THE WLRC’S MISSION is to help students understand, welcome, and meet legal education’s academic challenges. Center faculty focus especially on helping students to develop a professional voice as lawyers and to practice using that voice powerfully. We thus challenge students to achieve legal literacy: ability both to read and write as lawyers. We simultaneously teach students the closely related skill of researching: searching strategically for information and then sorting, analyzing, and organizing it in ways that empower communication through and about the law. We also explore with students the professionalism that undergirds effective communication and advocacy by lawyers.

The WLRC pursues its mission primarily through the nationally recognized Research, Reasoning, Writing, and Advocacy (RRWA) Program — ranked 19th by U.S. News & World Report’s “America’s Best Graduate Schools” 2017 edition. During two intensive semesters, first-year students work in small class sections to develop key skills for legal practice.

A related set of courses trains a select group of outstanding third-year students called Honors Writing Scholars. Those 3Ls then assist WLRC faculty as instructional mentors for first-year students.

In addition, all WLRC faculty support the law school’s Academic Excellence Program. Leading those efforts for first-year students are Professors Bishop and Salinas.

“The WLRC’s programs don’t just teach students how to be successful lawyers; they teach students how to lead fulfilling lives.”

—KENLEY EAGLESTONE, CLASS OF 2014

www.law.unc.edu/academics/wlrc

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The WLRC offers assistance inclusively to all students, starting before the first-year orientation. Through the RRWA Program’s experiential classes, activities, and small-group and individual meetings, plus through optional academic assistance for 1Ls, WLRC faculty and staff guide students as they adjust to law study and professional life. Additional mentoring comes from the 14 outstanding 3Ls who serve as Honors Writing Scholars.
KEVIN BENNARDO, Clinical Associate Professor. Bennardo’s professional experience includes working for federal judges at both the trial and appellate levels, practicing intellectual property law at a multinational law firm, and serving as court counsel for the Supreme Court of the Republic of Palau. His published works have been cited by numerous case books, legal treatises, and judicial opinions.

KACI BISHOP, Clinical Associate Professor. A Davis Society graduate of UNC School of Law, Bishop previously clerked at the Court of Appeals of North Carolina and worked at the North Carolina Justice Center. She has taught in the school’s Immigration Clinic and will teach there again in fall 2016.

ALEXA CHEW, Clinical Associate Professor. A graduate of Princeton and Duke, Chew came to UNC after working as an associate at a large firm, teaching at Campbell University, and serving as a longtime judicial clerk at the Court of Appeals of North Carolina. She is the author of The Complete Legal Writer (2016). She also teaches UNC’s LL.M. students.

LUKE EVERETT, Clinical Associate Professor. A former high-school teacher with a master’s degree in teaching, Everett also has gleaned wisdom and experience from running a prestigious century-old law firm in Durham, N.C. In spring 2017 he will teach Small Firm Civil Practice.

RACHEL GURVICH, Clinical Assistant Professor. A graduate of UNC and Harvard, Gurvich clerked at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit and practiced at a major international law firm, focusing on intellectual property and appellate litigation. She also served as a Special Assistant District Attorney and taught as an adjunct at Boston College Law School.

SARA WARF, Clinical Assistant Professor. With bachelor and law degrees from UNC, plus a background in academic publishing, Warf has practiced as an appellate attorney in a major Raleigh firm, clerked for two judges at the Court of Appeals of North Carolina, and taught at Campbell Law School. In spring 2017, she will teach Judicial Clerkship Writing.

O.J. SALINAS, Clinical Associate Professor. A native of South Texas, Salinas previously practiced civil litigation, earned a master’s in counseling, and taught law-related courses to undergraduates and master’s students. He has special expertise in academic counseling at the undergraduate and law-school levels. He has taught UNC’s Negotiation course and is the author of A Short and Happy Guide to Effective Client Interviewing and Counseling (2016).

CRAIG SMITH, Clinical Professor and Assistant Dean for the WLRC. Smith clerked at a U.S. District Court, practiced with a law firm, earned an LL.M. in Germany, taught law at Vanderbilt, Penn State, and German universities, and served as president of the Association of Legal Writing Directors. He also teaches the Honors Writing Scholars.

WYATT ORSBON, Clinical Assistant Professor. Orsbon is a graduate of St. John’s College, University of the Pacific’s McGeorge School of Law, and University College London. He previously taught legal writing at North Carolina Central University School of Law and clerked at both the North Carolina Supreme Court and the North Carolina Court of Appeals. He also teaches UNC’s LL.M. students.

STAFF

PATRICIA FREY, WLRC Business Services Coordinator. Since 2000, Frey has served as the WLRC’s primary welcoming presence, assistant, and wellness consultant. She has more than 40 years of experience and is a certified life coach and yoga instructor who shares with the law school community instruction in gentle yoga and stress management.