



# Research Week 2022

## A Novel Model for Universal Representation and Forensic Evaluations: OHSU Asylum Clinic

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### Keywords

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### Abstract

#### OHSU Asylum Clinic

##### *Background*

It is known that medical and psychological forensic evaluations aid in documenting evidence of trauma and abuse that can significantly affect a person's likelihood of being granted asylum. The evaluation and clinic space for forensic evaluations can also serve to connect asylum-seekers, who often face many barriers to accessing social services, with resources and support (ie, mental health treatment, nutrition, and medical care). Despite the inarguable benefits of these evaluations, prior to now, there had been no sustainable infrastructure in place to ensure that people seeking asylum have access to legal care and medical evaluations.

##### *Objective*

The OHSU Asylum Clinic is a medical student-led organization partnered with local non-profit Innovation Law Lab. The mission of the group is to enhance the intersection of healthcare, human rights, and law in Oregon to create a system that can support asylum-seekers while also increasing education around immigrant health. Alongside our community partners Oregon Worker Relief and Innovation Law Lab we are working to create a sustainable model for accessible forensic evaluations and universal representation.

##### *Current Outcomes and Future Innovations*

Recently with the passing of SB 1543, Oregon will become the first state in the nation to guarantee free legal representation and medical evaluations as needed for all persons seeking asylum. ECO will partner with OHSU Asylum Clinic to establish consistent forensic evaluations for each of their clients. The initial need as projected by ECO is 160 evaluations in the first two years. In the past year, the clinic completed more than 30 evaluations despite immigration courts being closed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Soon, the clinic will transition to a once a month in-person clinic to facilitate community support and offer tangible resources to clients. Furthermore, last year, the immigrant

health elective was created to increase awareness surrounding barriers to health. There are plans to expand educational opportunities to residency programs throughout OHSU.