



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

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| 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 *Break*
- 10:15-11:00 **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
- 11:00-11:45 **Preventing Low Level Felonies from Becoming
High Level Habitual Felonies** (45 mins.)
Jason St. Aubin, Attorney
St. Aubin Law, Davidson, NC
- 11:45-12:45 pm *Lunch*
- 12:45-2:15 **Brainstorming, Preparing, and Presenting a Sentencing Argument** (90 mins.)
Small group workshops
- 2:15-2:30 *Break*
- 2:30-3:30 **Preservation Essentials** (60 mins.)
Glenn Gerding, Appellate Defender
Office of the Appellate Defender, Durham, NC
- 3:30-4:30 **Basics of Batson Challenges** (60 mins.)
Hannah Autry, Ass't. Capital Defender, Office of the Capital Defender, Durham, NC
Kailey Morgan, Staff Attorney, Center for Death Penalty Litigation, Durham, NC
- 4:30 *Adjourn*
- 5:30 **Optional Social Gathering**
TBA



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 *Break*
- 10:15-11:00 am **Protecting Juror from Removals for Cause** (45 mins.)
Emily, Coward, Director of the Inclusive Juries Project,
Johanna Jennings, Director, The Decarceration 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 *Wrap up and Adjourn*

CLE HOURS: 13

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