



Higher-Level Felony Defense

September 8-10, 2026 / Chapel Hill, NC

*Co-sponsored by the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Government
& the North Carolina Office of Indigent Defense Services*

Tuesday, September 8

12:30-1:00 pm	<i>Check-in</i>
1:00-1:15	Welcome
1:15-2:15	Mitigation Investigation (60 mins.) Josie Van Dyke, Mitigation Specialist Sentencing Solutions, Inc., Knightdale, NC
2:15-3:15	Defending Eyewitness Identification Cases (60 mins.) Laura Gibson, Assistant Public Defender Beaufort County Office of the Public Defender, Washington, NC
3:15-3:30	<i>Break</i>
3:30-4:15	Preparing to Defend High Level Felonies (45 mins.) Phil Dixon, Teaching Associate Professor UNC School of Government, Chapel Hill, NC
4:15-5:15	Self-Defense Update (60 mins.) John Rubin, Professor of Public Law and Government UNC School of Government, Chapel Hill, NC
5:15	<i>Adjourn</i>



Wednesday, September 9

9:00-10:15 am	The Law of Sentencing Serious Felonies (75 mins.) Jamie Markham, Thomas Willis Lambeth Distinguished Chair in Public Policy UNC School of Government, Chapel Hill, NC
10:15-10:30	<i>Break</i>
10:30-11:15	Storytelling and Visual Aides at Sentencing (45 mins.) Susan Weigand, Assistant Public Defender (Ret'd.) Veronika Monteleone, Assistant Public Defender Mecklenburg Co. Public Defender's Office, Charlotte, NC
11:15-12:00 pm	Preventing Low Level Felonies from Becoming High Level Habitual Felonies (45 mins.) Jason St. Aubin, Attorney St. Aubin Law, Davidson, NC
12:00-1:00	<i>Lunch</i>
1:00-2:30	Brainstorming, Preparing, and Presenting a Sentencing Argument (90 mins.) <i>Small group workshops</i>
2:30-2:45	<i>Break</i>
2:45-4:00	Preservation Essentials (75 mins.) Glenn Gerding, Appellate Defender Office of the Appellate Defender, Durham, NC
4:00-5:00	Basics of Batson Challenges (60 mins.) Kailey Morgan, Staff Attorney, Center for Death Penalty Litigation, Durham, NC Matt Propper, Staff Attorney, Center for Death Penalty Litigation, Durham, NC
5:00	<i>Adjourn</i>
5:30	Optional Social Gathering <i>TBA</i>



Thursday, September 10

9:00-10:00 am	Client Rapport (60 mins.) (ETHICS) Tucker Charns, Regional Defender Indigent Defense Services, Durham, NC
10:00-10:15 am	<i>Break</i>
10:15-11:00 am	Protecting Juror from Removals for Cause (45 mins.) Emily, Coward, Director of the Inclusive Juries Project, Duke University School of Law, Durham, NC
11:00-12:00 pm	Peremptory and For Cause Challenges (60 mins.) James Davis, Attorney Davis and Davis, Salisbury, NC
12:00 pm	<i>Wrap up and Adjourn</i>

CLE HOURS: 13.25

*including 1 hours of Ethics
(pending State Bar approval)*