

ENVIRONMENTAL & LAND USE LAW

ONE OF THE GREATEST CHALLENGES facing the world today is to foster sustainable communities and ensure the environment's long-term health. Meeting this challenge requires land use and environmental policies grounded in law, science, economics, ethics, psychology and politics. It also requires attention to the intersection of local, state, national and international policies. The Environmental and Land Use Law Program at the University of Virginia aims to develop leaders who combine knowledge in these fields with the skills to put sound policy into practice at all levels of government. The program joins outstanding legal teaching and scholarship with opportunities for interdisciplinary study and practical training. The faculty's active involvement in local, regional and global issues, including climate change, helps develop a real-world sense of environmental law and policy as practiced today.



THE SETTING Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Charlottesville and surrounding Albemarle County provide a beautiful and uniquely fruitful setting for the study of land use and environmental issues. The area faces urgent regional growth concerns, testing relationships

among urban, suburban and rural communities, all at a scale that makes these issues realistically accessible to student investigators. The proximity of the Shenandoah National Park, the Jefferson National Forest and the Chesapeake Bay (the Law School is in the Bay watershed) provide further opportunity to study problems in regional growth, natural resource policy and watershed management.



PROFESSOR JON CANNON leads Virginia's Environmental and Land Use Law Program. Before coming to the Law School in 1998, Cannon held several senior positions with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, including as general counsel. Cannon now serves on the National Academy of Science's Committee on America's Climate Choices and on the academy's Board of Environmental Studies and Toxicology.

COURSES AND SEMINARS

Climate Change: Science, Policy and Law
Environmental Law and Federalism
Environmental Law
Federal Land and Natural Resources Law
Foundations of Climate Change

Law and Policy
International Environmental Law
NAFTA and the Environment
Natural Resource Law and Policy
Land Use Law
Law and Policy of Watershed Management
Legislation
Local Government Law
Property Theory
Regulation of Toxic Substances

and Hazardous Waste Sites and Systems: Science, Planning and Law
Urban Law and Policy
Water Law

CLINIC
Environmental Law and Conservation Clinic



STUDENTS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND CONSERVATION CLINIC provide legal services such as commenting on permits, researching and supporting litigation, and advocacy on behalf of Virginia nonprofit environmental organizations. Clients have included the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Shenandoah Riverkeeper, Trout Unlimited and the Rivanna Conservation Society.

“We can make a difference by helping our clients be effective, whether by being watchdogs on state permits, or highlighting gaps in policy, or helping to draft better local regulations,” said **ELIZABETH BEARDSLEY '07** [second from left]. “I think all of the assignments are interesting and important because they are things that are not otherwise being done.”

CURRICULUM

The Environmental and Land Use Law Program includes 17 elective courses and seminars. Students can also receive credit for independent research on environmental issues. Recent research topics have included global climate change, watershed management in South Africa, land conservation in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and regional land use and growth-management policies.

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND CONSERVATION CLINIC

Students in the clinic represent environmental nonprofits, citizens' groups and other community organizations

seeking to protect and restore the environment of Virginia and other parts of the country. Students participate in a range of activities that are central to the practice of environmental law, including commenting on administrative rules, participating in permitting proceedings, advocacy before state administrative agencies and boards, factual investigations and litigation. The clinic has also been actively engaged in finding solutions to land-use and growth issues facing local communities. Although much of the clinic's work consists of traditional legal advocacy and counseling, clinic students also typically deal with the role of broader public advocacy in environmental disputes. The clinic explores the limits of

the law in protecting natural resources and examines cooperative and innovative ways of protecting and restoring the environment.

UNIVERSITY COURSES

Students may receive Law School credit for related graduate courses offered by other departments and schools in the University, including the Graduate School of Architecture's Department of Urban and Environmental Planning, which is well known for its leadership in sustainable design; the Darden School of Business, whose programs have featured sustainable economic development and business practices; and the University's highly regarded Department of Environmental Sciences. Topics include preservation planning, land use policy, ecology, climatology, global change, bargaining and negotiating, and business-government relations.



PROFESSOR JASON JOHNSTON, an expert in natural resources law and law and economics, joined the Law School faculty in 2010. He teaches courses on climate change and natural resource law and policy, among others. “This is a really important time in the United States for natural resource law,” Johnston said, as dozens of new water infrastructure projects are in the works in the Western United States. “If these new water projects happen out West, they will have enormous environmental consequences, and yet they seem to have been overlooked by many traditional environmental groups.”

EXPERTS from the private sector and academia examined the potential economic impact of climate change legislation at a 2010 symposium sponsored by the Virginia Environmental Law Journal.



BEYOND THE CURRICULUM

The Law School's support for learning opportunities in environmental and land use law goes deeper than course offerings.

SYMPOSIA

Over the past decade, the Law School has sponsored national conferences on growth management, nature conservation, environmental contracting, revitalization of contaminated land, transboundary watershed management and climate change. These symposia attracted leading practitioners and scholars and top government officials. Law students help plan these conferences and edit and publish the papers that emerge from them.

VIRGINIA ENVIRONMENTAL LAW JOURNAL

This student-edited and -managed publication, founded in 1979, is a leader in environmental legal scholarship.

VIRGINIA ENVIRONMENTAL LAW FORUM

This popular and active student group hosts speakers and sponsors law students who participate in environmental moot court and negotiation competitions. The forum, in cooperation with the Law School's Mortimer Caplin Public Service Center, also provides pro bono opportunities to students interested in environmental law. Typically, students may choose from among 15 or more environmental pro bono projects on behalf of public interest and governmental clients that have requested

assistance. Forum members also have opportunities to network with environmental law employers and professionals.

PUBLIC SERVICE

The Law School has made a strong financial commitment to students choosing to pursue public interest careers. The school's Mortimer Caplin Public Service Center helps students interested in environmental law find summer internships and postgraduate employment.



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www.law.virginia.edu/environment

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