

Current Developments in Criminal Law

February 19, 2021 / 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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

School of Government experts will discuss recent developments in criminal law that they have been studying. You will hear from the members of the School's public defense education team (John Rubin; Defender Educator Phil Dixon; Civil Defender Educator Timothy Heinle; and Racial Equity Network Project Attorney Emily Coward) as well as long-time School of Government faculty member Tom Thornburg and our newest faculty member Brittany Williams. We will cover, among other topics, developing case law on commonly charged offenses, obtaining records helpful to preparation of your case, issues of race, and the new Second Chance Act. Webinar participants will be able to ask questions online, in real time. Additional information about the webinar is located at <https://www.sog.unc.edu/courses/criminal-law-webinars-case-and-legislative-updates>

CLE Credit: 1.50 Hours of General CLE Credit

SPEAKERS

John Rubin, *Albert Coates Professor of Public Law & Government*

John Rubin joined the School of Government in 1991, where he specializes in criminal law and indigent defense education. He has written several books, articles, and other resources on criminal law, including a book on *The Law of Self-Defense in North Carolina* and a guide to *Relief from a Criminal Conviction*, among other publications. He is also the editor of a seven-volume practice manual series on indigent defense. He regularly teaches and consults with judges, magistrates, prosecutors, public defenders, and other criminal justice officials. In 2004, John created the Indigent Defense Education program at the School of Government, supported by contract revenue, grants, registration fees and sales, and fundraising.

As director of the program, he oversees the work of several lawyers and professional employees who develop and deliver a curriculum of annual training programs, a library of reference materials, online educational offerings, and consultation services. He helped establish and continues as a consultant to the North Carolina Office of Indigent Defense Services, the statewide agency responsible for overseeing and enhancing legal representation for indigent defendants and others entitled to counsel under North Carolina law. In 2008, John was awarded a two-year distinguished professorship for faculty excellence. In 2012, he was named Albert Coates Distinguished Professor of Public Law and Government. In Fall 2018, he served as the faculty director for UNC's honors study abroad program in London, and he teaches an honors undergraduate seminar on criminal law and justice at UNC. Before joining the School, John practiced law for nine years in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles, California. He earned a J.D. from UNC-Chapel Hill in 1982 and a B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley in 1978.

Tom Thornburg, *Professor of Public Law and Government*

Tom Thornburg served as the School's senior associate dean from 2004 to 2020. He was also director of the North Carolina Judicial College from 2011 through 2015. He joined the School of Government (then the Institute of Government) in 1990 as an assistant professor. He was associate director, then associate dean, from 1996 until 2004. His responsibilities include assisting with day-to-day School management, faculty



support, and program development and oversight. He was a 2010–2011 Academic Leadership Fellow at UNC-Chapel Hill's Institute for the Arts and Humanities. Thornburg has been a member of several commissions and boards, including the North Carolina Commission on the Administration of Law and Justice, the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission, the School of Government Foundation Board of Directors, and the Earlham College Board of Trustees. Recent campus service has included: Senior Academic/Associate Deans' Council, the Provost's Committee on Inclusive Excellence and Diversity; Faculty Grievance Committee; Project Working Group for Resource Management, Planning, and Allocation; Employee Procedures Working Group concerning Sexual Violence, Discrimination, and Related Misconduct; Advisory Committee on Transportation and Parking; and International Affairs Advisory Council. His faculty work focused primarily on criminal law and courts. Thornburg was chief legal counsel to the North Carolina Department of Correction in 1992–1993. He edited and revised *North Carolina Crimes: A Guidebook on the Elements of Crime* (Fourth Edition, 1995); revised *Introduction to Law for North Carolinians* (Second Edition, 2000); edited and revised *Notary Public Guidebook for North Carolina* (Ninth Edition, 2004); and has published on the topic of juvenile curfews. Thornburg earned a BA from Earlham College and an MPP and JD from the University of Michigan.

Brittany Williams, *Assistant Professor of Public Law and Government*

Brittany Williams joined the School of Government in July 2020. Prior to joining the School, she received her JD from the North Carolina Central University School of Law (summa cum laude), where she served as the Notes and Comments Editor for the North Carolina Central Law Review. Brittany is a member of the North Carolina State Bar.

Phil Dixon, Jr., *Defender Educator, Public Defense Education*

Phil Dixon joined the School of Government in 2017. Previously he worked for eight years as an attorney in Pitt and surrounding eastern North Carolina counties, focusing primarily on criminal defense and related matters. Dixon served as assigned counsel to indigent clients throughout his career and represented adult and juvenile clients charged with all types of crimes at the trial level. He earned a BA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a JD with highest honors from North Carolina Central University. He works with the public defense education group at the School to provide training and consultation to public defenders and defense lawyers, as well as to research and write about criminal law issues.

Timothy Heinle, *Civil Defender Educator, Public Defense Education*

Timothy joined the School of Government in 2020 as part of the School's Public Defense Education program. Timothy graduated from New England Law—Boston in 2009 and moved to eastern North Carolina to practice law, initially as a solo practitioner. For more than ten years, Timothy's practice areas included trial and appellate level work on juvenile abuse, neglect, and dependency cases, termination of parental rights hearings, incompetency and guardianship matters, and child support contempt proceedings. As a member of the Indigent Defense Education team at the School of Government, Timothy provides education and resources to defense attorneys, including public defenders, appointed and contract attorneys, and private attorneys, in representing clients in these and other civil matters.

Emily Coward, *Project Attorney, Public Defense Education*

As project attorney for the School of Government's Racial Equity Network Project, Emily Coward works within the School's Public Defense Education Group to assist defense attorneys and other court actors in identifying and addressing issues of race and equity in the criminal justice process. She has worked for the School's Public Defense Education team since 2012. Prior to that, she worked as a staff attorney with North Carolina Prisoner



Legal Services, representing clients in civil and post-conviction matters. She also served as a law clerk for Judge James Robertson of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia and for Justice Thembile Skweyiya of the Constitutional Court of South Africa. While a law student at Duke University, she was lead articles editor for *Law & Contemporary Problems* and received the faculty award for outstanding achievement in criminal law and procedure. She is coauthor of *Raising Issues of Race in North Carolina Criminal Cases*, which received the School's Margaret Taylor Writing Award in 2015. She earned a BA from Oberlin College and a JD magna cum laude from Duke University School of Law.