EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM INFORMATION
WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

WHAT IS AN EXTERNSHIP?

An externship is an opportunity for students to earn academic credit by working, without pay, under the guidance of a practicing attorney. The program allows students to be exposed to different areas of practice or to the courts, learn an area of substantive law, develop practical lawyering skills, and build a direct understanding of a lawyer’s professional responsibility. The Externship Program is divided into two components: field work and classroom. The field work must take place the host site, not remotely. For the coursework, students are required to read assigned material, attend classroom sessions, write reflective essays, and to submit weekly timesheets, and to arrange “site visits” with their supervisors and the Externship Director.

WHERE CAN I BE AN EXTERN AND HOW DO I FIND AN EXTERNSHIP?

Willamette law students can be externs in any law-related professional organization that has been approved by the Externship Director. A list of over 125 pre-approved externships can be found on the externship webpage. Students are also free, and encouraged, to find their own externships (about half of students set-up their own externships) with the approval of the Externship Director. If your potential host organization/firm has not participated in the WUCL program before and would like more information, Bev Ecklund or the Externship Director will send an informational letter to your potential host supervisor outlining the program and its requirements. Once the potential host has reviewed the material and agrees to their responsibilities, we can confirm the externship.

Examples of appropriate externship host organizations include: courts, prosecutor’s offices (Das) and public defense firms, non-profit organizations, government agencies, legal aid, lobbying groups, corporation’s in-house counsel offices, international governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and within certain parameters, private law firms.

Students must be supervised at the host organization by an attorney in good standing with a State Bar and have no disciplinary record. The supervising attorney is responsible for providing the student with law-related work, experiences, and on-going feedback. Both the extern and the attorney supervisor will be required to sign an agreement regarding the minimum standards expected of each party.

ACADEMIC CREDIT AND GRADES

The Externship Seminar is either part-time: a three (3) credit course or a six (6) credit course in which you will be assigned a grade of Honors, Credit or No Credit; or full-time (9 summer, 13 academic semester) credit course. You may take the three (3) credit course twice or the six (6) credit or the full-time (8 or 13) credit course once. If you take the course twice, you are strongly advised to try a different type of externship the second time in order to broaden your experiences. For the full-time externship, you must have completed three semesters of law school. You are also able to do an additional substantive paper for an additional 1 or 2 credits.

Requirements to Enroll in the Externship Course
1. Passing grade in Legal Research and Writing.
2. Good academic standing.
3. OJIN criminal background check.
4. Securing an externship by the end of the first week of class.

**WHEN IS THE EXTERNSHIP COURSE OFFERED?**

The Externship Seminar is normally offered during the Fall, Spring, and Summer terms. You must be enrolled in the Externship Seminar during the term in which you are completing your externship hours. In other words, you cannot enroll for a spring externship and complete the extern hours over the summer or in the fall.

**APPLICATION DATES FOR EXTERNSHIPS**

Some externships require student applications 3 to 6 months in advance of the externship start date. Others can be secured within the month before the term starts. If you want to extern this summer, you should check the application dates for pre-approved field placements to check if there is an early application date. For example, the Oregon Tax Court and Appellate Courts require students to apply in the fall for summer externships. DO NOT wait until you are enrolled in the course to apply for an externship.

**APPLYING FOR AN EXTERNSHIP**

Most organizations require, at a minimum, a copy of your resume and a cover letter. Others may want one or two references and an unofficial transcript. Check the list of pre-approved externships for application requirement, or ask the organization you are considering applying to. Each organization/firm has its own application requirements.

**PROCESS FOR ENROLLING IN THE COURSE, WAITLIST AND CONFIRMATION LETTERS**

1. Enroll in the externship course through the normal registration process.
2. Once you are enrolled in the course, you will remain on the wait list until you have 1) secured an externship and 2) passed an OJIN check (Oregon criminal background check). Students must have an Externship by the week prior to class commencing.
3. Contact Bev Ecklund, becklund@willamette.edu, as soon as you have been accepted by a host organization. She will send your host supervisor and you a confirmation letter which explains the program’s expectations, and which also includes the Supervisor-Student Agreement that you both must sign and return, and the Field Activities List that is reviewed with your supervisor.

**CAN I GET PAID FOR MY EXTERNSHIP HOURS?**

No. Under accreditation standard 306 of the American Bar Association, externs must not receive any compensation. Compensation includes not only wages, but also any stipend, scholarship or award proffered to the Extern for tuition, travel, living expense, or any other purpose. This policy does not preclude normal financial aid, or scholarship. Many of our host organizations invite our students to continue to work for them in paid positions after the hours for the externship are complete, and you are free to do that so long as there is a clear distinction between your paid and
To be clear: no hour for which you are paid can be counted towards academic credit. In addition, you cannot simultaneously be paid and get credit while at your externship.

**CAN I CONVERT MY PAID JOB INTO AN UNPAID EXTERNSHIP?**

Generally, no. The purpose of the Externship program is to allow students to “try out” different types of practice areas or to be exposed to new areas of law while gaining practical experience. If you are already working in a position, you are already gaining practical experience. **Caveat:** If you feel that you will be able to gain additional experiences in your position as an extern that are not available to you as a paid law clerk, please discuss this with the Externship Director.

**CAN I FULFILL MY PROFESSIONAL SKILLS WRITING REQUIREMENT WITH AN EXTERNSHIP?**

Yes. You can fulfill your Professional Skills Writing Requirement (also known as the second year writing requirement) through the Externship Program. It requires approximately 20 pages of original work product created during your extern placement. The 20 pages can include a variety of work types. For example, acceptable work may include, motions, contracts, and client letters. Unacceptable work product includes work that is more than 10% not your own or only requires you to fill in blank forms, such as DUII expungements.

Some externships, such as judicial clerkships, may not allow you to use your work product because of confidentiality issues. Letters from Judges attesting to the quality and amount of work you completed during your externship are acceptable to fulfill the course work product requirements only, **but not the Professional Skills Writing Requirement.** If you want to use the externship for your writing requirement, you must have an externship that allows you to use your work product.

**CAN I GET AN EXTERNSHIP OUT-OF-STATE OR OVERSEAS?**

Yes, as long as you are being supervised by a licensed attorney in that jurisdiction who has no history of professional misconduct, and that person has been approved by the Externship Director. However, the law school is not obligated to approve every externship opportunity proposed, regardless of location. **Please note:** even if you are out-of-state or overseas, you are required to attend class, which you can do through appropriate technology, such as Adobe Connect.

**LONG DISTANCE/WEB CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Out-of-state or overseas Summer Term students attend class through Adobe Connect or Google Hangout. You will need to coordinate with WITS to ensure that you meet the technology requirements (software, webcam, and land phone line) to attend by long distance before you leave for your summer externship. For the audio, we use telephone conferencing. You must use a landline, not cell or wireless phone.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Successful completion of your externship requires the following:

1. Work a minimum of 104 hours for 3 credits, 260 hours for 6 credits, 416 for full-time summer (9 credits), and 624 for full-time regular term (13 credits), in your field placement during the term. This should be done over the course of the term, but at
least over 6 weeks in the summer and 8 weeks in the other terms with permission, (except in special situations).

2. Complete reading assignments and attend and participate in classroom discussion and work;
3. Prepare reflective essays as assigned;
4. Prepare and submit weekly timesheets;
5. Submit all required work product by the end of the term;
6. Arrange a site visit and a final exit interview/evaluation by your supervisor.

WARNING: THIS IS NOT A COMPLETE LIST OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS. IF YOU ENROLL IN THE COURSE, PLEASE READ THE CURRENT TERM’S COURSE SYLLABUS.

EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM PROFESSOR AND STAFF

EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM STAFF & PROFESSORS:
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