

2020 Robert O. Dawson Conference on Criminal Appeals

May 6, 2020 • Live Webcast

Wednesday Morning, May 6, 2020

Presiding Officer:

Joanna Jefferson, The University of Texas School of Law - Austin, TX

8:20 am	Welcoming Remarks
8:30 am 0.75 hr	Significant Decisions of the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals Analyze significant decisions in the last year and what they mean for criminal law practitioners. Hon. David C. Newell, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals - Austin, TX
9:15 am	5-Minute Break
9:20 am 0.75 hr	11.07 Writs Discuss the law of 11.07 habeas corpus with tips for writ practice at the Court of Criminal Appeals. Michael Staats Falkenberg, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals - Austin, TX
10:05 am	5-Minute Break
10:10 am 1.00 hr	Legal Writing: How to Write Plainly Do criminal-law appellate briefs need to be written in plain English? And what does “plain English,” mean? This presentation defines plain-English legal writing and offers guidance on plain English-principles related to words, sentences, and organization. Wayne Schiess, The University of Texas School of Law - Austin, TX
11:10 am	5-Minute Break
11:15 am 0.75 hr	Emerging Issues in PDRs Gain insight on significant and emerging issues pending in the Court of Criminal Appeals. Kathleen Mary Schneider, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals - Austin, TX Stacey M. Soule, Office of the State Prosecuting Attorney - Austin, TX
12:00 pm	5-Minute Break
12:05 pm 0.50 hr	Chapter 64 Motions and Hearings A brief overview of motions for forensic testing, collaborative and contested, and common missteps on the road to 11.073. Matthew Bryant Howard, Bexar County Criminal District Attorney's Office - San Antonio, TX

12:35 pm	Break for Lunch—Presentation Resumes at 12:55 p.m.
Wednesday Afternoon, May 6, 2020	
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12:55 pm 0.50 hr	Practical Tips from Writ Litigators Explore real world tips, suggestions and insights for litigating writ claims at every step in the process -- from preliminary investigation, to trial court, to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. Catherine G. Burnett, South Texas College of Law Houston - Houston, TX
1:25 pm	5-Minute Break
1:30 pm 0.50 hr	The Jury Charge It's tedious to draft, dreadful to listen to, and probably ignored by jurors. Learn why the least exciting part of trial is the most important. David M. Gonzalez, Sumpter & Gonzalez L.L.P. - Austin, TX
2:00 pm	5-Minute Break
2:05 pm 0.50 hr	Appellate Practice in the Digital Age Explore how the digital revolution and the consequent move from paper to electronic filing of legal documents has changed the way that legal texts are written and read, and learn effective strategies for appellate lawyers to communicate within this new digital reality. Rosa Theofanis, Travis County District Attorney's Office - Austin, TX
2:35 pm	5-Minute Break
2:40 pm 0.75 hr 0.25 hr ethics	Conviction Integrity Units Discuss the concept of conviction integrity as an extension of the prosecutor's duty to see that justice is done. Hear practical issues in evaluating, investigating, and responding to actual innocence claims and considerations for offices that do not have a dedicated CIU. Alison Fox Dahlberg, Bexar County District Attorney's Office - San Antonio, TX John Lopez, Travis County District Attorney's Office - Austin, TX
3:25 pm	5-Minute Break
3:30 pm 0.50 hr	Standards of Review Identifying the appropriate standard and utilizing it as a roadmap to a persuasive legal argument on appeal. Lisa Dotin Stewart, Travis County District Attorney's Office - Austin, TX

4:00 pm	5-Minute Break
4:05 pm 1.00 hr 0.25 hr ethics	<p>Judicial Panel + Current Practices in the Era of COVID-19</p> <p>Practical advice from the people whose opinions matter about what they like to see in briefs and appeals and what they do not. Gain insight on their personal experiences with COVID-19, what they see on the horizon, and (potentially) answer questions from viewers.</p> <p>Moderator: Jay R. Brandon, Bexar County District Attorney's Office, Appeals Section - San Antonio, TX</p> <p>Panelists: Hon. Lana Myers, Fifth District Court of Appeals - Dallas, TX Hon. Beth Watkins, Fourth Court of Appeals - San Antonio, TX</p>
5:05 pm	Adjourn