



## **Criminal Law**

**What would I do?** Criminal defense lawyers represent clients accused of crimes. Their public counterparts are the prosecutors and district attorneys who represent the interests of the state in the prosecution of those accused of crimes. Both types of criminal lawyers deal with fundamental issues of the law and personal liberty. They defend many of the basic rights considered crucial to the preservation of a free and just society. (<http://www.lsac.org/jd/thinking-about-law-school/fields-of-law>)

**Where would I practice?** Criminal lawyers represent either the state or individuals on a wide range of crimes ranging from simple misdemeanor traffic violations to first degree murder. Settings for criminal lawyers include **governmental agencies** at either the federal, state or local level, or, in the case of non-indigent defense work, for **small or solo private practices**. (<https://www.law.georgetown.edu/careers/career-planning/practice-areas/criminal.cfm>)

**What types of cases would I handle?** (<https://www.hq.org/crime.html>)

- Petty theft
- Murder
- Burglary
- First-offense drunk driving
- Embezzlement
- Procedural violations
- Possession of small amounts of controlled substances

**What schools in Florida specialize in this field of law?<sup>1</sup>**

School Name	Specialty Program(s) <sup>2</sup>
Barry University Dwayne O. Andreas School of Law (Orlando)	- <b>Criminal Defense Externship Program</b>
Florida A&M University College of Law (Orlando)	- <b>Criminal Defense Clinic</b>
Florida Coastal School of Law (Jacksonville)	- <b>Criminal Law Certificate</b>
Florida International University College of Law (Miami)	- <b>Death Penalty Clinic</b> - <b>Criminal Externship Placement</b> - <b>Florida Center for Capital Representation</b>
Florida State University College of Law (Tallahassee)	- <b>Criminal Practice Clinic</b> - <b>Criminal Justice Externship</b>
Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad Law Center (Davie)	- <b>Criminal Justice Clinic</b>

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**Fields of Law**  
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School Name	Specialty Program(s) <sup>2</sup>
St. Thomas University School of Law (Miami)	- <b>Criminal Practice Externship</b>
Stetson University College of Law (Gulfport)	- <b>Prosecution Clinic</b> - <b>Public Defender Clinic</b>
University of Florida, Frederic G. Levin College of Law (Gainesville)	- <b>Criminal Justice Certificate Program</b> - <b>Prosecution Clinic</b> - <b>Criminal Defense Clinic</b> - <b>Criminal Law Externship</b> - <b>Criminal Justice Center</b>
University of Miami School of Law (Miami)	- <b>Innocence Clinic</b> - <b>Death Penalty Practicum</b>
Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley Law School (Tampa)	- <b>Access to Justice Clinic</b> <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This is not an exhaustive list of Florida schools specializing in this field. **Although these schools offer specialty programs in this field, this does not mean you are unable to gain exposure to this field at another law school not listed above.**

<sup>2</sup>Information obtained through school website and [officialguide.lisac.org](http://officialguide.lisac.org)

<sup>3</sup>This program is offered across WMU's regional campuses, contact the Tampa Bay, FL location to confirm its offering.

## What are these “specialty programs?”

Specialty Program	Definition
<b>Certificates</b>	Specialization certificates allow JD students to focus their elective courses, build substantive knowledge and relevant skills, and enhance their resumes. Though specializations are not required for graduation, they can provide a guiding structure for exploration of various fields of law. With a variety of courses to choose from within each field, students can customize their specialization to their particular area of interest. <a href="http://law.qqu.edu/academics/specialization-certificates/">(http://law.qqu.edu/academics/specialization-certificates/)</a>
<b>Clinics</b>	At many law schools, clinical pedagogy is well established and robust. Typically clinics are focused in areas of law – civil or criminal litigation, civil rights litigation, or representation of community organizations. These clinics involve “live” clients with active legal matters. They include a classroom component and close supervision by a clinical faculty member. <a href="http://digitalcommons.tourolaw.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&amp;context=jel">http://digitalcommons.tourolaw.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&amp;context=jel</a> )

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Specialty Program	Definition
<b>Concentrations</b>	<p>"While it is not the best comparison to make, a Concentration is similar to a major in undergraduate studies, in that a student with a specific interest in a field can do focused study in that field. A major difference though, is that students who graduate law school with a Concentration will have the same degree as those without a Concentration, a juris doctor, that will be viable in any area of law in which they wish to practice."  <a href="http://www.lls.edu/academics/concentrations/">(http://www.lls.edu/academics/concentrations/)</a></p>
<b>Externships</b>	<p>Today, accepted externship pedagogy involves faculty instruction in a classroom component to every externship opportunity, and some training for the practitioner supervising attorneys. Further, while externships used to include the equivalent of 3-5 credit hours of work outside the law school, an emerging form of externship involves the student spending the entire semester, and 15 credits, working onsite on an externship assignment.  <a href="http://digitalcommons.tourolaw.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&amp;context=jel">http://digitalcommons.tourolaw.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&amp;context=jel</a>)</p>
<b>Practicum</b>	<p>In practicum classes law students get hands-on learning working under the supervision of attorneys and professors in a non-lawyering role as they work on cases and practica give students insight into a specific area of legal interest and a window into what it is like to practice in that area.  <a href="http://www.law.miami.edu/academics/externships-fellowships">http://www.law.miami.edu/academics/externships-fellowships</a>)</p>