• Business Associations—The study of corporations and other business associations provides an essential foundation for health law practice.

• Labor and Employment—The introductory course in labor and employment is becoming increasingly important to many health law practice settings.

• Tax—The introductory course in federal income taxation is very important. Additional tax courses are also recommended in corporate and partnership tax. An introduction to exempt organizations should be included in the health law survey course and a more specialized course in exempt organizations (tax and governance) is recommended.

Practical Experience in a Health Law Externship Clinic

We recommend at least one practical experience for academic credit in a supervised health law externship or a specialized health law clinic for all health law concentrations or certificates. This experience may also include a substantial writing component.

Capstone Course in Health Law

Finally, we recommend a capstone experience in health law for 3Ls, which integrates elements from across the health law curriculum into a practical, team-oriented course. One possible example of a capstone could be Health Care Transactions, with students working in small teams on simulation transactions of increasing complexity. Other examples of capstones could be advanced health law courses taught jointly with business school faculty and students, as well as Medical-Legal Partnerships involving students from law, medicine, and public health.

The capstone should include a substantial writing component relevant to the particular type of class: transactional capstones could include joint venture agreements; advocacy capstones could include substantial policy position papers; litigation capstones could include appropriate court documents. The overall goal is to improve the students’ writing ability within health law with high quality, relevant work.

Teaching Health Law Skills

Many law schools have recently supplemented traditional law school teaching methods, especially in the second and third years. We applaud this trend and suggest stronger emphasis on:

• Casebook and classroom teaching that examines a diversity of legal materials beyond appellate court decisions, including:
  ○ Statutes, regulations, preambles, advisory opinions, guidance, standards, and other regulatory materials from a variety of federal, state, and private sources;
  ○ Client and board room documents, including documents that an associate might be asked to draft or comment on early in their career;
  ○ Complaints and depositions;
  ○ Medical and health policy literature; and
  ○ Legislative text and committee reports.

• Working in small teams on collaborative projects, including some elements of negotiation, drafting, and transactions;

• Teaching and assessment that include problem sets, including the problem sets that AHLA members have developed for law schools (see Appendix A); and

• Health law specific research skills, including health law research guides that some law schools maintain for students (for example, Boston University Law School’s guide is available at www.bu.edu/lawlibrary/research/health/index.html).