

2024 ROBERT O. DAWSON  
**CONFERENCE ON CRIMINAL APPEALS**



May 1–3, 2024

AT&T Conference Center ■ Austin, Texas

 [Live Webcast May 1–3](#)

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### RECEPTION SPONSORS

Appellate Section of the State Bar of Texas  
State Bar of Texas Criminal Justice Section

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Earn up to 12.25 Hours of Credit Including 2.25 Hours of Ethics (Hours Vary by State)

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*Times listed are in Central Time*

**WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, MAY 1, 2024**

**Presiding Officer:**

**Hon. Barbara P. Hervey, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX**

**1:00 p.m. Registration Opens**

Includes light refreshments.

**1:50 p.m. Welcoming Remarks**

**2:00 p.m. 1.50 hr**

**U.S. Supreme Court and Texas Court of Criminal Appeals Update**

Get current on the two high courts' latest cases in a presentation curated for the appellate practitioner. Get caught up with the cases from the end of last year's term and preview what remains in the pipeline for this one.

Emily Johnson-Liu, Office of the State Prosecuting Attorney, Austin, TX  
Britt Houston Lindsey, Taylor County District Attorney's Office, Abilene, TX

**3:30 p.m. 15-Minute Break**

**3:45 p.m. .75 hr**

**Drafting Effective PDRs and Motions for Rehearing**

Discuss effectively phrasing issues in PDRs, knowing when to fight and when to fold and getting PDRs granted.

Carmen Roe, Carmen Roe Law Firm, PLLC, Houston, TX

**4:30 p.m. .75 hr**

**Approaches to Statutory Interpretation**

Hear discussion of reading and analyzing statutes, dissecting issues in brief writing, and providing practical tips on briefing and arguing statutory construction issues before appellate courts.

Hon. Melissa Young Goodwin, Third Court of Appeals, Austin, TX

**5:15 p.m. Adjourn to Reception**

**THANK YOU TO OUR RECEPTION SPONSORS**

**Appellate Section of the State Bar of Texas**

**State Bar of Texas Criminal Justice Section**

**5:15 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.**

Enjoy refreshments and a networking opportunity with colleagues and conference faculty.

**THURSDAY MORNING, MAY 2, 2024**

**Presiding Officer:**

**Carson R. Guy, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX**

**8:30 a.m. Conference Room Opens**

Includes continental breakfast.

**9:00 a.m. 1.00 hr**

**The Intersection of Science and the Law**

Highlight the increasing importance of forensic science in the criminal justice system and some of the challenges facing lawyers and scientists.

Hon. Barbara P. Hervey, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX  
Carson R. Guy, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX

**10:00 a.m. .50 hr**

**Beyond the Font Wars: Word Processing Tips for Formatting Appellate Briefs**

Don't let bad formatting get in the way of a good argument. Learn intermediate and advanced techniques to make your briefs readable and user friendly.

Douglas R. Gladden, Rosenthal Kalabus & Therrian, McKinney, TX

**10:30 a.m. 15-Minute Break**

**10:45 a.m. .50 hr**

**Writs**

Discuss the law of 11.07 habeas corpus with tips for writ practice at the Court of Criminal Appeals.

Michael Staats Falkenberg, Harris County Public Defender's Office, Houston, TX

**11:15 a.m. 1.00 hr**

**Writ Panel: An Interactive Walkthrough the Process**

An interactive conversation with representatives from all sides of 11.07 writ litigation discussing the roles they play in the investigation, presentation, and decision in a post-conviction writ.

**Moderator:**

Michael Staats Falkenberg, Harris County Public Defender's Office, Houston, TX

**Panelists:**

Kelly Gatewood, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX  
Hon. Stacey Mathews, 277<sup>th</sup> District Court, Georgetown, TX  
Nancy Louise Nicolas, Travis County District Attorney's Office, Austin, TX

**THURSDAY AFTERNOON**

**Presiding Officer:**

**Hon. Barbara P. Hervey, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX**

**NETWORKING LUNCHEON**

**12:15 p.m.**

Interact and network with faculty and colleagues. Lunch included with registration.

**1:00 p.m. 1.00 hr**

**The Science of Readable Legal Writing**

There is a growing body of empirical research that validates many of the best writing and legal-writing tips the experts have been pushing for years. This presentation highlights the tips, explains the research, and suggests how to implement the tips in your own writing.

Wayne Schiess, The University of Texas School of Law, Austin, TX

2:00 p.m. .50 hr

### Drafting Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law

Practical tips for post-conviction litigators: drafting proposed Findings of Fact; increasing the likelihood they will be adopted; and framing the issues for favorable review.

Catherine G. Burnett, South Texas College of Law Houston, Houston, TX

2:30 p.m. 15-Minute Break

2:45 p.m. .75 hr ethics

### Brady/Watkins/Morton Act

The obligation to disclose evidence comes from multiple sources, including constitutional, statutory, and ethical. This presentation discusses each source and recent, significant cases in the area.

Carson R. Guy, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX

3:30 p.m. 1.00 hr | .25 hr ethics

### Court of Appeals Judicial Panel

Court of Appeals justices discuss what goes into their decision-making, how to make them more receptive to your briefs (or not), and other factors to improve your appellate practice. Audience members will have the chance to ask questions. Please submit your questions in advance to [ConferenceQA@utcle.org](mailto:ConferenceQA@utcle.org).

**Moderator:**

Jay Brandon, Bexar County District Attorney's Office, Appeals Section, San Antonio, TX

**Panelists:**

Hon. Meagan Hassan, 14<sup>th</sup> Court of Appeals, Houston, TX

Hon. Rosa Lopez Theofanis, Third Court of Appeals of Texas, Austin, TX

Hon. Beth Watkins, Fourth Court of Appeals, San Antonio, TX

4:30 p.m. Adjourn

FRIDAY MORNING, MAY 3, 2024

### Presiding Officer:

Alison Fox Dahlberg, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX

8:30 a.m. Conference Room Opens

Includes continental breakfast.

9:00 a.m. 1.00 hr

### Tricks of the Trade: Appellate Tips from Both Sides

10 tips to be a better direct appeal and writ practitioner.

Jessi Freud, Freud Law P.C., Georgetown, TX  
Douglas K. Norman, Nueces County District Attorney's Office, Corpus Christi, TX

10:00 a.m. 15-Minute Break

10:15 a.m. 1.00 hr | .25 hr ethics

### Court of Criminal Appeals Judicial Panel

Hear a panel of judges respond to your frequently—and sometimes infrequently—asked questions. Please submit your questions in advance to [ConferenceQA@utcle.org](mailto:ConferenceQA@utcle.org).

**Moderator:**

Alison Fox Dahlberg, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX

**Panelists:**

Hon. Barbara P. Hervey, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX

Hon. Mary Lou Keel, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX

Hon. Bert Richardson, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX

Hon. Michelle M. Slaughter, Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, TX

11:15 a.m. 1.00 hr ethics

### Ethical Issues in Criminal Appeals Practice

Ethical representation is required at the appellate level as well as the trial level. Explore rules of ethics and situations specifically centered on appellate representation.

Stephanie L. Stevens, St. Mary's University School of Law, San Antonio, TX

12:15 p.m. Adjourn



UT Law CLE is committed to helping attorneys meet their annual Texas MCLE requirements. Following the event, registrants will receive a free, on-demand eSupplement that will bring their total available hours to 15.00, including 3.00 hours of ethics.

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Call 512.475.6700 to register.

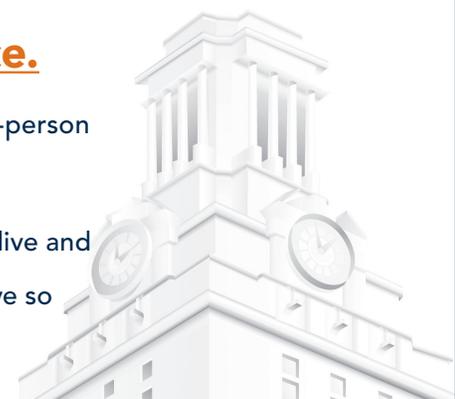
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This course has been approved for Minimum Continuing Legal Education credit by the State Bar of Texas Committee on MCLE in the amount of 12.25 hours, of which 2.25 credit hours will apply to legal ethics/professional responsibility credit. The University of Texas School of Law is a State Bar of California approved MCLE provider (#1944), and an Oklahoma Bar Association MCLE presumptively-approved provider (#169).

## UT Law CLE is committed to Practice Excellence.

We are here to support our community. Information and updates regarding our in-person conferences and live webcasts will be posted at [www.utcle.org](http://www.utcle.org).

In addition, we continue to offer multiple educational opportunities online—both live and on-demand—by bringing practitioners together virtually. We are fortunate to serve so many of you who strive for excellence in the practice of law.



## CONFERENCE FACULTY

---

JAY BRANDON

Bexar County District Attorney's Office, Appeals  
Section  
San Antonio, TX

CARSON R. GUY

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals  
Austin, TX

NANCY LOUISE NICOLAS

Travis County District Attorney's Office  
Austin, TX

CATHERINE G. BURNETT

South Texas College of Law Houston  
Houston, TX

HON. MEAGAN HASSAN

14th Court of Appeals  
Houston, TX

DOUGLAS K. NORMAN

Nueces County District Attorney's Office  
Corpus Christi, TX

ALISON FOX DAHLBERG

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals  
Austin, TX

HON. BARBARA P. HERVEY

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals  
Austin, TX

HON. BERT RICHARDSON

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals  
Austin, TX

MICHAEL STAATS FALKENBERG

Harris County Public Defender's Office  
Houston, TX

EMILY JOHNSON-LIU

Office of the State Prosecuting Attorney  
Austin, TX

CARMEN ROE

Carmen Roe Law Firm, PLLC  
Houston, TX

JESSI FREUD

Freud Law P.C.  
Georgetown, TX

HON. MARY LOU KEEL

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals  
Austin, TX

WAYNE SCHIESS

The University of Texas School of Law  
Austin, TX

KELLY GATEWOOD

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals  
Austin, TX

BRITT HOUSTON LINDSEY

Taylor County District Attorney's Office  
Abilene, TX

HON. MICHELLE M. SLAUGHTER

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals  
Austin, TX

DOUGLAS R. GLADDEN

Rosenthal Kalabus & Therrian  
McKinney, TX

HON. ROSA LOPEZ THEOFANIS

Third Court of Appeals of Texas  
Austin, TX

STEPHANIE L. STEVENS

St. Mary's University School of Law  
San Antonio, TX

HON. MELISSA YOUNG GOODWIN

Third Court of Appeals  
Austin, TX

HON. STACEY MATHEWS

277th District Court  
Georgetown, TX

HON. BETH WATKINS

Fourth Court of Appeals  
San Antonio, TX

## PLANNING COMMITTEE

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HON. BARBARA P. HERVEY—CO-CHAIR

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals  
Austin, TX

JAY BRANDON

Bexar County District Attorney's Office,  
Appeals Section  
San Antonio, TX

CARSON R. GUY

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals  
Austin, TX

HON. DAVID C. NEWELL—CO-CHAIR

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals  
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ALISON FOX DAHLBERG

Texas Court of Criminal Appeals  
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LISA DOTIN STEWART

Travis County District Attorney's Office  
Austin, TX

JOANNA JEFFERSON—DIRECTOR

The University of Texas School of Law  
Austin, TX

MICHAEL STAATS FALKENBERG

Harris County Public Defender's Office  
Houston, TX

## HOW TO REGISTER

### Online:

[www.utcle.org/conferences/CR24/signup](http://www.utcle.org/conferences/CR24/signup)

### Mail:

The University of Texas  
School of Law  
ATTN: CLE  
P.O. Box 12883  
Austin, TX 78711

### Fax:

512.475.6876

**Questions? 512.475.6700**

If you have dietary requirements or would like to request accommodations under the ADA, please contact Customer Service at 512.475.6700 or [service@utcle.org](mailto:service@utcle.org) at least 10 days prior to the conference.

## REGISTRATION BENEFITS

**Comprehensive Course Materials:** Access course materials in "Your Briefcase" approximately 48 hours before the live event, and enjoy unlimited access to the final, complete course materials – downloadable PDFs of papers and slides.

**Accredited eConference:** Complimentary access to the eConference – with papers, slides, and video – accredited for one year in both TX and CA are available in "Your Briefcase" 6–8 weeks after the event.

**TX MCLE Credit Reporting:** UT Law CLE can report credit on your behalf directly to the State Bar of Texas. Track the Texas MCLE credit reported on your behalf at "Your Account" after you've logged in at [www.utcle.org](http://www.utcle.org).

## TROUBLE LOGGING IN?

A UT Law CLE account is created for conference attendees and product customers with information provided on the order form. An email address will serve as the User Name.

**Forget Your Password or Need it Reset?** Just select "Forgot Password" under "Sign In or Join" at [www.utcle.org](http://www.utcle.org).

**Still Need Assistance?** Contact customer service at 512.475.6700 or [service@utcle.org](mailto:service@utcle.org) during business hours.

## REGISTRATION FORM

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

CR24

Bar Card # \_\_\_\_\_  TX  Other State: \_\_\_\_\_  N/A

Name [ Mr. / Ms. ] \_\_\_\_\_

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Registrant's Email (required) \_\_\_\_\_

Assistant's Email (optional) \_\_\_\_\_  
*Invoices, confirmations, and receipts are emailed to these addresses.*

### EVENT REGISTRATION

*Includes Electronic Course Binder Download (PDF) in "Your Briefcase." Special group registration rates available. Call 512.475.6700.*

Live, In-Person Event Registration . . . . . \$595 | \$695 after April 17

Live Webcast Registration . . . . . \$595 | \$695 after April 17

**Printed and Shipped Binder with Registration (Shipping Included)** – Available for order through Friday, May 3, 2024

*Please note that the printed binder will arrive 2–3 weeks after the conclusion of the live conference. Delivery to P.O. boxes is not permitted. Binders will not be distributed on-site.*

Printed and Shipped Course Binder . . . . . \$81.19 (\$75\*)

### Webcast Add-on

*Register for the in-person conference and add on the webcast format for attendance flexibility.*

Webcast Add-on . . . . . \$75

**TOTAL EVENT REGISTRATION \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**FIRST AND SECOND YEAR ATTORNEYS MAY ATTEND FOR JUST \$195! CALL 512.475.6700 TO REGISTER.**

### POST-CONFERENCE PRODUCTS

#### eConference – For Texas and California MCLE Credit

*Includes Electronic Course Binder Download (PDF) and program video/audio. Available 6-8 weeks after live event. Hours may vary depending on actual event runtime.*

Individual eConference . . . . . \$695

#### Post-Course Binder – For Research and Self-Study

*Comprehensive binder with papers and slides, available for delivery 4–6 weeks after live event.*

Electronic Post-Course Download (PDF) . . . . . \$297.69 (\$275\*)

Printed Post-Course Binder . . . . . \$351.81 (\$325\*)

**TOTAL POST-CONFERENCE PRODUCTS \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

### METHOD OF PAYMENT

Check (make check payable to The University of Texas at Austin)

VISA  MasterCard  American Express  P.O. (include a copy of the purchase order upon submission)

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CR24

**AUSTIN**

May 1–3, 2024

**CONFERENCE LOCATION**



**AT&T Conference Center**  
 The University of Texas at Austin  
 1900 University Avenue  
 Austin, TX 78705  
 877.744.8822 (reservations)

**Special Room Rate: \$199**  
 good through March 31, 2024  
 reference "Criminal Appeals Conference"  
 (subject to availability)

**Parking:**

Please visit [www.utcle.org/conferences/CR24](http://www.utcle.org/conferences/CR24)  
 for daily and overnight rates

**KEY DATES**

**April 17, 2024**

*Last day for early registration rates*

**April 26, 2024**

*Last day for full refund cancellation*

**April 29, 2024**

*Last day for partial refund cancellation*  
 \$50 processing fee applied

**May 1, 2024 1:50 p.m., CT**

*Conference begins*

**May 3, 2024**

*Last day to order a printed and shipped course binder  
 with in-person or webcast conference registration.*

**REASONS TO ATTEND**

UT Law CLE's **2024 Robert O. Dawson Conference on Criminal Appeals** features members of the Court of Criminal Appeals and judges from the intermediate courts around Texas joining prosecutors and defense attorneys for balanced discussions and insights into current issues facing the criminal justice system, including:

- **A review of significant decisions from both the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court from the past year.**
- **The *Intersection of Science and the Law* highlights the increasing importance of forensic science in the criminal justice system.**
- **Participate in an interactive conversation with representatives from all sides of 11.07 writ litigation in *Writ Panel*.**
- **Hear practical advice from judges during two judicial panels; the *Court of Appeals Judicial Panel* and the *Court of Criminal Appeals Judicial Panel*.**
- **Explore legal writing, statutory interpretation, writing findings of fact, and more.**

**ROBERT O. DAWSON**

The Conference on Criminal Appeals is named in honor of Robert O. Dawson, a beloved UT Law professor for 37 years, who passed away in 2005.

From 1974 through 1998, he served as the director of the Criminal Defense Clinic, where he and his co-supervisors worked with students on over 7,200 criminal defendants' cases. He also served as co-director of UT Law's Actual Innocence Clinic, a clinic teaching students how to screen and investigate claims from prison inmates that they are actually innocent of their convicted offense.

As a reformer and scholar, Professor Dawson wrote extensively on criminal and juvenile law and drafted much of the juvenile legislation enacted by the Texas legislature over the past 35 years.

He authored and co-authored many books, including *Texas Criminal Practice and Procedure*, *Texas Juvenile Law*, *Criminal Justice Administration*, and *The Juvenile Justice Process*.

