

Valena Elizabeth Beety joined the faculty in 2012 as an Associate Professor of Law and Deputy Director of the Clinical Law Program, chairing the West Virginia Innocence Project. Her scholarship and teaching interests include criminal law, criminal procedure, innocence litigation, and the role of identity in the criminal justice system. Her experiences in prosecution and innocence work shape her interest in criminal justice, from investigation through incarceration. She has previously written on reproductive rights for incarcerated women, the death penalty in Mississippi, and the role of weight bias in the criminal courtroom.

Beety received her B.A. and J.D. from the University of Chicago. While in college, she was a Rape Victim Advocate, obtained a research grant to work with Chicago Legal Aid for Incarcerated Mothers, and worked as a fellow for the Governor's Commission on the Status of Women in Illinois. While in law school, Beety was a member of the University of Chicago Law Review; she worked at the ACLU Women's Rights Project as well as at the U.N. International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, where she focused on sexual violence in the genocide.

After law school, Beety clerked for the Honorable Chief Judge James G. Carr of the Northern District of Ohio, and for the Honorable Martha Craig Daughtrey of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. She then joined the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, where she prosecuted domestic violence crimes and other crimes of violence, first-chairing seventeen jury and bench trials to verdict. Prior to her appointment at West Virginia University School of Law, Beety was an Adjunct Law Professor at the University of Mississippi School of Law and Senior Staff Attorney in their innocence clinic, the Mississippi Innocence Project. She received the BLSA Faculty Member of the Year Award for 2011-2012.