Amicus Curiae Project - An Advanced Research and Writing Course

**Description:**
Today more than ever, amici curiae (“friends of the court”) play a leading role in shaping the law. Amici are not parties to a case but add their voice because they have an interest in the outcome. Amici can influence courts by providing legal, factual, or policy analysis not provided by the parties. In this course, students, working in pairs, research and write amicus briefs that, while not filed in court, are based on real cases pending in the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. Past briefs have addressed such topics as whether the necessity defense applies to a charge of criminal trespass against a homeless person who slept on private property to escape the cold; whether blog posts can be protected petitioning activity, under the Massachusetts anti-SLAPP statute, where the authors are political activists rather than professional journalists; and whether an arbitrator has the authority to reinstate a police officer who was terminated for using a chokehold on a disorderly person. Useful prerequisites are Legal Writing Workshop, Advanced Legal Research, and Appellate Practice. Students can apply by submitting a resume and unofficial transcript (with narrative evaluations) to the instructor.

**Enrollment Cap:**
The course is limited to six students.

**Instructions to Apply:**
Interested students should submit a resume and unofficial transcript (with narrative evaluations) to Professor Philipson at alexphilipson@gmail.com by Friday, January 11th at 5 pm. Professor Philipson will schedule interviews, by phone if necessary. Students will be notified of selection by Wednesday, January 16th.

**Application Deadline:**
Friday, January 11th at 5 pm