

Conference

University Legal Clinics : between
normalisation, subversion and
transformation



June, 4-5 2026



PRESENTATION

The conference proposes to explore the inherent tensions experienced by legal clinics as they navigate between normalisation, subversion and transformation. By offering opportunities for legal clinics to exchange about experiences within a variety of contexts, including from the global south – this conference will strive to open a reflection space on the way legal clinics, despite their diverse backgrounds, develop strategies to challenge established norms, while taking a clear-eyed look at the various constraints they face.

Co-organized by the legal clinics of Quebec universities and the University of Ottawa, in collaboration with the Réseau des Cliniques Juridiques Francophones and the Canadian Association for Clinical Legal Education.

FR

Session delivered in French with simultaneous interpretation available in English

PROGRAM - AM

THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2026

Université du Québec à Montréal
Président-Kennedy Pavilion (PK)

8h30 **REGISTRATION AND WELCOME**

9h00 **OPENING SESSION**

9h30 **PLENARY SESSION 1 (HYBRID)**

Room PK-1140

WORKSHOP "LEARNING THE LAW IN RELATIONSHIP: WHAT EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION MEANS TO STUDENTS AND LAWYERS"

Sarah Buhler (in-person), Chantelle Johnson Smyth (in-person), Nick Kinnish (online), and Gemma Smyth (in-person)

11h00 **BREAK**

11h30 **PLENARY SESSION 2 (IN-PERSON)**

Room PK-1140

PANEL "ANISHINAABE PEDAGOGIES AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING IN CLINIC & EXPERIENTIAL LEGAL EDUCATION"

Jamie Holmes, Rebecca Hammond, and Gemma Smyth (in-person)

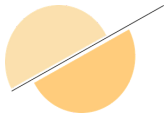
12h30 **LUNCH**

Rooms PK-1140 and PK-1150

PROGRAM - PM

THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2026

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CONCURRENT SESSIONS

14h00

SESSION 3 (IN PERSON)

Room PK-1140

A

FR

PANEL "LEGAL CLINICS PUT TO THE TEST BY THE QUESTIONING OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW: ADVANCING THROUGH MINEFIELDS"

Mirja Trilsch, Laurence Guénette, Daniel Crespo Villarreal and Érick Sullivan (in-person))

14h00

SESSION 3 (HYBRID)

Room PK-1780

B

FR

ROUNDTABLE "SPECIALIZED UNIVERSITY LEGAL CLINICS AND THEIR ROLE IN ACCESS TO JUSTICE: THE EXAMPLE OF CLINICS IN BUSINESS LAW, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW, FINANCIAL SERVICES LAW, AND TECHNOLOGY LAW"

Moderator: Véronique Fortin

Doug Sarro, Gilles de Saint-Exupéry, Cinthia Duclos, Patrick Mignault, Frédéric Letendre, and Céline Moille (in-person)

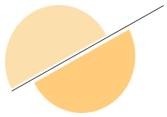
15h30

BREAK

PROGRAM - PM

THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2026

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CONCURRENT SESSIONS

16h00

SESSION 4 (HYBRID)

Room PK-1140

A

ROUNDTABLE ON BILL 75 (QUEBEC)

Moderator: Érick Sullivan

FR

THE NORMALIZATION OF LEGAL ADVICE IN QUEBEC OR THE TWELVE TASKS OF ASTERIX

Sophie Laviolette, Jérémie Côté and Virginie Côté (in-person)

FR

THE LEGAL FACTORY (LA FABRIQUE JURIDIQUE): BALANCING PEDAGOGY, PUBLIC INTEREST, AND INTERDISCIPLINARITY

Véronic Boyer and Célyne Lalande (online)

16h00

SESSION 4 (HYBRID)

Room PK-1780

B

PANEL ON THE CONSTRAINTS OF RESEARCH AND LEGAL CLINICAL EDUCATION

FR

LEGAL CLINIC FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME - UDEM

Jo-Anne Wemmers, Amissi M. Manirabona, Alain-Guy Sipowo, and Andreea Zota (in-person)

INCORPORATING RESEARCH IN CLINICAL SETTING

Andrew Eckart (online)

BETWEEN SANISM AND STRUCTURAL DETERMINANTS: NAVIGATING INSTITUTIONAL PRESSURES AND MOVEMENT LAWYERING IN MENTAL HEALTH SETTINGS

Marina McKenzie (in-person) and Matthew Cheng (online)

17h30

CLOSING OF DAY 1

Room PK-1140

19h00

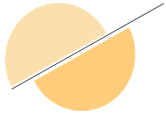
DINNER AT A RESTAURANT

Optional activity, individual contribution
(registrations closed)

PROGRAM - AM

FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2026

Université du Québec à Montréal
Président-Kennedy Pavilion (PK)



CONCURRENT SESSIONS

8h00

WELCOME

8h30

SESSION 5 (HYBRID)

Room PK-1140

A

PANEL ON DECOLONIZATION AND RESISTANCE IN LEGAL CLINICS

FR

DECOLONIZING LEGAL CLINICS: EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL CHALLENGES FROM THE MERCATOR NETWORK EXPERIENCE

Sylvie Sarolea and Ilham Hamdai (in-person)

FR

UNIVERSITY LEGAL CLINICS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: LIMITS AND POSSIBILITIES OF RESISTANCE, THE CASE OF MOROCCO

Saïda Latmani and Soukaina EIHAJJAJI (online)

8h30

SESSION 5 (ONLINE)

Room PK-1350

B

PANEL ON THE POWERS OF NORMALIZATION, SUBVERSION, AND TRANSFORMATION OF EMERGING LEGAL CLINICS

FR

LEGAL CLINICS BETWEEN STABILITY AND TRANSFORMATION: EXPERIENCES IN MARRAKECH

Elhabib Stati Zineddine (online)

FR

AFRICAN LEGAL CLINICS BETWEEN STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS AND EMANCIPATORY MISSION: THE EXPERIENCE OF CEJUS IN TOGO

Célestin KOTCHADJO Komlan (online)

REIMAGINING THE ROLE OF LAW CLINICS IN ZIMBABWE: FROM SOCIAL JUSTICE TO VEHICLES OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Chengetai Hamadziripi (online)

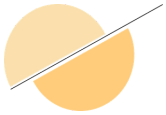
9h30

BREAK

PROGRAM - AM

FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2026

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Président-Kennedy Pavilion (PK)



CONCURRENT SESSIONS

10h00

A

SESSION 6 (HYBRID)

Room PK-1140

PANEL ON RACISM AND GENDER

FR

DEVELOPING AN ANTI-RACIST CLINICAL PEDAGOGY IN LAW FACULTIES: TENSIONS, OBSTACLES, AND HORIZONS

Andrea Velasquez, Djemila Carron, and Charlotte Hamel (in-person)

FR

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF LEGAL CLINICS - THE EXAMPLE OF THE LAW CLINIC ON THE RIGHTS OF VULNERABLE PERSONS AND THE UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA

Olivia Le Fort (online)

REVIEW OF TEN YEARS OF A GLOBAL SOUTH LEGAL CLINIC: TENSIONS, POSSIBILITIES, AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGIES IN THE FACE OF THE ANTI-GENDER AGENDA

Taysa Schiocchet, Clara Viana Lage Meirelles, and Taíza Soares de Assis (in-person)

10h00

B

SESSION 6 (HYBRID)

Room PK-1350

PANEL ON CONSTRAINTS LIMITING LEGAL CLINIC ACTIVITIES

FR

10 YEARS OF CLINICAL EXPERIENCE: THE EVOLUTION OF THE CJDE UNDER (NEO)LIBERAL PRESSURE

Selma Josso (online)

FR

CLINICAL LEARNING: AN ANTIDOTE TO THE LOGIC OF PERFORMANCE

Marie-Pier Durand, Ariane Savard, and Sarah-Maude Biron (in-person)

SQUARE PEG IN A ROUND HOLE

Peter Duke, Jessica Sim, and Nadia Shivji (in-person)

11h30

LUNCH

Rooms PK-1140 and PK-1150

PROGRAM - PM

FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2026

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Président-Kennedy Pavilion (PK)

13h00

PLENARY SESSION 7 (HYBRID)

Room PK-1140

PANEL ON CLINICAL PEDAGOGIES

UNLEARNING THE ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL CLINIC: THE POTENTIAL FOR COGNITIVE APPRENTICESHIP MODELS IN CLE

Sydnee Blum (in-person)

FR

TRAINING CRITICAL AND HIGH-PERFORMING DIPLOMATS: NAVIGATING BETWEEN IMAGINED URGENCY AND THE LONG TERM OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

Valériane Thool and Ariane Pépin (in-person)

FR

CLINICAL WORK FACING THE LIMITS OF LAW: REFLECTIONS ON INTERDISCIPLINARITY, REFLECTION, AND CRITIQUE

Bastien Charaudeau Sautomauro (online)

FR

TENSIONS OF A LEGAL CLINIC BETWEEN THE MISSION OF LEGAL OUTREACH AND THE DRAFTING CONSTRAINTS OF ACADEMIC RIGOR

Léa Borlat, Anaïs Bayrou, and Antoinette Maget Dominicé (online)

14h30

SYNTHESIS AND CLOSING REMARKS



UNIVERSITY LEGAL CLINICS

University legal clinics emerged during a period of pedagogical protest about the way law was being taught in the United States in the beginning of the 20th century. Over the past century, the history of the legal clinic movement in North America has been greatly impacted by the social movements of the 1960s and 70s and thus moved towards an approach that became more globalised, and which progressively normalised the presence of legal clinics in North American universities. The transformation of legal clinics from being marginal entities to becoming accepted and even valued puts into question the very function of these legal clinics within the university institution, especially since this movement is not global and not all forms of clinics enjoy the same level of support.

Today, a wide range of university legal clinic models have two main objectives: one that is pedagogical in nature and the other, which is to support public interest. Underneath these two key objectives, which appear to go hand in hand, lie tensions, including the weight and importance each clinic gives to either objective. On the one hand, not all university legal clinics have the same understanding of what “training law professionals” means. On the other hand, the public interest objective of contributing to “access to justice” or social justice is understood and applied differently. While certain clinics concentrate on the training of professionals for the labor market – with or without a focus on social justice issues –, others insist on an education which highlights the flaws and oppressions created by the justice system, the legal profession and the law itself. In reality, under this apparent dichotomy between clinic models, most clinics must find a balance between institutional reasoning and constraints of universities, faculty and students, the bar, in addition to the job market, and the political, economic and cultural context. To deal with these multiple constraints, which vary from one context to another, legal clinics tend to continuously oscillate between strategies of normalisation, subversion or transformation.

THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS!



Law Commission of Canada
Commission du droit du Canada



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Réseau des Cliniques
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