Notre Dame Law School
Lawyering Practice Externship

Information for Students

Overview of the Course: Students may earn 3 or 4 academic credits while working 8-12 hours per week in a nonprofit organization, a governmental agency, or a judicial chambers and attending a companion weekly seminar.

Eligible Placements: Non-profit legal organizations, governmental agencies, or judicial chambers. All placements must be approved by the faculty instructor. The placements must offer substantial legal work under the direct supervision of an attorney or judge. The placements may be local or regional (e.g., Elkhart, Chicago, and Indianapolis). Judicial externships may be at any level of the state or federal court system.

Students are not permitted to choose placements already offered in other NDLS local externship courses (Corporate Counsel Externship, St. Joseph County Public Defender, National Immigrant Justice Center’s South Bend office, Notre Dame Athletic Department or athletics compliance work within the Notre Dame’s General Counsel’s Office). Nor are students permitted to extern in the same law office through both the Notre Dame Law in Chicago Program and the Lawyering Practice Externship Course.

Eligible Students: All second and third year students. Students should keep in mind that if they wish to appear in state court with a student practice license, they must be at least a second semester 2L in Indiana or a 3L in Illinois. Not all placements require a student practice license. Moreover, students may appear before federal courts and agencies without a student practice license.

Fieldwork: Students must work at least 8 hours per week at a placement to earn 3 credits for the course, and at least 12 hours per week to earn 4 credits. Their time at the placement site must be documented on time sheets and signed off by both the student and the supervisor.

Seminar: All students must attend a one hour weekly seminar with readings and multiple written assignments. The seminar is designed to prepare students for success in their placements and to help students deepen their learning experience by reflecting on their externship work, on the legal profession more generally, and on their individual professional development.

Grading: S/U for all credits.

Credits: Students will receive 3 total credits if they choose an 8-hour weekly placement and 4 total credits for a 12-hour weekly placement. One credit hour is classified as standard academic credit (for the seminar); the remainder are fieldwork credits. Fieldwork credits are academic credits that count
toward the graduation requirement. They are labeled separately because the faculty has adopted a policy that students may not count more than ten fieldwork credits toward the 90-hour graduation requirement.

**Finding a Placement:** Students are expected to make arrangements for their own placements. Students should not hesitate to meet with Professor Jones to strategize about placements, including identifying organizations or judges that the student might contact. Before a student contacts a potential placement, the student should seek approval from Professor Jones.

Students are encouraged to review the Placement Sites document posted on the LPE webpage, and also, to be proactive in identifying other potential externship sites.

Placements should be arranged during the semester before the externship takes place, and all placements must be arranged before the first week of classes. Students waiting until the last minute run the risk that the class will be full.

Students should be aware that many potential placement sites, particularly in Chicago, have their own externship application procedures and deadlines. Those offices may receive applications from students at multiple law schools. Students can normally check the organizations’ web sites to find externship application information. For Chicago-based organizations, there is a directory of organizations and helpful information on the Public Interest Law Initiative web site (www.pili-law.org).

To arrange an externship with placement site, a student should (1) secure Professor Jones’ approval to apply to a particular site and (2) provide the potential supervisor with the “Information for Supervisors” document on the Lawyering Practice Externship web page (http://law.nd.edu/academics/clinics-and-experiential-learning/externships/lawyering-practicexternship/) along with any other application materials the placement site has requested. Once the student and placement site have agreed to a placement, the student should, together with the supervisor, complete and sign the “Externship Agreement” that can be found under the “Student Supervisor Agreement” heading on the web page. Please note that the Externship Agreement is a fillable PDF that can either be filled out and signed electronically or completed by hand.

**Registering for the Course:** Enrollment in the Lawyering Practice Externship is by instructor permission. Once a student has provided Professor Jones with the completed “Externship Agreement,” the student will be enrolled in the course.

**Scheduling Fieldwork Hours:** Students may not schedule fieldwork hours that conflict with regularly scheduled classes in their other courses. Students will be required to provide the instructor with both their fieldwork schedule and their full class schedule to demonstrate that they have no conflicts.
**General Externship Policies:** Participating students should be aware that the Hoynes Code limits students to ten total fieldwork credits toward the 90 hour graduation requirement. (Hoynes Code, Section 4.4.5.4)

Students enrolling in the Lawyering Practice Externship may not be simultaneously enrolled in another externship course. Students enrolled in a clinic may not enroll in the Lawyering Practice Externship without permission of the clinical instructor. Such simultaneous enrollment is discouraged.