

CLAIRE S. RAJ

University of South Carolina Joseph F. Rice School of Law
1525 Senate Street, Columbia, SC 29208 · (803) 777-1391 · rajc@law.sc.edu

CURRENT POSITIONS

University of South Carolina Joseph F. Rice School of Law, Columbia, SC
Professor 2023 - present
Associate Professor 2020 - 2023
Assistant Professor 2015 - 2020
Visiting Assistant Professor 2012 – 2013, January 2014 – May 2015

- Founded and direct the Education Rights Clinic. Supervise student attorneys in cases involving access to education, including: special education services, discipline and expulsion matters, language access and enrollment issues.
- Doctrinal courses taught: Special Education Law; Parents, Children and the State

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Poverty, Process, and the Right to an “Appropriate” Education, 74 DUKE L.J. (forthcoming Spring 2025).

Masks, Mayhem, and the Future of Disability Rights in Schools, 25 N.Y.U. J. LEGIS. & PUB. POL’Y 247 (2023) (co-authored with Crystal Grant).

Rights to Nowhere: The IDEA’s Inadequacy in High Poverty Schools, 53 COLUM. HUM. RTS. L. REV. 409 (2022).

The Lost Promise of Disability Rights, 119 MICH.L.REV. 993 (2021).

The Promise and Peril of Using Disability Law as a Tool for School Reform, 94 WASH.L.REV. 1831 (2019).

Coerced Choice: School Vouchers and Students with Disabilities, 68 EMORY L.J. 1038 (2019).

Disability, Discipline, and Illusory Student Rights, 65 UCLA L. REV. 860 (2018).

Andrew F.’s Unintended Consequences, 46 J.L. & EDUC. 499 (2017) (co-authored with Emily Suski).

The Misidentification of Children with Disabilities: A Harm With No Foul, 48 ARIZ. STATE L.J. 373 (2016).

The Gap Between Rights and Reality: The Intersection of Language, Disability, and Educational Opportunity, 87 TEMPLE L. REV. 283 (2015).

EDUCATION

Case Western Reserve University School of Law, Cleveland, OH
Juris Doctor, May 2003

University of Rochester, Rochester, NY
Bachelor of Arts, Political Science, May 2000

Study Abroad: **Institute of Political Science and Economics**, London, England, Spring 1999

OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Washington, DC Jan. – June 2024
Special Counsel (temporary IPA appointment)

Assisted with research and drafting of proposed rulemaking with respect to federal regulations implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Howard University School of Law, Washington, DC April 2008 – May 2012
Externship Director & Instructor

Directed legal externship program and taught seminar on public interest lawyering for students who participate in externship program.

Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project Coordinator & Instructor

Supervised second and third year law students who taught constitutional law and juvenile justice at local public high schools. Planned and facilitated moot court competition with high school student participants.

Equal Justice Program Coordinator

Coordinated pro bono opportunities for law students. Facilitated partnerships with legal employers interested in supporting Howard public interest law students through fellowships, internships, and donations to the Howard Public Interest Fellowship Fund.

American University, Washington College of Law (WCL), Washington, DC
Assistant Director, Public Interest Specialist September 2006 – April 2008
Office of Career & Professional Development

Supported and assisted law students with professional interests in the fields of public interest and government work.

Adjunct Professor, Advanced Externship Seminar Fall 2007 & Spring 2008

Taught an externship seminar course focused on social justice lawyering, diversity in the legal profession, and professional skills.

The Children's Law Center, Washington, DC
Staff Attorney November 2004 – September 2006

Represented clients in neglect proceedings before judges in D.C. Superior Court. Prepared and litigated neglect and guardianship trials.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

What COVID-19 Mask Litigation Can Teach us about Disability Rights, NYU School of Law Clinical Law Review Workshop, October 8, 2022 (presenter).

What COVID-19 Mask Litigation Can Teach us about Disability Rights, AALS Education Law Section Works-In-Progress, University of Illinois Chicago School of Law, September 16, 2022 (presenter).

Education Law Working Group, AALS Clinical Law Conference, virtual, May 13, 2022 (co-facilitator).

Inclusive Education, Diversity Equity and Inclusion Initiative, Princeton School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton, NJ, March 17, 2022 (invited speaker).

Diversity and Inclusion, Inaugural William Hubbard Conference on Law & Education, University of South Carolina School of Law, Columbia, SC, February 25, 2022 (moderator).

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Past, Present, and Future, School of Education Summer Institute on Education Equity and Justice, American University, Washington, DC, June 28, 2021 (panelist).

The Impacts of Covid-19 on Education Law, SC Bar Education Law Committee, November 17, 2020 (moderator).

Child Find: The Latest Thorny Issues, Special Education Law Symposium, Lehigh University College of Education, June 22, 2020.

Ethical Issues in Special Education Law, Education Advocacy CLE, SC Appleseed Legal Justice Center, Columbia, SC, August 9, 2019.

Trauma as Disability and the Coming Expansion of Disability by Neighborhood, works-in-progress, Southern Clinical Conference, University of South Carolina School of Law, October 19, 2018.

Educating Students with Disabilities in the Era of School Choice, works-in-progress, AALS Clinical Conference, Denver, CO, May 9, 2017.

Special Education and Educational Rights, Children's Law Conference, Children's Law Center, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC, November 17, 2017.

Educating Students with Disabilities in the Era of School Choice, works-in-progress, AALS Clinical Conference, Denver, CO, May 9, 2017.

The Role of Educational Advocates in Ensuring Educational Access, Southeastern School Behavioral Health Conference, Myrtle Beach, SC, April 27, 2017.

Collaborating with Mandatory Reporters, Southern Clinical Conference, Louisiana State University Paul M. Herbert Law Center, Baton Rouge, LA, October 20, 2017 (panelist).

Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District: How much education is enough for children with disabilities? University of South Carolina School of Law, Columbia, SC, February 23, 2017.

Crashing the Party: Teaching Students to Lawyer Where Lawyers Haven't Been, Southern Clinical Conference, Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center, Baton Rouge, LA, October 15, 2016 (panelist).

The Intersection of Adolescent Development, Behavior and Disability, School to Prison Pipeline CLE, Columbia, SC, June 24, 2016.

The Misidentification of Children with Disabilities: A Harm with No Foul, School-to-Prison Pipeline in Indian Country Symposium, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, March 27, 2015.

SELECTIVE SERVICE

Co-Chair, Section on Clinical Legal Education, Association of American Law Schools (AALS), 2021-2022.

Faculty Advisor, Journal of Law and Education, University of South Carolina School of Law, 2019 – present.

Director, Constitutional Scholars Pipeline Program, University of South Carolina School of Law, 2015 – 2017.

AWARDS

Outstanding Faculty Publication Award, University of South Carolina School of Law, 2019.

Teacher of the Year, Howard University School of Law, Student Bar Association, 2012.

Public Interest Faculty/Staff Award, American University, Washington College of Law Public Interest Law Student Group, 2007.

BAR ADMITTANCE

South Carolina (active), District of Columbia (active), Pennsylvania (inactive)