At Northeastern University School of Law, students are challenged to think about social justice and what it means to practice law in the public interest.

The Legal Skills in Social Context (LSSC) Social Justice Program is a partnership between community organizations or agencies and the School of Law to address unmet social justice needs.

Each organization selected to join the program receives 2,000 hours of closely supervised free work by students organized into “law offices.”
Legal Skills in Social Context

The Legal Skills in Social Context Course

LSSC is an intensive first-year critical reasoning and practice course that focuses on developing students’ analytic, advocacy and team-lawyering skills through an exploration of the complex interplay between law and issues of diversity. It is the only course of its kind in the nation, and is renowned for:

- Exposing law students to the complex relationships among law, diversity, values and multicultural American society, as applied to historically marginalized groups.
- Challenging students’ values to help sensitize them to the formidable tasks involved in addressing societal differences.
- Requiring students to develop critical analytical and problem-solving skills in the context of team lawyering.
- Providing an opportunity to create representational relationships between Northeastern students and community organizations.

“We could not have carried out such an in-depth and extensive analysis of the complex issues facing the Access to Justice for Pro Se Litigants Committee without the dedication and effective work of the LSSC students.”

– Edward Notis-McConarty
Chair, Boston Bar Association, Task Force on Pro Se Litigants

The Social Justice Program

As part of the School of Law’s commitment to experiential learning and community partnerships, students in the LSSC Program employ their analytical research and writing skills to address social justice challenges identified by a wide range of community organizations and agencies. The program benefits organizations by pursuing aspects of your social justice agenda that you might otherwise forego due to staffing or resource constraints. The program provides your organization with a free and closely supervised legal and acumen of two upper-level law student lawyering fellows and 14 first-year law students, all under close faculty supervision. Above all, you will contribute to the legal education of future lawyers by participating in this team-lawyering effort and by introducing students to the spirit and practice of community lawyering. In order to participate in the LSSC Program, your organization must meet the following requirements (see application form for additional expectations):

- You must propose a project that can be completed in 10 to 11 weeks and involves both legal and investigative field research components (i.e., it must present a social justice question to be addressed within a real-world context that requires case law, statutory and/or policy research as well as anecdotal research based on interviews and meetings with experts, stakeholders and site visits).
- You must complete and return the application materials by Thursday, June 30, 2011.
- You must designate a contact person (or persons) who will be available to provide assistance to the students for the duration of the entire project – from September 2011 through the end of May 2012.

The Process

APPLYING:
- Identify a compelling social justice issue.
- Complete the application form available in hard copy or online and return it to the LSSC Program by Thursday, June 30, 2011.

NOTIFICATION OF SELECTION:
- Your organization will be notified by early July if your proposal presents an appropriate learning opportunity for our students and can feasibly be completed in the time frame provided.

MOVING FORWARD:
- Once your proposal has been accepted, an upper-level lawyering fellow will be assigned to coordinate your “law office” team of approximately 14 first-year students.
- The project research will be completed by mid March. The student law office responsible for your project will make an oral presentation of its findings in April, and a final written report will be presented to your organization in May.

Please visit our Web site at www.northeastern.edu/law/lssc for a more detailed description of the program and projects completed in recent years.