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## May 2011 E-newsletter Faculty Spotlight: Andrea Dennis

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## Faculty Spotlight: Andrea Dennis

### News @ Georgia Law May 2011 Faculty Profile

**Name:** Andrea L. Dennis

**Title:** Associate Professor of Law

**Courses taught:** Criminal Law, Evidence, Criminal Procedure

**Hometown:** Silver Spring, Md.

**Law school/graduation year:** New York University/1997

**Other degree(s)/institution(s)/year(s):** B.S./University of Maryland at College Park/1994



#### 1. What influenced your decision to go to law school?

- I was interested in many different disciplines, including psychology, engineering, history and public policy. I choose law school once I learned that being a lawyer afforded me the chance to explore and possibly meld a diversity of interests.

#### 2. What did you do before entering the legal teaching academy?

- I practiced in a variety of contexts. After clerking for a federal district court judge, I worked at Covington & Burling as an associate on commercial, patent and white collar litigation matters, as well as antitrust matters. While at Covington, I also completed a stint as a special prosecutor handling child abuse and neglect cases for the D.C. government. After several years, I left Covington to become an assistant federal public defender in Maryland. Between practicing and entering academia, I did policy and programming work for the National Office of Job Corps.

#### 3. How did you choose your legal specialty when you practiced law?

- Having worked in a variety of different areas, ultimately I settled on criminal defense because I found it to be interesting, challenging and fulfilling.

#### 4. What did you enjoy most about this area of law?

- Giving voice to my clients and getting to know my clients as individuals, not simply defendants.

#### 5. What made you decide to become a professor?

- Being a professor combines the best of all worlds: the chance to shape a new generation of lawyers, the luxury to research issues in depth and the option to work on cases.

**6. What do you enjoy most about your job? What is the most rewarding aspect of being a professor?**

- Working with students and exploring my own interests.

**7. What are you currently researching?**

- I am collaborating with a social scientist on a piece investigating the impact of criminal history on the legal experience of female intimate partner violence offenders.

**8. How do you stay up to date on legal issues and trends?**

- By talking with my colleagues here and elsewhere, talking with students, and reading electronic resources such as online newspapers, legal blogs and legal news aggregators.

**9. What book/resource do you find yourself referencing the most?**

- Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.

**10. What advice would you give to current law students?**

- Revel in this time you have to learn without borders.

**11. What is your favorite thing about living in Athens?**

- The vibrant community.

**12. What do you enjoy doing in your free time? What are your hobbies?**

- Playing tennis.

**13. If you could share an afternoon with anyone, with whom would you choose to spend it?**

- Arthur Ashe (professional tennis player and international humanitarian).