

**University of Iowa College of Law
Externship Program**

Information for Outside Supervisors

Under the College of Law's Non-Clinic Externship Policy, law students may receive academic credit for externships with a nonprofit or governmental organization. For each hour of academic credit earned, a student must work at least 50 hours on site, having frequent and close interaction with attorneys or judges. A general statement of our educational objectives for non-clinic externships is included below.

For approval of an externship, the College of Law requires that a student submit materials including a statement of the qualifications of the person who will be the student's immediate supervisor (usually a résumé or its equivalent), and a letter from the outside supervisor, which must (1) identify in a general way the nature of the work the student will be asked to do in the proposed externship, (2) indicate that the organization is not for-profit and certify that the student will not receive any form of compensation; (3) identify the person who will be the student's immediate supervisor; (4) state the organization's commitment to the educational possibilities of the externship and to providing the student with on-going feedback on the student's work; (5) agree that the student may share substantially all of the student's work-in-progress with the faculty supervisor or indicate what arrangements can be made to permit the faculty supervisor to participate meaningfully in the evaluation and to provide guided reflection on the student's work (see next section below); (6) agree that the organization will consult with the faculty supervisor during the course of the externship, provide information, in accordance with the understandings reached concerning confidentiality, as may be requested on those aspects of the student's work that do not result in written product, and, at the end of the externship, provide the faculty supervisor with a written statement concerning the approximate number of hours that the student has worked, whether the student has satisfactorily completed all of his or her work, and evaluating the student's work.

With respect to the arrangements for sharing work in progress, if the host organization is of the view that office confidentiality requirements prevent the extern from disclosing work in progress, then the faculty supervisor and on-site supervisor should explore what methods can be used to preserve the confidentiality of the office without preventing the faculty supervisor from participating meaningfully in evaluating the student performance and providing opportunities for guided student reflection about their externship work. For example, consideration should be given to redacting all work to be shown to the faculty supervisor to eliminate names and all other identifying details. The faculty supervisor does not need to know the identity of the parties in order to engage with the student on legal issues he or she has been asked to research or in order to critique the clarity of the writing. To the extent the student's work involves the development of specific facts (client or witness interviewing, for example), it may not be possible to solve confidentiality problems by redaction, but the faculty supervisor could engage the student in meaningful discussion about the process of planning and preparing for client or

witness interviews, without requiring identification of the people involved or disclosure of specific facts. Although it is not ideal for the faculty supervisor to be able to discuss work done only after the extern is completely finished with the work, in some cases where, for example, the extern's work is incorporated into a brief or decision (of a board or court), it may be acceptable for the faculty supervisor to see the student's work only after the brief or decision is made public if there is not too long a delay before the work is made public and it occurs in any event before the end of the externship. It is, however, not possible for faculty supervisors to participate in evaluating research and written work product if they are not permitted to see any of the written product during the externship. If a significant portion of the student's work may not be disclosed to the faculty supervisor during the externship period, then the faculty and on-site supervisors need to consult to determine whether there is a way that the faculty supervisor can participate meaningfully in evaluating the student's work during the externship. If there is not, we cannot approve the externship according to ABA rules. Opportunities for guided student reflection should also be provided by the faculty supervisor though those opportunities may be provided by the host institution if it does so in a program of regular tutorials or seminars.

Statement of Educational Objectives for Non-Clinic Externships

Non-clinic extern opportunities are intended to provide the student with a number of different educational opportunities; the balance among them will necessarily vary with the nature of the placement. Every placement, however, shall have as its animating purpose the in-depth exposure of the student to the actual practice of law in as many facets as practicable. The student must be directly involved in activities characteristically performed by attorneys; merely shadowing attorneys, while an appropriate component of an externship educational experience, should never be the exclusive, nor even the predominant, activity for a student. The specific activities that would fulfill this purpose are manifold, for instance, research and writing, document drafting, client interviewing and counseling, fact investigation, negotiations, and court appearances.

The non-clinic externships approved under this policy should be directed toward providing as broad an exposure to all relevant skills as is possible. Some placements will by their nature limit the student's actual performance of lawyering activities to perhaps one or two of this non-exclusive list. For instance, judicial externships will always emphasize almost exclusively the legal research and writing skills practiced by attorneys. In those circumstances, the faculty and site supervisors should make every effort to ensure the students are at least offered the opportunity to observe and/or discuss a broader range of activities.

These externships are intended to expose our students to legal skills but also to legal practitioners; thus, any placement must guarantee that the student will have frequent and close interaction with attorneys. Similarly, the placements are intended to expose our students to the ethical issues raised in the actual practice of law; thus, every placement should offer an opportunity to confront and discuss real ethical problems. Finally, the requirement that the placements occur in non-profit venues is the result of a faculty

judgment that every externship should reflect a conscious commitment to public service and that the externship will offer the student the opportunity to make a concrete contribution to society.