

GEOFFREY FIEGER TRIAL PRACTICE INSTITUTE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

About the Geoffrey Fieger Trial Practice Institute

The Geoffrey Fieger Trial Practice Institute (TPI) at MSU College of Law is a comprehensive set of programs aimed at bridging the law school experience with the practice of trial law in real-world settings. A rigorous, **two-year certificate program** is the central component to the Geoffrey Fieger Trial Practice Institute. The curriculum was designed in collaboration with practicing trial lawyers and judges and features required and elective courses related to pretrial and trial skills.

Classes are taught by seasoned litigators who bring a real-world perspective to the classroom. Students receive intensive training in drafting oral arguments and other trial simulations in front of actual judges and seasoned litigators. Interdisciplinary learning opportunities include collaborations with other MSU programs. The theatre department will offer training in courtroom demeanor and public speaking, and students will learn about forensic science through the School of Criminal Justice. All courses are designed to assist students in understanding and empathizing with the jury, judge, and opposition. Fieger said, "Good trial lawyers must understand human experience and, above all else, know themselves."

Interested students may apply in Spring 2006, and after a highly selective process, accepted students start the program in Fall 2006. The selection process admits students based on their potential for successful trial advocacy rather than academic performance serving as the sole criterion. After two years of comprehensive training in trial practice, students will be awarded a Certificate of Trial Practice. A scholarship program awards tuition grants to the most promising students.

Students in both the full-time and part-time programs are eligible for admission in the Certificate Program, so long as they have completed at least 24 credits. Some courses, however, may be offered only in the evening, or, on rare occasions, only in the day. No deviations from the schedule will be authorized or permitted.

An annual lecture series showcasing nationally known trial lawyers as well as professional mentoring are important elements of the Institute. In addition to showing students the intricacies of trial practice, mentors offer advice and leads on job placement opportunities.

The Law College's **fully functional trial courtroom** is the backdrop for the Institute's program to train students in the latest techniques available for use in trial practice through extensive sets of simulations.

Practical, hands-on experience is an integral part of the Institute. Every student in the institute graduates with a portfolio of legal, trial-related writing to show prospective employers.

Required TPI Courses:

Pre-Trial I (3 credits)
Pre-Trial II (2 credits)
Trial I – Criminal (3 credits)
Trial II – Civil (3 credits)
Advocacy as a Performing Art (1 credit, pass/fail)
Forensic Science (2 credits)

Other Required Courses:

Administrative Law (3 credits)
Criminal Procedure (3 credits)
Courtroom Technology Lab (0 credits)

TPI CERTIFICATE PROGRAM APPLICATION

Applications must be turned in to the registrar's office by February 3, 2006; Interviews are February 9 -11, 2006

Please attach: (1) a one page statement of goals/purpose for entering the program; and (2) a current resume

Applying to enter beginning: Fall Semester 20_____

Name: _____ PID: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Required TPI Courses:

Year 1

- Pre-Trial I (3 credits) – Fall
- Pre-Trial II (2 credits) – Spring
- Courtroom Technology Lab (no credit) – either Fall or Spring

Year 2

- Trial I – Criminal Trial (3 credits) – Fall
- Advocacy as a Performing Art (1 credit) – Fall
- Trial II – Civil Trial (3 credits) – Spring
- Forensic Science (2 credits) – 1st half of Spring

Other Required Classes:

- Administrative Law (3 credits) – must be completed before graduation
- Criminal Procedure I (3 credits) – must be completed before graduation

Additional Requirements:

- Attend all TPI sponsored events unless prior permission from the TPI Director
- Maintain professional dress and decorum during TPI classes and TPI sponsored events

I understand that the TPI Certificate Program requires the completion of 20 credit hours in addition to the Courtroom Technology Lab. I also understand that TPI students are required to attend all TPI sponsored events and maintain professional dress and decorum during TPI classes and TPI sponsored events. _____ *(please initial)*

I understand that scheduling of these classes is subject to administrative constraints. Although the needs of individuals will be considered as a part of the process, it will not be possible to accommodate every request. I understand that some courses may be offered only in the evening (or, on rare occasions, only in the day), and that NO deviations from the schedule will be authorized or permitted. I also understand that the Trial Practice program is a premier program at MSU College of Law and that the Law College is consistently trying to improve it. Thus, I understand that occasional changes to the program may be necessary, and I agree to be bound by those changes. _____ *(please initial)*

I understand that none of the TPI classes can be taken pass/fail with the exception of Advocacy as a Performing Art. All other TPI classes, including Forensic Science, must be taken for a letter grade. I understand that any changes or exceptions to this grade policy must be in writing and signed by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. _____ *(please initial)*

I understand that participation in any other program at the Law College, if it interferes with the timely completion of the TPI Certificate Program (for example, the D.C. Externship Program), will be permitted only if approved in advance and in writing by the TPI Director & Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. _____ *(please initial)*

Finally, I understand that the TPI Certificate Program is a highly rewarding program and its demands are correspondingly high. If admitted, I will commit myself to the requirements of the program. In addition, I understand that if I fail to comply with the TPI Certificate Program requirements, including but not limited to attending TPI sponsored events and maintaining professional dress and decorum, that I may be removed from the program. _____ *(please initial)*

THE REGISTRAR'S OFFICE HAS PERMISSION TO PROVIDE A COPY OF MY CURRENT TRANSCRIPT TO DEAN KUYKENDALL FOR PURPOSES OF THIS APPLICATION. _____ *(please initial)*

Signature _____

PID _____

Date _____