

FAQs for Students

What is fair housing law?

Fair Housing Law is an offshoot of Civil Rights Law. It prevents housing providers from discriminating against people in access to housing based on race, religion, national origin, gender, disability, familial status, and sexual orientation.

What are the benefits of this program for me?

Undergraduate students selected to participate in the Fair Housing Internship Program will:

- learn about fair housing and related civil rights issues from an experienced law professor
- intern at a fair housing agency or government office addressing fair housing issues
- meet with experts in the field and attend events sponsored by local fair housing agencies and organizations
- explore career possibilities in fair housing
- enhance interpersonal and group presentation skills
- receive four semester hours of academic credit from The John Marshall Law School (pending approval of your home institution)

Do I have to be interested in law school to participate in this program?

Although the course is modeled after the fair housing law course offered to John Marshall students and undergraduate students interested in law school are encouraged to apply, the program is not limited to students planning to attend law school.

Is this program limited to specific majors?

The program is not limited to specific majors. The topics covered and experiences provided in this program may be familiar to students majoring in political science, sociology, social work, or pre-law, but all interested students are encouraged to apply regardless of their major.

Will I get undergraduate credit for this course? Will the credits count toward my major?

The John Marshall Law School will award a total of four (4) semester hours of credit for students that complete the program. The “home” institution will review the transcript to determine the transferability of credit and whether the course can be counted toward the student’s undergraduate major or minor or can only be counted as a general elective.

Will I get credit that can be counted toward a law degree?

The Juris Doctorate (JD) program at John Marshall is accredited by the American Bar Association. Law school credit can only be earned by students who have taken the LSAT and been admitted to law school.

Do I have to pay tuition?

No tuition or fees are charged to students selected to participate in the program. The program is funded by a grant awarded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO), and the Fair Housing Initiative Program (FHIP).

Where does the class meet?

The class will meet at The John Marshall Law School Fair Housing Clinic located at 55 East Jackson in downtown Chicago.

When does the class meet?

The class meets Monday 6–8 p.m. beginning August 29 and ending with a final exam on December 12. Class will not meet on Labor Day, September 5. The internship will begin in the second half of the first semester will continue through February 2012. Students can arrange internship hours individually. (Students will be able to continue their internship over winter break, if necessary.)

Where can I do the internship hours for this course?

Students will have an opportunity to serve at one of several locations that may include the John Marshall Fair Housing Legal Clinic; Access Living, Center for Service, Advocacy and Social Change for People with Disabilities; Latin United Community Housing Association; Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago; and the Illinois Department of Human Rights. Other locations may be added later.

Why does this program include an internship or service learning component?

The internship will provide the student with hands-on exposure to agencies that work in fair housing. The internship provides the student with the opportunity to put their knowledge about fair housing to use, the opportunity to give back to their communities, and the opportunity to explore careers in fair housing.

Who teaches this class?

The executive director of the program, Michael P. Seng, teaches the course. Professor Seng is also director of the Fair Housing Legal Support Center and Legal Clinic, and coordinator of the Predatory Home Lending Project at John Marshall. The program manager, Daniel Bondavalli, will also contribute to instruction. He is a graduate of The John Marshall Law School, a practicing attorney, and, as a law student, served as a clinical intern at the John Marshall Fair Housing Clinic.

What is the textbook for this course?

The primary text for this course is *The Integration Debate: Competing Futures for American Cities*, edited by Chester Hartman and Gregory D. Squires. Chester Hartman is director of research for the Poverty & Race Research Action Council. Gregory Squires, a professor of sociology and public policy and public administration at George Washington University, serves as a member the John Marshall Law School Fair Housing Legal Support Center Advisory Board. The text includes writings by academic and professional experts from fields including law, education, public health, criminal justice sociology, and public policy examine the policy, legal, and historical foundations of efforts to achieve more balanced living patterns in the U.S. Professor Seng coauthored the chapter “Achieving Integration through Private Litigation.” Students will also learn about legal issues related to fair housing through review of actual court cases.