

POLICY ON
NON-CLINIC LEGAL EXTERNSHIPS--
IN A NUTSHELL

University of Iowa College of Law

*This FAQ sheet is intended as a convenient reference guide regarding the externship policy. . The complete official non-clinical externship policy, from which the information contained herein was drawn, can be found at: http://www.law.uiowa.edu/documents/externship_policy.pdf.

In the event any information herein conflicts with the policy laid out in the College of Law's Policy on Non-Clinic Externships, the latter document controls in all respects.

Which externships are considered “non-clinic”?

- Non-clinic externships are those externships that are not directly made available to students through and administered by the College of Law's legal clinic. Students ordinarily locate and arrange “non-clinic” externships on their own, although guidance is available on the college's website, through the Office of Career Services and on the College's website at <http://www.law.uiowa.edu/academics/legalexternships.php>.

For which types of organization may I work and also receive academic credit?

- The law school grants academic credit for certain non-clinic legal externships with ***non-profit or governmental organizations***.

When are non-clinic externships generally performed?

- Most non-clinic externships occur during the summer, but may also be performed in the spring or fall.
- Students must complete ***two semesters of law school*** before participating in an externship.

May I receive credit for working at a non-clinic externship located in close proximity to the College of Law?

- No, unless the student obtains special permission from the College's legal clinic. Academic credit for non-clinic externships is generally available only if the organization is ***beyond the geographic reach of the law school's clinic***.

For how many hours must I work on-site at the externship office for each academic credit hour I receive?

- Students receiving academic credit must work ***at least 50 on-site hours for each credit hour***.

Must I complete a research paper in order to receive academic credit? Is it graded?

- **3 Academic Credit Summer Externship – NO**
 - Students receiving three academic credits for a non-clinic externship during the summer are not required to write a research paper.
 - Students **must spend at least 150 on-site hours**, and will be required to complete a series of reports and reflective writings over the summer.
 - Grading for the three-credit externship will be pass-fail.
- **4+ Academic Credit Summer Externship and all Academic Year Externships– YES**
 - Students receiving more than three academic credits for summer externships must complete a research paper for which two academic credits and two writing credits would normally be given (typically around 40 pages).
 - Students receiving three academic credits for an externship **during the academic year** must complete a research paper for which one academic credit and one writing credit would normally be given (typically around 20 pages). For externships during the academic year that receive four or more credits, students must complete a research paper for which two academic credits and two writing credits would normally be given, (typically 40 pages).
 - For the credits earned by the required research paper, grading will be based on the law school's grading scale, while the remainder of the hours (for the on-site work) will be graded pass-fail.
 - Research papers completed during externships may satisfy the faculty-supervised writing credit graduation requirement.

Are there additional limitations imposed on externships for more than 6 academic credits?

- Yes. Externships for more than 6 credits will be approved only if:
 - The application is extraordinarily strong;
 - There is an on-site visit by the faculty supervisor (as required by the ABA); and
 - There are significant educational components, such as classroom teaching or seminars.

What are the application requirements for non-clinic externships?

- Applications must be approved by the Curriculum Committee.
- **Deadlines:**
 - Summer externships: **April 1**
 - Fall externships: **July 1**
 - Spring externships: **December 1**
- The application should be submitted to Cymie Wehr in Career Services.
- Two application forms, which prompt information to satisfy all policy requirements, are available on the College's website: one for the three-credit summer non-clinic externship, and one for the summer non-clinic externship greater than three hours and the academic-year non-clinic externship.

In reviewing externship applications for possible approval, what does the Curriculum and Externship Committee consider?

- The committee considers:
 - Whether the application is complete and was submitted in a timely fashion;
 - Whether the student is in good academic standing;
 - The degree to which the organization or outside supervisor is known to be committed to the *educational* possibilities of the externship:
 - In-depth exposure to the practice of law, including legal skills
 - Involvement in activities characteristically performed by attorneys, for example, research and writing, document drafting, client interviews, counseling, fact investigations, negotiations and court appearances
 - Frequent and close interaction with attorneys
 - Exposure of students to ethical issues raised in the practice of law, and to opportunities to confront and discuss real ethical problems
 - Externship is a reflection of a conscious commitment to public service and offers the student the opportunity to make a concrete contribution to society
 - The committee's confidence in the quality and commitment of the outside supervisor;
 - Whether the circumstances will permit effective faculty supervision; **and**
 - In close cases, the strength of the student's academic record.
- The faculty also prefers externships for fewer credit hours over those for greater hours, and favors externships in the summers or in the fourth and fifth (rather than the third or sixth) semesters.

May a student receive credit for externships earned at another school?

- Yes, students may receive credit with the approval of the Curriculum Committee, which will only authorize such registrations when the other school's externship program conforms in all respects to that of the College's.

What actions will the supervising faculty member perform at the end of the externship?

- The faculty member will provide the committee with a short report indicating whether the student has completed all obligations, and will assess the quality of the student's experience.
- After consulting with the on-site supervisor, the faculty member will also provide the student with a short assessment, either oral or in writing, of the student's performance during the externship.