



## Externships Everywhere Course Description

**Program Statement:** The *Externships Everywhere Program* gives students the opportunity to work at an approved externship placement away from the law school on a full time basis and complete a research and writing seminar or independent study on a topic related to the externship.

### Faculty

Externships Faculty Coordinator: Gopal Balachandran

Externships Class Professor: (*Faculty member teaching the section of the Externship Course matching the student's topical area of work.*)

Research & Writing Seminar/Independent Study Faculty: (*Faculty member who agrees to supervise the student in an Independent Research & Writing Seminar or Independent Study, or faculty member teaching a related seminar course who allows the student to participate in that seminar course remotely.*)

### Staff

Career Services Office: Recruitment Manager, Brenda I. Porter, [bzp72@psu.edu](mailto:bzp72@psu.edu)

Clinics & Experiential Learning: Angela Lombardo, [aml33@psu.edu](mailto:aml33@psu.edu)

Technology Support: Assistant Dean Matt Gardner, [pmg12@psu.edu](mailto:pmg12@psu.edu)

Multimedia Specialist Tim McCarthy, [tdm11@psu.edu](mailto:tdm11@psu.edu)

Multimedia Specialist Daren Brodish, [dcb20@psu.edu](mailto:dcb20@psu.edu)

### Student Eligibility

**Externship Placement Requirement:** student has received an offer to work as a full-time extern from an approved externship employer for the semester.

**Academic Eligibility Requirements:** student must confirm with the Registrar that they meet each of the academic eligibility requirements listed below before registering:

- Student is in good academic standing and in good standing under the Penn State Law Honor Code.
- Student must rank in the top 80% of his or her class based on overall cumulative grade point average. If, however, the student earned a C or lower in either semester of Applied Legal Analysis and Writing, or if the student earned a D or lower in any other course in the first-year curriculum, then the student must rank in the top 75% of his or her class based on overall cumulative grade point average. Finally, if the student is in their last semester prior to graduation, they must rank in the top 50% of their class based on overall cumulative grade point average.
- Student will complete the third year of law school with at least the 88 credits required to graduate.
- Student will not exceed the 18-credit limit on co-curricular credits with inclusion of credits for the Externships Everywhere Course.
- Student has obtained: 1) written approval of their overall course selection from the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Externship Faculty Coordinator; and 2) written approval from the faculty member for their Research & Writing Seminar/Independent Study (whether the Seminar is Independent or not).

**Intended Outcomes\*** --The goals of Penn State Law Externships are:

1. To provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their externship experiences.
2. To introduce students to, and encourage students to delve into, professional responsibility topics particularly as they relate to their externships.
3. To engage students in discussions about topics such as access to justice, government lawyering, and civility/professionalism through the use of hypotheticals and other learning activities.
4. To encourage students to learn from each other how to deal with challenges at their externships and how to deepen their externship experiences.
5. To provide students with opportunities to develop and practice their professional skills, particularly the skills of legal research/analysis/reasoning, problem-solving, and written/oral communication in the legal context of their externship.
6. To allow students to examine the settings where they work and the types of lawyering they are observing with the goal of helping them make more informed choices about their legal careers.

- *See also, **Educational Objectives: Learning Outcomes** at the end of the Syllabus & in the Penn State Law Externships Program Manual*

### **Externships Everywhere Course Components**

1. **Externships Class** (more information below, and on Syllabus)
2. **Field Placement** work at an approved externship employer  
*(Components 1 and 2 typically comprise 10 credits, but with pre-approval of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the student can work fewer hours per week and thus earn less than 10 credits)*
3. **Research and Writing Seminar Course or Independent Study**: a Research Seminar, including but not limited to Independent Research Seminars or Independent Study, for at least 2 credits  
*(Components 1, 2 and 3 typically comprise 12 credits).*
4. **Elective Course**: (*\*Optional\**) with pre-approval of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the student may enroll in another Penn State course during their Externships Everywhere semester (*e.g., approved graduate-level course at a Penn State Commonwealth campus, or a Penn State Law or other approved Penn State graduate-level course by videoconference*).

**Methods of Assessment**: The Research and Writing Seminar course (RWS) or Independent Study is a graded course for at least 2 credits. Students are evaluated and grades are assigned by the faculty member according to the guidelines for the particular writing course.

Students' performance in the Externships Class, and Field Placement, are assessed together as a single course. Students are assigned a grade of "Credit" or "No Credit". Students are expected to meet ALL the Externship Class & Field Placement requirements to earn a grade of "Credit."

## **The Externships Class**

Students in Externships Everywhere participate remotely in our Penn State Law Externships Class, which is taught in sections by subject area. Externships Everywhere students are placed in the section most appropriate to their field placement job. The students participate in the Externships Class by remotely accessing our Penn State Law classrooms using videoconferencing technology with the help of our technology staff.

## **Assigned Teaching Materials**

Wortham, Scherr, Maurer & Brooks, LEARNING FROM PRACTICE, 3d Edition, West 2007, 2016

- ❖ **FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:** Please note that individual chapters can now be purchased directly from our distributor's website, which is [www.westacademic.com](http://www.westacademic.com). If you choose to do so, you will click the *Students Tab* on their site, and then do a search for *Wortham*. This will bring up the individually-numbered chapters available for purchase. The chapters are approximately \$6.00 per chapter. You can decide which option would be most appropriate for your individual needs and purposes

ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct:

## **Externship Course Requirements:**

### 1. Class Attendance

Students must attend the 6 class sessions, in person or via videoconference, of the relevant subsection of the Penn State Law Externships residential class, each of which is taught by a Penn State Law faculty member with subject area expertise. Students will explore professional responsibility issues as they arise in their field placement externship settings. Students will be urged to reflect on their externships and analyze the ethical and substantive legal issues they encounter on the job. They will incorporate the skills and doctrines they are learning into class discussions and presentations. *\*If a student misses a class without a verifiable excuse, they are at risk of receiving "No Credit" for the Externship.*

### 2. Punctuality of Submissions

Students are expected to submit their assignments and forms on time. There will be written assignments throughout the semester, including reflective essays and forms (see "Forms" section below) related to the independent externship field placement work. These are in addition to the work required for the Research and Writing Seminar (RWS) or Independent Study Course.

### 3. Field Placement Attendance:

Students should have an established work schedule approved by their Supervising Attorney by the beginning of the semester. This schedule must be reported to the Externships Faculty through Form A – Confirmation Sheet – which is due by the end of the second week of class. Students' work schedules are expected to track the academic calendar. Students are required to work a minimum of 14 weeks over the course of the semester at an approved externship. Students should work approximately 35-38 hours per week (or a proportionately lower number if have received approval from the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs to take the externship for less than 10 credits). Students will not receive academic credit for the Externship course unless they have

completed the required number of hours in a manner that is satisfactory to the Supervising Attorney and the Faculty. Students who miss their field placement hours are required to make them up in accordance and agreement with their Supervising Attorneys. Students who fail to complete the hours in a satisfactory manner may not receive some or all their requested units. Students must meet the Penn State Law Registrar's deadlines for adding or dropping externship credits.

4. **Professionalism:**

Students are expected to act in a professional and ethical manner. Students will:

- A. Work the agreed-upon number of hours (approx. 35-38 hours/week if 10 credits);
- B. Submit the weekly time-sheets and other written work by the due dates;
- C. Perform work of a satisfactory quality as deemed by the Supervising Attorney(s) and/or the Externships Faculty;
- D. Behave in an ethical and professional manner in connection with their academic or professional assignments in the placement.

*\*\*\*Failure to abide by the above may result in credits being denied for the Externship.*

**CANVAS :**

The Externships Class and Field Placement documents and communication are managed by the "Canvas" system. All written classwork and all "Forms" (see Syllabus for detail) should be submitted on Canvas (uploaded to the appropriate area in the course website). Students must put their name, field placement name, and semester at the top of all documents they submit. Staff (listed on Page 1) are available to assist students with Canvas submissions.

**Interim Student Meetings:**

Faculty members (either the Externships Faculty Coordinator or the Externship Class professor); and the RWS Faculty Advisor, will meet privately, either in person or via videoconference, with all Externships Everywhere students. The Externships faculty discuss the field placement work, classwork, and the students' integration of skills and doctrine. RWS faculty conduct numerous meetings with the students on the progress of their Seminar paper in addition to class time. Individual RWS faculty have weekly individual meetings with their students, by video conference for Externships Everywhere. The requirement for weekly meetings does not apply to independent studies.

**Contact with your Field Placement:**

During the semester, a faculty member (or their designee) will maintain communication with your Field Placement Supervising Attorney(s). A faculty member (or their designee) may also conduct a videoconference or a live site visit with your Field Placement. If a professor plans to visit the placement, they will endeavor to meet with you and your Supervising Attorney(s) separately and together.

# ***Externships Program***

## **Educational Objectives: Learning Outcomes**



*We expect students in all externships to:*

### **A. Articulate the concept of professional identity & cultivate their own professional identity**

Students will use a Learning Agenda to articulate their goals for the Externship, and will reflect on the relationship of those goals to their own professional identity development. Supervising Attorneys and Faculty will provide feedback on the goals and the opportunities within the Externship and the tutorial, to meet those goals. Faculty Supervisors will give students opportunities for reflection, feedback and evaluation on professional identity development, using reflection essays and other tutorial interaction.

### **B. Perform ethically with attentiveness to all relevant rules of professional conduct and self-awareness**

Students will examine their professional responsibilities as lawyers in context. This includes analysis not only of legal ethics and compliance with the Rules of Professional Conduct, but with leadership and the uses of power and influence which a law degree makes possible. Students will begin to exercise judgment and responsibility in their lawyering roles.

### **C. Improve their knowledge & practice skills in a particular area of substantive law**

Students will identify and build selected and focused lawyering skills and doctrine particular to their placement type, as part of a lawyering process to promote transfer. Students will gain a greater understanding of the legal theory and doctrine pertaining to the areas of law in which their placements focus. They should be able to integrate this substantive knowledge with the actual work of their placement, and reflect on this with their faculty supervisor.

### **D. Engage in reflection that fosters learning from experience, & learning for transfer.**

Students will practice reflective lawyering by focusing on their tasks and observations in the externship placement, and then analyzing those with guidance from their Supervising Attorneys and Faculty Supervisor. This reflective learning will follow a conscious process: experience, reaction, theory, and application. Students will use reflective writing, guided discussions with supervisors, faculty and peers, time and matter tracking, and self-evaluation tools. Students will demonstrate the ability to transfer those lessons to more complex problems and to other settings.

### **E. Evaluate the justice system and examine their role in it**

By participating in the legal system, students will gain an appreciation of its strengths and weaknesses. Through critical examination they will reflect on their opinions about its quality, effectiveness, & fairness. Students will learn first-hand about the impact of the justice system on clients and others, such as witnesses and victims, who are directly affected. The externship's reflective learning experiences will allow students to evaluate the ways legal institutions function in society, and analyze their own role in strengthening the justice system.