



SEMESTER IN PRACTICE – SECTION 976

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION.

Eligible students in their third year of law school may spend a Semester in Practice externing with an approved public agency or non-profit association under the supervision of a field placement supervisor and the External Programs Director. This course consists of (1) the field placement component, and (2) a 16-week seminar component taught by the Director.

The extern seminar will examine selected areas of legal doctrine as applied to the legal workplace. Drawing from the externship experience and assigned weekly readings, students will investigate questions such as:

- Does the case law reflect the reality of the legal workplace?
- What is the role of the attorney in resolving legal issues?
- How are legal solutions developed and communicated?
- How can the delivery of legal services be improved?

Each student will be asked in weekly writing assignments to relate the experiences and observations in the externship placement with the topics discussed in class.

2. FIELD PLACEMENT SUPERVISORS.

Field placement supervisors who have accepted externs in the past are described on the Field Placement Supervisor list that is available in the Legal Aid Clinic and the Career Placement office. This list is updated on a regular basis and may set forth supervisor information and requirements of interest to the students.

3. APPLICATION PROCESS.

3.1. **Application Form.** Students interested in the Semester in Practice are required to (a) complete the Student Externship Application and (b) submit the completed application to the External Programs Director (by delivering the application to the Clinical Office Services Supervisor at the Legal Aid Clinic).

3.2. **Interview of Applicants.** The External Programs Director may schedule and hold interviews with each of the applicants. Applicants will be evaluated, in part, on:

- Demonstrated interest in and understanding of the educational goals of the Semester in Practice program.
- The match between the student's skills and placement preferences with an appropriate supervisor.

3.3. **Selection of Participants.** The External Programs Director and the Director of Clinical Programs will select up to 12 applicants for participation in the Semester in Practice program based on the following factors:

- **Class Rank.** Students with a cumulative class rank in the bottom 25% are not eligible for the Semester in Practice. Students with a cumulative class rank greater than the bottom 25% and less than the top 50% will be evaluated, in part, based on the number of bar-related courses completed with a passing grade. Class rank for purposes of admission to the Spring Semester in Practice will be measured through the immediately preceding Spring semester.
- **Interviews.** The interview criteria listed above.
- **Coordination with other Programs.** Admission decisions will be coordinated with the restrictions applicable to other programs such as Law Review and the Board of Student Advocates.

3.4. **Placement.** Placements will be made as follows:

- The External Programs Director and the Director of Clinical Programs will make an initial placement decision as to which student best fits the qualifications for externing with a particular field placement supervisor. We cannot guarantee that a student will be placed in the particular externship of his or her choice; however, we do our best to accommodate a student's preferences if the student meets the qualifications the field placement supervisor seeks.
- After we make the initial placement decision, the field placement supervisor may choose to interview the student and approve the placement. The field placement supervisor may wish to see certain information from the student, such as a writing sample, resume, law school transcript, and letters of recommendation. The field placement supervisor will make the final decision whether to accept the student as an extern.

3.5. **Placement Schedule.** Deadlines for the application, interview, selection and placement process for the Semester in Practice are as follows:

EVENT	DEADLINE
Student Application to Clinic	Last week of April
Interviews (as needed) Completed	First week of May
Selection of Participants	Mid-May
Placement with Supervisor	July-August

4. AVAILABLE CREDIT.

Students completing the Semester in Practice course generally receive 12 classroom credits, graded on a pass/fail basis. However, the student may not receive more than 12 credits (classroom and non-classroom combined) from all extern programs. Thus, if a student receives five credits from a public service externship, the student will receive only seven classroom credits for completing the Semester in Practice course.

5. REQUIRED TEXTS.

The required texts for the Semester in Practice course are as follows:

J.P. Ogilvy et al, Learning from Practice: A Professional Development Text for Legal Externs (Second Ed. 2007)

Each student is required to sign-up on TWEN (The Westlaw Education Network) to

- (a) secure course assignments, and
- (b) submit timesheets, journals, writing samples, and student evaluations.

6. GRADING CRITERIA.

6.1. Field Supervisor Evaluation: 25% of grade. The student will be evaluated by their field supervisor at the conclusion of the externship based on the supervisor's evaluation of the student's:

- Research ability
- Legal analytical skills
- Intellectual capacity and creativity
- Writing skills
- Oral expression
- Common sense, judgment and ability to set priorities
- Initiative and responsibility
- Ability to relate well and effectively with clients and co-workers
- Enthusiasm, temperament, office demeanor and behavior.

6.2. Class Presentation and Final Paper: 25% of grade. Each student will be required to (1) write a final paper (length varies from 8 to 15 pages) on any subject that relates directly to the extern placement experience, and (2) lead a discussion of the paper in one of the final seminar sessions. The factors that are relevant to the evaluation of the class presentation and final paper are:

- evidence that the student has pursued and developed his or her own original thought and analysis; and
- the coherence and persuasiveness with which the student presents and develops his or her central argument.

Presentations and papers need not follow the format of traditional legal argumentation. *PLEASE NOTE - This paper will not satisfy the College's upper division writing requirement.* Students are encouraged to schedule office meeting time with the External Programs Director for assistance in developing a successful class presentation and final paper. Meeting times with the External Placement Director will count towards the student's required 35 hours per week work requirement.

6.3. Weekly Journal Assignments: 25% of grade. Each student will be required to prepare ten informal "journal writing" assignments of one to two pages addressing the questions assigned in the class schedule for each week (see below). Journal assignments must be submitted to the External Program Director (through TWEN). Each journal entry assignment will be worth two and one-half percentage points toward the final grade. Late assignments will receive a one point deduction if turned in by the following week's deadline the assignment will be considered missing after the following week's deadline and no points will be awarded. A student will be dropped from the externship program if more than one journal assignment is missing.

6.4. Class Attendance and Participation: 25% of grade. Class attendance and participation in all scheduled classes is mandatory, **even if you are not working the full 16 weeks of the semester.** The student should be prepared to offer thoughts and to respond to questions during the classroom component.. A student will be dropped from the externship program if he or she misses the classroom component.

6.5. Requirements for a Passing Grade. A student will receive a passing grade in the Semester in Practice course if they meet the following requirements:

- The student has 70 or more points;
- The student has satisfied the journal assignment and class attendance requirements; and
- The student satisfies the timesheet and program evaluation requirements listed below.

7. REPORTING AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS.

In addition to the above requirements and the general rules applicable to all externships, students in the Semester in Practice course are required to satisfy the following requirements:

7.1. Timesheets. Students must deliver (through TWEN) timesheets (on the approved Student Timesheet) for each workweek to the External Programs Director on or before the immediately succeeding Tuesday. The timesheet should include a written description of the specific tasks performed, the nature and extent of the contact with the field supervisor, and the time spent. It must not, however, provide any identifying information about the client or cases, confidential information, or information that might violate

the attorney-client privilege.

7.2. **Program Evaluation by the Student.** Within two calendar days after the last day of the semester, each student must complete and deliver (through TWEN) the student's evaluation of the externship (on the approved Student Evaluation Form) to the External Programs Director.

8. RULES APPLICABLE TO ALL EXTERNSHIPS.

8.1. **Use of Externship Hours to Fulfill Residency Requirements.** To graduate from the College of Law, all students must complete six semesters in residence. A student must register for a minimum of ten credit hours during a semester for that semester to count toward the residency requirement. **One half** of a semester in residence may be achieved by successful completion of a **five credit-hour** externship. **Please note that the student and not the College of Law (or any of its personnel) is responsible for ensuring that this and all other graduation requirements are met.**

8.2. **Financial Aid.** Students may use summer school financial aid to pay for both classroom credit hours and non-classroom credit hours. To qualify for summer financial aid, the student must be registered for a minimum of **five credit hours**. In the past, some students who wished to complete a **four-credit hour, non-classroom credit externship** have registered for five hours to qualify for financial aid. If the student chooses this option, the student will have to complete ten weeks of work, rather than eight weeks. The fifth credit hour will not count toward the 88-hour graduation requirement.

8.3. **Externships with Family Members Prohibited.** To ensure the educational integrity of the externship program, a student may not participate in an externship where a family member will supervise the student at any time.

8.4. **Non-Payment Rule.** All externships are non-paying, meaning students **cannot** receive payment in return for their work. This is an American Bar Association rule. Under certain limited and unusual circumstances, a student may be allowed to receive a stipend from the office at which the student will extern. Such a stipend is allowed **ONLY** if the student will incur expenses as a result of the externship that are over and above the student's normal living expenses incurred while attending law school in Moscow. For example, if a student has an externship in Washington, D.C., and the supervisor offers the student a stipend for living expenses, special arrangements can be made for approval of such a stipend to cover expenses the student would incur over and above the student's Moscow living expenses. Students in such circumstances will be required to submit a budget detailing the correlation between their living expenses and the amount of the stipend prior to the beginning of the externship.

Students **cannot** divide their time between externship work and paid work by, for example, working mornings without pay for externship credit and afternoons for pay. However, after a student has finished **all externship requirements**, the student may continue to work for the field supervisor for pay if the student receives an offer to do so.

8.5. Maximum Externship Credit Hours.

- Students can earn a total of 12 credits (classroom and non-classroom combined) in externship placements. Thus if a student participated in the five credit summer externship course, the student could only receive 7 classroom credits from the Semester in Practice course.
- Students can only apply 4 non-classroom credits total toward graduation.
- Students may apply a total of 9 summer externship credit hours towards graduation – 5 classroom credits and 4 non-classroom credits.

8.6. Concurrent Degree Program Students. Students in a concurrent degree program cannot apply externship credits toward graduation.

8.7. Academic Probation. Students who are on academic probation are not eligible for placement in the Semester in Practice course.

8.8. Upper Division Writing Requirement. Due to confidentiality and supervision issues, written work produced during any externship will not satisfy the College of Law's upper division writing requirement.