

**Master Clerks Academy
UNC School of Government
Friday, November 30, 2018**

Agenda

- 8:00 a.m. **Registration & Continental Breakfast**
- 8:45 **Welcome and Course Overview**
Trey Allen, Assistant Professor of Public Law and Government, UNC School of Government
- 9:00 **Conflicts of Interest – What To Do When Your Board Members Turn To You For Advice**
Norma Houston, Lecturer in Public Law and Government, UNC School of Government
May a Mayor vote to award his brother a multi-million construction contract? May a commissioner vote on his mother’s special use permit? May a council member accept tickets to the Arts Council Jazz Festival funded by the city? When board members have such questions, they often turn to the clerk for input. This session will provide an in-depth look at the rules on conflicts of interest in voting and prohibitions on gifts and favors.
- 11:00 **Break**
- 11:15 **State of Emergency Declarations: Who, When, How, and What?**
Norma Houston, Lecturer in Public Law and Government, UNC School of Government
As we saw during Hurricane Florence, Mayors and Board Chairs often turn to their clerks for assistance in issuing local state of emergency declarations. This class will discuss the who, when, how, and what of issuing local state of emergency declarations, and offer tips on how to be prepared for the next disaster.
- 12:15 p.m. **Lunch**
- 1:15 **Myth Busters!**
Frayda Bluestein, David M. Lawrence Distinguished Professor of Public Law and Government, UNC School of Government
Test your knowledge and see if you can bust the most common myths that haunt the town halls and commissioner chambers of local governments in North Carolina. The myths will touch on what can be done in closed sessions, the powers of mayors pro tem., the ability or board members to endorse candidates, the appropriation of city money to churches, prayer at public meetings, public records, voting rules, and more. Sharpen your skills and learn the truth about some of the most elusive aspects of local government law.
- 2:30 **Break**
- 2:45-4:00 **State Firearms Laws and Limits on Local Authority over Firearms**

Jeff Welty, Associate Professor of Public Law and Government and Director, North Carolina Judicial College, UNC School of Government

Concerns about gun violence have prompted some local governments in North Carolina to consider imposing restrictions on the carrying or use of firearms. It is important for a local government that is weighing such action to understand relevant features of the state's firearms laws. This session will examine statutory provisions that govern the carrying of firearms in public, as well as provisions that circumscribe the authority of local governments to adopt and enforce firearms-related restrictions.

4:00

Final Announcements and Adjournment

Note: Clerks who attend all Academy sessions and complete the required assessment will be eligible to receive 2.5 CMC/MMC points and/or 5.5 hours of continuing education credit toward NCCMC or NCCCC recertification. No partial credit will be awarded.

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Instructor Biographies

Frayda Bluestein joined the School of Government (then the Institute of Government) in 1991. From 2006 to 2017 she served as the School's associate dean for faculty development. Prior to joining the School, she worked in private law practice, focusing primarily on municipal and land use law, and for one year in the Legislative Drafting Division of the North Carolina General Assembly. Her publications include books and articles about local government structure and authority, public contracting, conflicts of interest and transparency laws. She is a frequent contributor to the School's Coates' Canons: NC Local Government Law blog, writing on topics including North Carolina local government authority, annexation, public records, open meetings, conflicts of interest, and First Amendment issues affecting local government. She was awarded the School of Government's two-year professorship for outstanding junior faculty achievement in 1998, the two-year professorship for teaching excellence in 2004, and the David M. Lawrence Distinguished Professorship in 2014. In 2016, Bluestein was honored with the Grainger Barrett Award for Excellence from the Government and Public Sector Section of the North Carolina Bar Association and the Ernest H. Ball Award for Excellence in Municipal Law from the North Carolina Association of Municipal Attorneys. Bluestein earned a BA from the University of California at Berkeley and a JD from the University of California at Davis.

Norma Houston joined the School of Government in 2006. Prior to that, she served as chief of staff and general counsel to State Senate President Pro Tempore Marc Basnight. She has also worked for UNC President Erskine Bowles and served as Dare County attorney, assistant attorney general in the NC Department of Justice, and staff attorney for NC Prisoners Legal Services. She is a member of the North Carolina State Bar and serves on the boards of several organizations. Houston has been an adjunct faculty member at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Law and also teaches state government in the School's graduate program in public administration. She was named Albert and Gladys Hall Coates Term Lecturer for Teaching Excellence for 2015-2017. Houston earned a BS in criminal justice and psychology and a JD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Jeff Welty joined the School of Government in 2008 and works in the area of criminal law and procedure. His research interests include search and seizure, digital evidence, criminal pleadings, capital punishment, and firearms law. He serves as the director of the North Carolina Judicial College, which provides training and education to the state's judicial officials. Welty founded and contributes regularly to the *North Carolina Criminal Law Blog*, an award-winning resource visited by approximately 100,000 users each month. He has written for, appeared on, or been quoted in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, *National Public Radio*, *Bloomberg News*, *Lawyers' Weekly*, the *Raleigh News and Observer*, and many other media outlets. His books about capital punishment and digital evidence are widely-used legal references. Welty completed a federal judicial clerkship and worked in private practice before coming to the School. Welty earned a JD at Duke University School of Law, where he served as executive editor of the *Duke Law Journal* and graduated in 1999 with highest honors.