Declaration Form of Intention to Pursue Criminal Law Certificate

Learning Goals: Through the required doctrinal and procedural courses, students will gain a command of substantive and procedural criminal law. In the skills courses, students will learn about professionalism and legal ethics for the criminal law practitioner and develop the ability to speak and write clearly as advocates. Students will demonstrate an ability to engage in detailed legal research and writing by an in-depth exploration of an aspect of criminal law to satisfy the writing component of the certificate. Each certificate recipient will meet at least three times with the faculty coordinator: first, for a discussion and signing of the declaration form, next for a review and critique of the required writing submission, and lastly for the final approval of the certificate. These meetings will provide an opportunity for mentoring and discussions about career goals and professionalism.

Student Name: ___________________  Graduation Year: ____________

In order to receive the Criminal Law Certificate, students must earn at least 18 credits with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 from the following courses and satisfy the writing requirement as outlined below.

Doctrinal Requirements (10-11 credits)
- REQ7140  Criminal Law (3 credits)
- LIT7210  Evidence (4 credits)
- CRI7262  Constitutional Criminal Procedure (3 credits)
- CRI7307  Criminal Practice & Procedure (4 credits)

Skills/Experiential Requirements (8-16 credits)
- CRI7350  Criminal Law Clinic or a part-time externship or a full-time SIP in a prosecutor’s or defender’s office or a part-time or full-time judicial externship where 50% or more of the student’s time is spent on criminal matters (6-13 credits depending on whether placement is part-time or full-time).
  and
- LIT7220  Trial Practice (3 credits)
- LIT7318  Intensive Trial Practice (2 or 3 credits depending on whether the student is selected to compete in the Texas Young Lawyers’ Assoc. Trial Competition)

Writing Requirement (0-3 credits)
- A substantial written work on a criminal law topic approved by the Faculty Coordinator of the Criminal Law Certificate. This requirement may be satisfied by any of the following:
  • A law review note submitted and approved to satisfy the AWR requirement
  • An AWR written in conjunction with a criminal law seminar or other class
  • An AWR written as part of an independent research project
  • An AWR written to satisfy the AWR requirement but not otherwise for academic credit
  • A substantial written work that would satisfy the AWR requirements if submitted as an AWR

I intend to pursue the Certificate in Criminal Law. I have read the learning goals and requirements and understand them. I understand that careful planning is necessary to ensure that I meet all of the requirements for the certificate by the expected date of graduation. I understand that all work in support of the certificate must be completed prior to graduation. I understand I must resubmit this form to the Faculty Coordinator for final approval upon completion. I understand I can only pursue one certificate at VLS.

Signature of Student ____________  Date ____________  Faculty Coordinator’s Initials ____________  Date ____________

Faculty Coordinator’s signature and date upon completion, subject to final review by the Registrar.  Date ____________