the student, including any that exceed the minimum hour requirements for the Emphasis.