

Pepperdine University School of Law

Externship Program Handbook

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Registration

Students must register with the Clinical Programs Office by the **last day of add/drop**, meaning students should initiate registration well before this date. See the [School of Law Academic Calendar](#) for this date.

Students may **not** make any adjustments to their registration, work commitment or credit hours after the last day of add/drop.

Students who secure field placements after the drop/add deadline may be permitted to enroll at the director's approval, but will be limited to two units and must secure a [Faculty Advisor](#) in lieu of the workshop.

I. Enrollment

Students may not enroll themselves in Externship courses. They will first need to complete the [Externship Checklist](#):

1. Meet with the Director of Externships, Professor Sophia Hamilton, for approval of your externship placement. To schedule an appointment email sophia.hamilton@pepperdine.edu.
2. Once your externship position has been approved and secured, complete the registration packet found in [Forms](#). One of the pages requires your supervisor's signature. Return the completed forms to the Clinical Programs office, room 104. They may be mailed, faxed, emailed or dropped off in person. We prefer to receive a PDF of the forms via email.
3. The Clinical Program Manager will register you for the fieldwork and workshop once the registration paperwork has been received.

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II. Credits

Each unit of externship credit requires 52.5 hours of completed field work. Hours spent in on-site work or with lawyers in the field placement count toward externship credit, while travel time, breaks, and most off-site work do not count toward externship credit. Students can earn up to 10 units per term for externships and up to 22 units of out-of-classroom credit toward graduation; these units include credit earned for externships, journals, and advocacy teams. See the School of Law [Experiential Learning Requirement](#) for more information.

Following the add/drop deadline, changes cannot be made to the number of registered units. Students are expected to register for the number of units that properly reflects the number of hours to be worked. If extenuating circumstances arise, students should contact [Professor Hamilton](#) as soon as possible to request an exception.

Externship Courses

I. Field Studies (LAW 300.01)

Students may earn up to 10 units of academic credit per term for legal work they perform with or without pay, under the supervision of licensed attorneys in a variety of field placements.

Students will work at their field placements, investing in the work of their offices, bearing professional responsibility for clients and matters, observing the work of their supervisors, other attorneys and support professionals, adversaries and judges and reflecting constantly on their professional roles and progress toward personal goals. All fieldwork hours must be completed at the placement site. Credit will not be awarded for time spent traveling to and from the externship, time spent on break, or time spent on work at home.

II. Workshops (LAW 300.11, 12, and 13)

A. First-Time Externs

Concurrent enrollment is required in one of the workshops for first time externs. All workshops begin the second week of the term and meet on alternating weeks. Workshop hours count toward work hours.

LAW 300.11 (WORKSHOP 1) Professor Stringfellow-Otey

Mon 6-7pm

LAW 300.12 (WORKSHOP 2) Professor Sophia Hamilton

Wed 6-7pm

LAW 300.13 (WORKSHOP 3) Professor Sophia Hamilton

Tues 1:40pm-2:40pm

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B. Returning Externs

Students who have already taken and completed an externship and the required workshop or faculty advisor are not required to take a workshop or have faculty advisors, but must participate in on-going, contemporaneous, faculty-guided reflection as designated by the Director of Externships.

Students in subsequent externships must complete all requisite paperwork, including registration materials, timesheets, and evaluations. Returning externs are also required to meet with Professor Hamilton mid-semester and at the end of the semester to discuss their placement. The Clinical Program Manager will email with available meeting times around mid-semester and end of semester.

C. Faculty Advisors

Faculty advisors are required for first-time externs who cannot attend a workshop.* Externs with a faculty advisor must:

1. Find a faculty advisor who is a full-time School of Law professor
2. Obtain the approval of the [Director of Externships](#)
3. Meet with their approved faculty advisor on a bi-weekly basis (it is the student's responsibility to make sure these meetings are scheduled)
4. Provide their faculty advisor with copies of their reflective memos

At the faculty advisor's discretion, additional readings or research may be required to supplement the externship.

**An extern may have a faculty advisor, subject to the discretion of the Externship Director, for schedule conflicts.*

Course Requirements

I. Attend Mandatory Orientation

All first time externs are required to attend. One hour may be used toward work hours.

See the [School of Law Academic Calendar](#) for the date and watch the Surf Report for further information.

II. Timesheets

Students must document their time using [Tick Timekeeping Software](#). See [instructions](#) on how to enter time and submit timesheets. Students will receive an email from Tick Support to facilitate setting up their account.

Approved timesheets are due periodically throughout the semester (see syllabus for dates). Students may either (1) upload signed timesheets to TWEN, or (2) email a PDF of their timesheets to their work supervisors for approval, copying clinicallaw@pepperdine.edu. Please note that students will not receive credit unless supervisors respond in an email confirming their approval of the timesheets.

III. Reflective Memos

Students must complete and submit reflective memos via TWEN by the dates specified in the syllabus (students may also find prompts in the syllabus). Reflective Memos should be the student's candid and confidential observations and thoughts. Students must:

- A. Type their reflective memos
- B. Each entry should be at least one page, double-spaced, and need be no longer than several well-thought out pages

The purpose of this component is to encourage students to explore various issues within the context of their work in the field.

Reflective Memos are a forum for comments on progress towards the student's goals, the student's performance or the performance of other attorneys, any problems or frustrations in the work, the culture and function of your office, questions about the work or the profession and the people it serves, and issues about the law and lawyering. Because reflection and learning from experience are goals of the externship program, students should demonstrate thoughtful, serious consideration of these issues.

IV. Evaluations

Students should actively seek feedback, criticism and guidance from their field supervisors. Good feedback may be the most important component of a successful externship experience. Feedback should be specific, constructive, timely and relevant to the students' work. Field advisors will be more apt to give useful criticism if the student invites and welcomes feedback, resists becoming defensive and applies criticism immediately to the work at hand.

Three evaluations are required throughout the term and will be accessed via link in an email from the Clinical Program Manager:

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- A. **Midterm Evaluation:** This is completed by the field supervisor and is intended to follow a discussion between the extern and supervisor about the externship direction and progress.
- B. **Final Evaluation:** This is completed by the supervisor alone.
- C. **Student Evaluation:** Externs are required to submit a confidential student evaluation regarding the field assignment.

V. **On-going, contemporaneous, faculty-guided reflection**

This is the workshop component of the course. Depending on the students' experience with externships, and/or the discretion of the Director of Externships, this is in the form of a:

- [Workshop](#)
- [Faculty Advisor](#)
- [Meetings with the Director of Externships](#)

Eligibility

I. Students

Second and third-year law students in good academic standing (cumulative GPA of 2.3 or higher) are eligible to participate in the externship program. Students with an overall GPA below a 2.3 may be eligible for participation, with a waiver from the Academic Dean. The Director of Externships must confer with all students and approve all externships.

II. Externship Placements

Prospective externs must secure their own placements. Current openings are available through Symplicity or the Career Development Office. New placements are eligible for approval if they meet the Clinical Program educational objectives and afford adequate field supervision.

Qualifying field placements may be in judicial, governmental, military, public interest and in-house corporate law offices. Private law firms will be approved if they are either (1) nonprofit public interest entities (cf. section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code), regardless of whether the student is paid or unpaid, or (2) a for-profit entity where the student is paid.

In Judicial placements, students develop skills in legal analysis, research, and writing under the supervision of a judge. Externships in trial courts offer an overview of litigation practice and observation of oral advocacy; externships in appellate courts focus on analysis, research and writing.

Public agencies conducting both criminal defense and prosecution allow students to assist in almost all aspects of representation. Under the Practical Training of Law Students (PTLS) program of the State Bar of California or Federal Student Practice Rule, students may be certified to appear in court under the direct supervision of a licensed attorney. In order to be certified students must be enrolled in or have completed evidence. However, it is strongly recommended that students complete evidence and criminal trial prep and settlement before seeking certification (visit Calbar.org for more information about certification).

Through externships with the various public interest entities, in both the public and private sectors, students will explore the role of the lawyer in society, as well as ethics and morality as it applies to law. Students develop their skills in analysis, negotiation, writing and counseling.

In corporate placements, students work under the supervision of lawyers in in-house counsel offices on diverse matters including governance, compliance, transactions, financing, licensing, negotiating and contracts. These placements may include entertainment companies, guilds, agencies, sports, finance, and real-estate companies.

Through field placements in the government sector, students develop their skills in legal analysis and reasoning, negotiation, interviewing, research and writing.

Contact Information

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