

**LAW 621, Externship
LAW 679, Duke in DC Externship**

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General Information:

The Externship Program is designed to allow a student to receive academic credit for gaining legal experience beyond that available in the classroom setting, by working under the supervision of a licensed attorney in a governmental or non-profit setting. The amount of credit awarded for the field placement component of a student's externship is based on the number of hours that the student works during the semester in the externship placement, with 1 credit awarded for every 50 hours of work. Travel time to and from the externship placement does not count towards the 50 hour per credit requirement. The expectation is that a student will work in the externship placement over the course of the entire semester, with 1 credit of work correlating to approximately 4 hours in the placement each week.

In addition to the hours spent working in the externship placement, externs are required to submit biweekly reflection papers to their faculty supervisor and to Dean Bart. Credit for work in the externship placement and the associated reflection papers will be awarded on a Credit/No Credit basis.

A student participating in an externship must have completed or be currently enrolled in a course designated as satisfying the Ethics and Professionalism Requirement for graduation. This requirement may be waived, with Dean Bart's permission, in order to enroll in an externship. A student who has earned 6 credits in externships and wishes to enroll in additional externship credits must obtain the prior approval of both Dean Bart and the Curriculum Committee (see Dean Bart for more information).

A student participating in an externship may not earn a salary or receive other compensation for the work performed in the placement, except for reimbursement for travel and other work-related expenses required by the placement entity.

Orientation:

Externship students are required to participate in the Externship Program Orientation & Training. A short reading assignment may be distributed via email in advance of the orientation. Following this orientation, and as soon as possible after you begin your externship, you will need to fill out the Supervisor/Extern Agreement Form with your supervising attorney, and return it to Dean Bart.

Bi-Weekly Reflection Paper Assignments:

Under Duke Law School Rule 3-25, students who are enrolled in an externship are required to complete and submit bi-weekly reflection papers, which should be about 2 single-spaced pages in length, in memo format. Your reflection papers should describe your thoughts and reactions to your externship experiences; your papers should not discuss the substance of your work, which could be a breach of confidentiality.

Reflection papers are due by noon on every other Friday, usually beginning the second or third Friday of the semester (due dates are provided before the semester begins). Please enter these due dates into your calendar; failure to submit reflection papers regularly and on-time may result in a "no credit" (i.e., failing) grade for the externship:

You should email your bi-weekly reflection papers to your Faculty Supervisor, as well as to Dean Bart and Laura Brockington (Brockington@law.duke.edu). Please both attach *and* cut-and-paste the body of your reflection paper into your email. The Faculty Supervisors for Duke in DC externs are Professors Schroeder, Kaufman and Peck.

Hours logs:

Bi-weekly reflection paper submissions must include an hours log. Hours may simply be noted at the top or bottom of the reflection paper. Your report of completed fieldwork hours is on honor; your supervising attorney does not need to sign off on your hours for your bi-weekly report. Please report the number of hours that you completed during the time period between reflection papers, as well as your cumulative fieldwork hours total for the semester so far. Travel time to and from an externship placement does not count towards your hours, but travel time between the placement office and the court (or other venue) may count towards your externship hours if the time was spent discussing cases, process, strategy or assignments with a supervising attorney. Social / break time in the office does not count towards externship hours, but lunch or other time spent with a supervising attorney discussing externship-related matters can be counted towards externship hours. Students must complete externship hours – 50 hours of fieldwork for every registered credit – between the first day of classes and the last day of exams.

Site visits, check-ins and evaluations:

Dean Bart will conduct site visits for each student extern. For site visits, Dean Bart will meet in your externship office with your supervising attorney to discuss your externship work and experiences. If there are questions or concerns that you would like Dean Bart to bring up on your behalf with your supervising attorney, be sure to communicate those in advance of the site visit.

Occasionally throughout the semester, Dean Bart will invite student externs to meet together over lunch or dinner to share about externship experiences. You should attend at least one of these meetings during the semester.

At the end of your externship, your supervising attorney will be asked to fill out a Final Evaluation Form in order to provide feedback on your performance in your externship. Dean Bart will review those forms with you in individual meetings that will be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time near end of the semester.

Reflection Paper Assignments:

First reflection paper: Goal Setting

Draft a “work experience” résumé entry for this externship from the perspective of the semester’s end: at the end of this experience, what do you want to be able to say that you did? How do you hope to describe and market this experience to future employers?

Why did you select your externship placement? What goals do you have for this experience? Are there types of practice (client work, trial work, appellate work) that you most want to experience through this externship? Are there areas of law – statutory or regulatory – with which you would like to engage and learn more about through this experience? Are there certain people within your

host organization with whom you would like to work or connect while you are working there as an extern?

Make a meeting to discuss your externship goals with your supervisor (and, if you have not already done so, fill out and return to Dean Bart the Extern/Supervisor Agreement Form). How did your supervisor respond to your stated goals for this externship experience? Did your supervisor suggest any additional goals for your work with the organization?

Second reflection paper: Professional Rules

Read NC State Bar Rules of Professional Conduct 1.6: Lawyer-client Relationship, Confidentiality of Information; and 1.9 Client-Lawyer Relationship, Duties to Former Clients (www.ncbar.gov/menu/rules.asp).

Make a meeting with one of your supervising attorneys to discuss Professional Responsibility issues, including Confidentiality and Conflicts. Engage your supervising attorney in a discussion about who is your “client”. How is your “client” defined in the work that you are doing in your externship? What systems are in place for protecting the lawyer-client relationship? For example, does your host organization have a system for completing conflicts checks and helping attorneys to calendar or otherwise manage matters/clients to meet deadlines?

Ask your supervising attorney to explain his or her expectations for you with regard to confidentiality, and share in your reflection paper about what you learned.

Third reflection paper: Self Evaluation

Discuss your perceptions of your talents and shortcomings as a soon-to-be lawyer. What do you do well or poorly, how do you think you are perceived by colleagues and supervisors, and how do you feel about your own performance (in school, in classes, in this externship)? What does this externship experience offer by way of opportunities to enhance your performance and qualification for the practice of law? In what ways might this externship experience fill in “gaps” in your professional development or experiences?

Fourth reflection paper: Professionalism

Describe what you have learned or observed in your externship about professionalism, including lessons learned about communication (with other attorneys, clients, courts, clerks, support staff, etc.), timelines and time constraints (deadlines, being on time to court, meetings, etc.), appropriate attire, expectations regarding work outside of regular office hours, intra-office socializing, etc.

How organized, responsive, and “on top of things” is your supervising attorney and/or other attorneys in your office? What have you witnessed as good professional self-management practices that you might like to incorporate into your own practice after graduation?

What are your observations about the pace of work for attorneys in this office? Do attorneys regularly work “after hours” or on weekends? Are there “billable hours” expectations? Do you like the pace of work that you have observed in your externship setting, or would you prefer a different set of expectations regarding the pace of work and time management in your post-grad workplace?

Regarding professionalism, office culture, and “work/life balance”, how does this in-office experience differ from other work experiences you have had (summer internships, other externships, work experiences prior to law school, etc.)?

Fifth reflection paper: Faculty Supervisor-Assigned Topic for Reflection
(Please request a topic from your externship faculty supervisor)

Sixth reflection paper: Professional Friendship-building (“Networking”)

How are you getting along with other people in your placement (including supervisors, other attorneys, other externs, support staff, etc.)? What kind of feedback are you getting on your performance? How do you feel about your performance in your externship, at this point?

Engage in some professional friendship building (“networking”). Make some meetings with a couple of attorneys in your office to ask them about their career paths. What did you learn about the typical career path for an attorney working in your externship area of practice? What advice did your supervising attorney share with you about how best to develop your own career path?

Look up a professional association aligned with your own practice area interest in a location where you would like to practice post-grad (state bar association sections, specialty bars, professional organizations, etc.) and share the website in your reflection paper. Explain why you might want to join this organization post-grad, when you become a practicing attorney.

Seventh reflection paper: Final Assessment

As you wrap up your externship this semester, look back to your first reflection paper entry and assess your success in meeting the goals that you had set out for this experience. Were you able to engage in all of the types of work that you wanted to try this semester, and meet all of the people you wanted to meet? What goals/experiences were you unable to reach or have, and why?

Reflect on the work assignments and feedback that you received this semester. Are you satisfied with what you accomplished? Describe how this learning experience was different from what you might have been able to learn in a classroom setting, and share some thoughts about how your own career development/path has been influenced by your experience this semester in your externship.