

**VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW
EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

STUDENT HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. PRELIMINARY PLANNING.....1

II. APPLICATION PROCESS.....1

III. PROCESS FOR PROPOSING A NEW EXTERNSHIP.....1

IV. REGISTRATION.....2

V. STUDENT REQUIREMENTS DURING THE EXTERNSHIP.....2

 a. Requirements For All Externs.....2

 1. Journals.....3

 2. Daily Time Log.....3

 3. Work Product.....3

 4. Evaluations of Field Supervisor and Placement.....4

 b. Additional Requirements for Externs Earning 1-5 Credits.....4

 c. Requirements for Externs Earning 6-15 Credits.....4

I. PRELIMINARY PLANNING

Your first year of law school is not too early to begin planning for an externship. Even though you cannot take an externship until your second or third year, you will want to think about whether an externship would be beneficial for you and what type of experience you would like to have. You will want to be familiar with both sets of Guidelines promulgated by the faculty. The Guidelines can be found online at www.valpo.edu/law/externships. Start by looking at the listing of available externships. Postings may also be found on the Career Planning Center bulletin board. Note the variety of experiences available, from judicial externships to public interest externships to private firms or corporations. Perhaps you are planning on participating in a concentration; an externship probably exists or can be established to allow you to fulfill your practicum requirement.

The law bulletin will inform you of any course pre- or co-requisites. Plan ahead to meet these so that you will be eligible. Remember that not all courses are offered every semester; plan accordingly.

Be sure to begin the application process soon enough to be considered for the externship. The Externship Director will help you with this. Usually, that means before pre-registration for the semester you wish to do the externship.

If you do not see an externship that meets your needs, it might be possible for a new externship to be established. See Section III for an outline of that process. You will need to allow extra time to establish a new externship because the paperwork, the Curriculum Committee, and the faculty processes must be completed before February 10th for the summer or fall of the next academic year and October 10 for the spring semester.

II. APPLICATION PROCESS

Once you have been selected for an externship, you must complete an application with the Externship Director before you register with the Registrar or Assistant Registrar to add it to your class schedule and receive academic credit. Please confirm that the externship shows up on your schedule before you begin or you will not receive retroactive credit for any hours worked. An orientation meeting will be planned with your faculty supervisor during the first week of class to distribute Extern Handbooks and receive externship guidelines.

See Section III of both sets of Guidelines for further detail on the application and selection process. Note that you are not guaranteed an externship placement.

III. PROCESS FOR PROPOSING A NEW EXTERNSHIP

If no available externship meets your needs, you may be able to propose a new externship. Seek out the advice of a faculty member who has background in the area of law in which you wish to pursue an externship or speak to the Externship Director. Remember to start the process early.

The steps for proposing a new externship follow.

1. First, the general characteristics of the externship must be established to put the process in focus. The number of credit hours will determine the applicable Guidelines. From there, the timing and the location of the placement must be chosen. Selecting the type of legal experience (e.g., civil, criminal, public interest, family law, sports law, etc.) will further bring focus to the process. Inform your decisions by discussing the possibilities with the Externship Director or a faculty member.
2. Find possible placements. You may consult the Externship Director or a faculty member for assistance in identifying possible placements.
3. After narrowing your prospects, inform the Externship Director and ask him or her to assist you with the formal proposal for a new externship. You will then need to contact the prospective Field Supervisor to explore the possibility of establishing an externship with VUSL. The Field Supervisor must be a licensed attorney who has been practicing law for at least five years. The Supervisor must complete the application for a New Externship Proposal and return it to the student. You must then submit the formal proposal to the Externship Director by the deadline listed above (FEB. 10 or OCT. 10).

The Externship Director will work with the prospective Field Supervisor on necessary paperwork to propose an externship to the Curriculum Committee.

A proposal would include the type of externship, number of credits, location, names of Field Supervisor and the fact that the Field Supervisor is aware of the faculty Guidelines and will abide by them. The placement's prospective Field Supervisor must attach his or her resume to a letter describing the work experience and mentoring the extern will receive, and stating that the prospective Field Supervisor is familiar with VUSL's Guidelines and is willing to abide by them. The letter should indicate the number of credits sought and whether the proposal is for a pilot externship or an ongoing one. The Curriculum Committee will make a recommendation regarding the externship.

At the next scheduled faculty meeting, the faculty will vote on the proposed externship and Committee recommendation.

IV. REGISTRATION

You may register for an externship only if you have been accepted into one of the externship placements. You may only drop an externship within the first week of the semester, and then ONLY with the permission of the Externship Director and field supervisor. You may only add an externship within the first week of the semester with the appropriate externship registration in the Registrar's Office. Withdrawal requires the written permission of the Field Supervisor and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. The Director has discretion to administratively withdraw a student for unexcused absences. For more detail, see Section IV of both sets of Guidelines.

Once you have been selected for and have registered for the externship, plan to attend an orientation meeting with the Externship Director and faculty supervisor to receive any specific instructions for your externship, such as choosing a paper topic and establishing deadlines for journals, time logs, work product, evaluation, and paper. Also, contact the Field Supervisor to

verify that you will be doing the externship and to establish your starting date, ending date, and working hours. Unless informed otherwise, you should arrange to begin working the first week of classes. If you are doing a 6-15 credit externship, you will want suggestions from your Field Supervisor as to a topic for your 2 credit paper. Make these contacts well in advance of the start of the semester.

V. STUDENT REQUIREMENTS DURING THE EXTERNSHIP

a. Requirements For All Externs

All externs must keep journals, a daily time log, a work product file, and complete evaluations of the Field Supervisor and the placement. These materials must be turned in to the Externship Director for placement in your Externship Binder. In general, you are required to work 45 hours for each credit received. You may not be compensated for your work. For detailed requirements, see Section V of both sets of Guidelines.

1. Journals

Adult learners make the most progress when they reflect on their experiences. Therefore, we require that you write a journal entry for every day that you spend in the workplace. Additionally, the Director wants to catch any problems in the externship quickly. Your entries may help you to give an overall evaluation of your semester, and may assist you in writing a paper. Section V. F. of the Guidelines for Externships Carrying Five (5) or Fewer Credits and Section V.G. of the Guidelines For Semester-Away Externships give suggestions for reflection:

...[T]he student should reflect on the lawyer's role and the student's reaction to assuming that role, how well or poorly a given activity went, and the student's challenges in dealing with that activity, and any reflections the student has regarding any activity at the placement.

Judicial externs should reflect additionally on the role of the law clerk, the process of judicial decision-making, and how factual issues are resolved by the court.

Government externs should reflect additionally on the role of government attorneys and how that role differs, if at all, from attorneys in the private sector, how government attorneys exercise their discretion to pursue certain cases and not others, and the student's observation about the legal system within which the placement operates.

Public interest externs should reflect additionally on the legal system's effect on the lives of people with low incomes and on access to lawyers for people with low incomes.

The journal should not contain confidential case information, such as names. However, the journal is private between you and the Director. This is where you can express your emotions, be they contentment, anger, or frustration with the work itself or with people in the workplace. The journal is where you can process such feelings. The Director will collect your entries periodically during the semester and offer some helpful comments. You may want to use single sheets of paper for your journal entries as you may not get them back from the Director before you will need to make more entries.

2. Daily Time Log

As a lawyer, you will need to keep track of your time. Also, the faculty supervisor, who awards your credit, needs to verify that you fulfilled your hourly requirements. You should use the Daily Time Log form that is provided in the forms portion of the Handbook. Refer to the sample log for an example of how to fill out the log. Remember, by the end of the semester your hours must add up to at least the number

of hours required for your particular externship. Be sure to detail how you spent all your time; you should be doing law-related tasks, not clerical tasks, to receive academic credit.

You will turn in your time logs to the Externship Director at least twice during the semester. Your Field Supervisor must sign your time logs.

3. Work Product

Keep a file of all your final copies of written work product. You will turn this file in to the Externship Director at least twice during the semester. Before turning it in, make sure that any confidential information is redacted and that your Field Supervisor approves.

4. Evaluations of Field Supervisor and Placement

You will fill out evaluations of the Field Supervisor and Placement at the end of the semester on a form available in this handbook. Your evaluations will not be read until grades are received by the Registrar.

5. Midterm and Final Evaluations of the Student

The student is responsible for getting the midterm and final evaluation forms to the Field Supervisor for submission to the Externship Director. The evaluations are available in this handbook.

b. Additional Requirements for Externs Earning 1-5 Credits

You may be required to write a final report according to the directions of the Director. Your report should contain, among other things, a discussion and analysis of your experiences in light of your legal education and a critique of the program.

c. Additional Requirements for Externs Earning 6-15 Credits

You will complete a two (2) credit, graded classroom component under the supervision of the Director. The classroom component consists of an interactive project, which is described in the Guidelines for Semester-Away Externships Section V.H.

The objectives to be achieved by the interactive project/classroom component include:

1. Enhanced student preparation for the externship experience, through supervised pre-externship research;
2. Formulation of realistic expectations of the externship experience through student identification of specific goals and objectives that are in line with the overall educational objectives of the Program;
3. Integration of theory and practice through the scholarly examination of a theoretical and a professional or ethics question, guided by input from the Director and Field Supervisors;
4. Post-externship student reflection upon achievement of specific goals and objectives and the impact of the field experience on pre-externship attitudes.
5. Outline for the Semester-Away Interactive Project:
 1. Prior to the commencement of a semester-away externship, each student, in cooperation with the Director and Field Supervisor, will identify at least one substantive issue and one professionalism or ethics issue that will serve as the foundation for the student's research project and reflection. The student will then conduct a literature search for relevant research on the issues identified and submit a bibliography to the Director for approval. Before embarking on the externship, the student will also prepare and discuss with the Director a statement of goals and objectives for the externship.
 2. Based on the first 4 weeks of field experience, the student will refine the focus of the theoretical and professional ism/ethics issues identified for the project and submit an outline for the project paper to the Field Supervisor for input, and then to the Director for

- input and approval.
3. Ten weeks into the field experience, the student will submit a draft of the project paper to the Director for further input. Analysis and discussion of the theoretical issue and the professionalism/ethics issue should be both supported by research and informed by the field experience.
 4. After consultation with the Director, the student will prepare a final paper, devoting approximately 10 pages to analysis and discussion of the theoretical issue, 5-7 pages to the professionalism/ethics issue, and 3-5 pages to reflection upon the initial goals and objectives for the externship experience. The student's grade for the interactive project shall be based on a combination of the quality of the first draft and the final draft of the interactive project paper, the student's ability to synthesize and candidly reflect upon the field experience, and the student's presentation.
 5. At the end of the semester, student externs shall make a presentation based on their field experiences and interactive projects to the other student externs and the Director.