Students enrolled in the Juvenile Defense Clinic, formerly the Children and Families Clinic, will represent children who are charged with delinquent acts in juvenile court. Delinquency cases are the juvenile equivalent of adult criminal cases. Qualified students must be certified under the Florida Student Practice Rule, Chapter 11 Florida Rules Regulating Admission to the Bar. Once accepted into the clinic, your CLI application will be processed. Students who have questions about the Juvenile Defense Clinic are welcome to contact us at 407-681-5403 or by email to Professor Puzone at kpuzone@barry.edu, or Lymaris Cruz at lcruz@barry.edu.

The Juvenile Defense Clinic focuses on in-court advocacy as a defense attorney. Students conduct all court appearances under the supervision of the professor. Also conduct detention/probable cause hearings, negotiate pleas, interview witness, take depositions, argue motions, conduct trials and post-trial proceedings. The clinic’s clients are mostly at risk youth living in extreme poverty and unstable home environments. Students will learn to develop theories of defense to the crimes charged as well as working with the client to address the underlying issues affecting the client’s behavior. Students will study the mental health issues that affect at risk teenagers. In addition will visit clients at their homes, schools, the juvenile detention court, the youth shelter and juvenile commitment programs. Clinic students are in court on a regular basis.

To enroll in the Juvenile Defense Clinic, students must have completed four semesters and forty-eight credit hours. The prerequisites for this course are Criminal Law, Evidence and Professional Responsibility. Recommended courses prior to taking this course include, Criminal Procedure and Trial Advocacy. Your Notice of Registrant Clearance from the Florida Bar must accompany the completed application.

The Juvenile Defense Clinic is six credit hours. Students will be required to commit to a minimum of approximately twenty hours per week. The students will meet in a class for three hours every week. The students in groups of two, will also be required to meet with their faculty supervisor once a week for at least an hour to review the status and progress of individual cases. Finally, the students will be required to commit to additional hours each week for client contact purposes. The remaining hours will be fulfilled each week preparing for class and the cases and in individual meetings with the supervising faculty to prepare for significant stages of the case.

In addition to these weekly hours during the semester, the students who enroll will be required to attend a pre-semester orientation to be held in the week prior to the start of classes. This orientation will provide an intensive review of some of the substantive and procedural law to be used in the clinic, review some of the special client issues presented by these cases, and lead students in some simulated exercises relevant to the cases.