

# Raquel K. Wilson

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Assistant Professor of Law teaching criminal law and criminal procedure beginning August 2023

## EXPERIENCE

### U.S. Sentencing Commission

Director, Office of Education and Sentencing Practice, Washington, DC,  
February, 2015 – January, 2023

- Lead office responsible for fulfilling the agency's statutory mission to educate, through seminars and workshops all those connected to federal sentencing, including judges, prosecutors, public and private defense attorneys, probation officers, and appellate and district court law clerks
- Manage staff of nine instructional designers, former probation officers, educators, and attorneys
- Oversee instructional design of synchronous and asynchronous online course content, and in-person training of judges, litigants, and probation officers
- Plan and execute annual national seminar for 800 to 900 attendees on sentencing guidelines and related case law
  - Responsibilities include site selection; working with finance and the office of general counsel on contract negotiations; supervising development of registration website, training materials, and mobile app; review of food and beverage and audio/visual plans; identifying and inviting speakers; preparing Commissioner remarks; leading team of subject matter experts and instructional designers to develop agenda and course materials; and teaching sessions on guidelines application and sentencing case law
- Planned and executed five annual national seminars for federal district court judges, drawing more than 100 registrants annually
  - 2015: Planned pilot program prior to launching annual event, designing curriculum and leading judge-only learning sessions
  - 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2022: Planned and executed one-and-a-half-day national seminar for judges on federal sentencing guidelines
  - Similar tasks to annual national seminar
- Represent the Commission as faculty at professional conferences nationwide, including annual conferences of the circuit courts of appeals, and seminars and workshops organized by the Federal Judicial Center
- Member of senior staff responsible for internal review of all policy-related work product and staff recommendations to Commissioners on policy matters
- Expanded the education program from all in-person training to include web resources such as podcasts, one-page primers, newsletters, a sentencing glossary aimed at non-experts, and a case law concierge for federal sentencing practitioners
- Design and deliver sentencing curriculum for the Federal Judicial Center's Phase I Orientation for District Court Judges consisting of lectures, scenarios, and case studies encompassing two and a half day sessions for more than 100 new judges since 2015
- Transitioned to synchronous online instruction during Covid quarantine, delivering online educational programs to more than 13,000 attendees

Deputy General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, Washington, DC,  
September, 2009 – February, 2015

- Advise Commissioners on legal issues arising under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines and criminal statutes
- Supervise Office of General Counsel staff of attorneys, administrative staff, and legal interns
- Member of senior staff responsible for internal review of all policy-related work product and staff recommendations to Commissioners on policy matters

- Lead author of [Report \[to Congress\] on the Continuing Impact of United States v. Booker on Federal Sentencing \(2012\)](#)
  - Briefed Congressional staff and members of the Criminal Law Committee of the Judicial Conference, as well as public interest groups and stakeholders on the Commission's findings and recommendations
- Chair policy teams on guideline amendments and other Commission priorities:
  - Amendment to sentencing guidelines on the relevance of offenders' personal characteristics at sentencing
  - Amendment to sentencing guidelines responding to hate crimes legislation
  - Amendment to sentencing guidelines on recidivist enhancements for prior crime of violence convictions

**Assistant Federal Public Defender**

- Western District of North Carolina, Asheville Division, July 2006 – July 2009
- Southern District of Texas, Houston Division, September 1999 – June 2006
  - Represented hundreds of indigent defendants in trial and appellate courts
  - Conducted 10 jury trials in the Southern District of Texas, filed more than 50 appellate briefs, argued numerous appeals before the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth and Fifth Circuits
  - Successful outcomes include:
    - Won dismissal of 7-year mandatory minimum firearms count in a bank robbery count
    - Attempted murder on Veterans Administration grounds reduced to simple assault
    - Not guilty verdict in a felon in possession of a firearms case
    - Alien smuggling charges dismissed with prejudice after challenge to the government's deportation of a material witness
    - Sentence vacated and remanded by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals after challenging the court's denial of acceptance of responsibility credit based on filing a motion to suppress evidence
    - Sentence vacated by the Fourth Circuit in a cold-record, plain error appeal of a sentence exceeding the statutory maximum in an illegal reentry after deportation case

**Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund**

- Associate Attorney, Tallahassee, Florida, 1998 – 1999
- Environmental litigation in state and federal court in civil suits filed on behalf of community environmental groups

**Honorable Robert L. Hinkle**

Law Clerk, United States District Court for the Northern District of Florida, Tallahassee, Florida, November 1996 – September 1998

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**Selected Presentations**

- **Faculty**
- Sixth Circuit Judicial Conference, *Recent Developments in Federal Sentencing*, September 2022
- Seventh Circuit Judicial Conference, *Compassionate Release and the First Step Act*, November 2022
- Federal Judicial Center Phase I Orientation for District Court Judges, 2015 – 2022
- Federal Judicial Center Phase II Orientation for District Court Judges and Appellate Judges Workshop 2017 – 2022
- Duke University Law School Bolshch Institute, *Federal Sentencing*, 2022
- US Sentencing Commission Annual National Seminar on Sentencing, *Grouping of Multiple Counts*, 2019; *Categorical Approach*, 2015 and 2014; *Criminal History Issues*, 2011
- National Institute for Trial Advocacy, *UNC Chapel Hill Southeast Region Trial Training*, 2009
- Orientation Seminar for Assistant Federal Defenders: *Federal Rules of Evidence*, 2008; *Supervised Release Revocations and Current Issues in the Bureau of Prisons*, 2004
- Advanced Conference for Federal Defenders, *Ethics panelist*, 2007, 2008
- Federal Defender Training Program for Criminal Justice Act Panel Attorneys, 2007

- Federal Public Defender for the Southern District of Texas Annual Conference, *Mental Health Issues in Federal Court*, 2002
- Harris County Bar Association, *Your First Day in Federal Court*, 2002
- **Invited Speaker**
- Federal Judicial Center District Judge Workshop, *Recent Developments in Federal Sentencing*, Washington D.C. (April 2022) and San Diego, California (August 2022)
- Eastern District of New York Seminar for Judges and Litigants, *First Step Act*, Summer 2019
- Fourth Circuit Judicial Conference, *The Categorical Approach*, June 2017
- Eighth Circuit Judicial Conference, *Compassionate Release and the First Step Act Panelist*, July 2022

#### **Bar and Court Admissions**

- United States Supreme Court
- Maryland Bar
- District of Columbia Bar
- North Carolina State Bar
- State Bar of California (inactive)
- Florida State Bar (inactive)
- US District Court for the Southern District of Texas
- US District Court for the Western District of North Carolina
- US Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
- US Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit

#### **EDUCATION**

##### **Stanford Law School**

Juris Doctorate, 1996

- *Stanford Environmental Law Journal*, Executive Editor, Article Review Board
- Black Graduate Student Association, Secretary
- Community Environmental Justice Project, Founding Member
- Independent Research Project, La Paz, Bolivia, Fall 1995
  - Researched implications of Bolivian law authorizing community-based indigenous legal programs

##### **Rice University**

Bachelor of Arts, conferred *magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa, 1992

- *Major: Political science*
- *Rice Fellow and recipient of six academic scholarships*

#### **Language**

Conversant in Spanish