2-1-2012

Feb. 2012 E-newsletter Faculty Spotlight: Jessica L. Heywood (J.D.'97)

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Recommended Citation
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Faculty Spotlight: Jessica L. Heywood (J.D.'97)

Name: Jessica L. Heywood
Title: Washington, D.C., Semester in Practice Instructor
Hometown: Born in Palo Alto, Calif.; raised in Augusta, Ga.
Law school/graduation year: University of Georgia/1997
Other degree(s)/institution(s)/year(s): B.A. in political science/Emory

1. What influenced your decision to go to law school?
   > There are no lawyers in my family, but I debated competitively in high school and college and found I really enjoyed research, writing and constructing arguments.

2. What did you do before entering the legal teaching academy?
   > I clerked for a judge, worked in law firms and most recently served as director of career and professional development and clinical instructor at a law school in Washington, D.C.

3. What made you decide to become a faculty member at Georgia Law?
   > Georgia Law holds a special place for me. My brother, Sam Heywood, and I both graduated from the law school and owe a lot of our success to our experiences at UGA. The opportunity to “return” to UGA while still living in D.C. was an easy decision.

4. Please describe your role as the Washington, D.C., Semester in Practice instructor.
   > I am responsible for soliciting and vetting placements for the program, matching students with placements, monitoring students during the course of the semester and teaching a two-hour graded seminar.

5. What do you enjoy most about your job? What is the most rewarding aspect?
   > In many ways, clinical instruction is a “bridge” from law school to the actual practice of law. Working with law students as they transition to the next phase of their professional careers is incredibly rewarding.

6. What type of influence do you hope to have on your students?
   > My goal is to provide students with the skills necessary to think critically about their professional development, and to use those skills throughout their legal careers.

7. What do you enjoy most about clinical instruction?
   > Clinical programs provide students with the opportunity to hone practical lawyering skills in an academic setting and ready themselves for the actual practice of law. Helping students prepare for and transition to a successful legal career is exciting and inspiring.

8. What is your favorite thing about living in Washington, D.C.?
   > Washington has all of the advantages of big-city living (world-class museums and cultural events) with a small town feel. Washington is a very livable city.

9. What do you enjoy doing in your free time? What are your hobbies?
   > I enjoy reading, cooking, working out and traveling.

10. What advice would you give to current law students?
    > The advice my father always gave me: “work hard and make yourself indispensable.”