

Lewis & Clark Law School

OVERVIEW OF THE EXTERNSHIP APPLICATION PROCESS

It is presumed that all students will have read, be familiar with, and be in compliance with, the Externship requirements and procedures as set forth in the What's What.

At Lewis & Clark Law School, unlike many law schools, there are no “pre-selected” externship placements. Students are expected to research and choose their own placements. However, you are not expected to do this without guidance. The Externship web site and the Externship Handbook in the Career Services Office contain a listing of all the Externship placements to date. In addition, many placements actually post Externship positions and you can find those on the Career Services job posting website. Also, the majority of government agencies and public interest organizations will take student Externs, even though they do not advertise for them.

A good place to look for potential placements in government positions is on the Career Services website under the Government Honors Section and in PSLaw Net for non-profits. As for Judges, most federal judges and state court appellate judges will take Externs. You can find judicial information on the Career Services Website or in the Career Services Resources Library. Also, the Associate Dean for Career Services and faculty members are happy to make suggestions, and you should talk to the Associate Dean about how to approach prospective placements if you have any questions.

1. GETTING STARTED

If you are interested in an Externship, the first thing you should do is set up an appointment with Libby Davis, Associate Dean for Career Services & Alumni Relations, who oversees the Externship Program. During your appointment, you will go over the Externship Program pre-requisites, components of an Externship, and possible placements. Before your appointment, please be sure to read the *What's What* section on Externships (found on-line on the Registrar's webpage).

2. APPLYING TO A POSSIBLE PLACEMENT

Once you've met with Dean Davis and know that you meet, or will meet, the Externship Program requirements, you can begin applying to possible placements. It is fine to apply to multiple placements at the same time but be sure to discuss this with Dean Davis in case the advice is different for the type of placement you are pursuing. Typically, the application materials you send to a potential externship placement will include a cover letter and resume (unless you are responding to a posting that requests additional materials). In your cover letter, be sure to state that you are interesting in externing for academic credit and there will be no expectation of compensation.

In many cases, you will need to send an email or make a follow-up call (about a week after your materials have been sent or a week after a stated deadline) to ask about setting an interview. Out-of-the-area employers will almost always do phone or video interviews for extern applicants. It is common

for employers to make an offer on the spot so try to line up your interviews in the order of your strongest placement preference. Once the employer has agreed to host you as an Extern, please let them know they will need to complete (sign) the Memorandum of Agreement and write a letter that responds to the questions in our On-Site Mentor Questionnaire. Neither take long to complete and are necessary to ensure that you will be receiving the type of experience you can earn credit for performing. Both are also reviewed by the Faculty Curriculum Committee when they consider semester extern applications.

3. YOUR ON-SITE MENTOR

When you interview, be sure to confirm who will be officially serving as your On-Site Mentor during your externship. This is the person the school will communicate with to ensure that everything is going well with the externship and will serve as your on-site point-person. Keep in mind that you are expected to be treated as part of the team, on the level of a first-year associate attorney or first year law clerk to a judge. The mentor is responsible for much more than mere supervision - mentors are expected to provide substantial time, effort and supervision over your work, to meet with you on a regular basis, and to ensure that you meet the goals for your Externship. If you get a sense that the office is extremely busy, that the mentor seems rushed, and is always having you deal with an office manager to “process” the Externship, or is not getting your paperwork back to you in a timely fashion, this should set off large warning bells that this may not be the placement for you. Make sure that *you* read the Supervising Attorney Handbook so that you know what is expected of on site mentors. Remember, even though the Faculty Curriculum Committee is the final arbiter of whether or not this Externship will be approved, the faculty has no way of knowing the true nature of the attorney’s supervisory capabilities.

4. CHOOSING A FACULTY ADVISOR (Semester Externs Only)

If you will be externing during fall or spring semester, you must have a faculty advisor. Your advisor will monitor your externship (through emails and your journal entries) and will supervise the required paper upon completion of the Externship. Ideally, you will want to choose someone who has some familiarity with the substantive area of your Externship. For judicial clerkships, just about any faculty member can act as a mentor. Be sure to set up a time to talk to the faculty member (don’t catch the person on the fly!). Talk to the professor about the Externship placement, the supervising attorney, what you hope to accomplish, and why you want the Externship. Be sure you have the Supplemental Registration form with you so that the Faculty Advisor can sign it. If you have any questions or concerns, you can always talk to Dean Davis.

5. COMPLETING THE EXTERNSHIP APPLICATION

Once you have the placement secured, your On-Site Mentor is working on their paperwork, and you’ve secured a faculty advisor (semester externs only), it will be time for you to assemble your Externship application. There is a checklist in the application packet which will remind you of everything that needs to be turned in. The documents you are required to turn in are: Resume, transcript (from WebAdvisor), a current class list (from WebAdvisor - for summer externship applications, turn in your spring class list), a short writing sample, the externship checklist, the Supplemental Registration form, and the Externship Brief. Information on what should be included in the Brief is in the application packet, which is available from Dean Davis.

6. ATTENDING THE CLASSES

Prior to commencing your externship, you will need to watch one webinar regarding the application process and attend one in-person class (the dates and times of all in-person classes is available on the Externship webpage). Watching the webinar and attending the class are mandatory.

7. APPROVAL OF THE EXTERNSHIP

Externship Applications must be received before or on the deadline date. No exceptions. Once they are received, they are reviewed by Dean Davis. For summer externship application, Dean Davis handles the approval process; for semester externships, she makes recommendations to the Faculty Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee then meets with Dean Davis, and the Committee makes decisions on the semester externships. Usually the entire process takes less than two weeks.

Once the Externship decisions have been made, students and On-Site Mentors are notified by Dean Davis. For fall or spring externships, the faculty advisor is also notified of the decision. There are no appeals of Curriculum Committee decisions - they are final. Rarely are Externship applications denied, *if*: all the criteria have been met, the application is complete, without error and a quality product, the Committee is convinced the placement and on-site mentor are of superior quality, and the application is submitted in a timely fashion.

If approved, you will receive additional information from Dean Davis prior to commencing your Externship and if you have any questions, you are encouraged to contact her.

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