

MASTERS EXTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

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EXTERNSHIP CHECKLIST

- Find an Externship.**
- Arrange for a **Faculty Supervisor.**
- Complete the **Contract Form** that details your responsibilities, those of your Faculty Supervisor, and your Mentor. This form requires signatures, so please allow plenty of time to complete the form—don't wait until the last minute! You may obtain electronic signatures.
- Submit signed Contract Form to the Externship Coordinator** no later than the day before the first day of residential classes during the semester in which you will be completing your externship. If you fail to meet this deadline, we will not accept your contract or register you for the credits until you receive approval from the Committee on Standards.¹ Note that the first day of residential Summer Session is the first day of classes in Term 1.
 - * Financial Aid cannot be processed until your completed contract has been received and accepted by the Externship Coordinator and you have been registered for the externship. This process may take a few weeks, please plan accordingly.

PLANNING & REGISTERING FOR YOUR EXTERNSHIP

Finding Your Externship

- If you are interested in a particular subject matter, consider meeting with one of your professors to discuss possible externships in that area.
- Review the listings on Symplicity, Career Services online job and externship database.
- Check out the directories at Career Services for ideas of organizations. Many organizations do not have formal externship programs but would love to have a VLS student as an intern.
- Schedule an appointment with a Career Services counselor to discuss other possibilities as well as how the externship will fit in to an overall professional development plan.

Finding & Confirming a Faculty Supervisor

Students can work with any VLS faculty member. The externship demands a lot of time from the faculty, so you want to be sure to start finding a supervisor as soon as you determine you will be doing an externship. It is the student's responsibility to contact potential faculty.

¹ To petition the Committee on Standards, please submit your petition and a complete contract form signed by Shannon Leach or Anne Linehan to the Registrar. Any questions regarding the Committee on Standards petition process should be directed to the Registrar.

- Determine your preferred Faculty Supervisor through considering the following: your relationship with any particular faculty member and/or faculty with expertise in the field of study most relevant to your externship. Search the Faculty Directory online: <http://www.vermontlaw.edu/community/faculty/faculty-directory>
- Act quickly! Line up your supervisor before the preceding semester ends. This is especially important for summer externships (try to secure your supervisor before the end of the spring term). Do not hesitate to confirm a Faculty Supervisor even when still undecided between externship opportunities. Anticipate that some faculty may not have time to supervise your externship, so have a few potential supervisors in mind.
- If you are having trouble finding a supervisor, contact Anne Linehan or Shannon Leach.

Registering for your Externship

To officially register for the externship:

- Submit your complete Contract Form to Shannon Leach for approval. Contracts are due no later than the day before the first day of residential classes, and will not be accepted late. The document can be submitted by email (as an attached PDF to sleach@vermontlaw.edu), by mail, or by hand delivery (Roger's House).
- Once your contract has been approved, the Externship Coordinator will pass along registration information to the Registrar's Office.
- The Registrar's Office will officially register you for the credits. You can confirm registration through Campus-Web.
 - * Financial Aid cannot be processed until you have been registered for the externship.
- Students cannot work distantly or telecommute for their externship; students must work in an office environment.
- If you have completed all required coursework and have earned 30 credits towards your master's degree, you are not eligible to enroll in an externship.

Externship Contract Form Guidelines

Creating and Submitting your Contract:

- Download and complete the contract form, available on the VLS website: www.vermontlaw.edu/MastersExternships
- Complete the form in its entirety (incomplete forms will not be approved).
- Obtain necessary signatures for the contract. The contract form will not be accepted without these signatures. Original and e-signatures are acceptable.
- Submit contract to Shannon Leach no later than the first day of residential classes for the semester in which you will be doing your externship.

If you have questions, or if you would like someone to review your contract before obtaining signatures, please contact Shannon Leach.

Attention 4th Semester, 7th Semester, and Summer Interns:

Your lack of registration status may create difficulties or eliminate the possibility of your being able to defer student loans, use VLS health insurance, or be eligible for financial aid and/or student loans. If you are doing a 4th semester, 7th semester, or summer externship and you plan on using VLS health insurance, getting financial aid, or deferring student loans you must register for the externship **no later than two weeks before the first day of residential classes.** Failure to

complete a contract and register in advance of the semester during which you will be completing your externship will result in your not being registered as a student. Also, if you have earned 30 credits towards your degree and have completed all required courses, you are not eligible to enroll in the externship program.

You may not earn JD credit through the Masters Externship program. See Shannon Leach for information about externships for JD credit.

Externship Credit Hours

45 hours of work onsite = 1 credit (regardless of semester)

For example:

- ~ 9 hours/week over 5 weeks = 1 credit (45 hours)
- ~ 20 hours/week over 9 weeks = 4 credits (180 hours)
- ~ 27 hours/week over 15 weeks = 9 credits (405 hours)

If your Externship is the only course in which you are enrolled (i.e. during a summer or seventh semester), please note the necessary credit minimums:

You must be enrolled in at least 3 credits to be eligible for financial aid from VLS.

You must be enrolled in at least 5 credits to be eligible for health insurance from VLS.

You must be enrolled in at least 3 credits to defer student loans.

You must be enrolled in at least 3 credits to be considered a part-time student, and 6 credits to be considered a full-time student.

Masters students can pursue an Externship for between 4 and 10 credits. You cannot change the credit value of your externship after the Add/ Drop Deadline.

Tuition

Tuition for externship credits is the same as tuition for course credits. Tuition is due within a month of receipt of your bill. Questions about tuition and billing should be directed to Emily Parker in the Business Office at eparker@vermontlaw.edu. Remember to take care of Financial Aid matters as much in advance as possible.

DURING YOUR EXTERNSHIP

Meetings with Faculty Supervisor & Mentor

You are expected to stay in touch with your Faculty Supervisor, through face-to-face or phone conversations, throughout the externship. You must meet with your Mentor at least once a week to receive feedback and direction, and to address progress on your externship goals addressed in the Learning Plan document.

Learning Plan & Self-Evaluations

Working with your Faculty Supervisor, establish goals for your externship and create your Learning Plan document. At the half-way point of your externship, complete the Midterm Self-Evaluation. In the final week of your externship, complete the Final Self-Evaluation. Each Self-Evaluation will refer back to your original Learning Plan. All three documents (with instructions) are available on the externship webpage: www.vermontlaw.edu/masterseexternships.

Journals

You must keep a daily journal reflecting on your externship experience and related readings. You must submit a summary of these daily reflections (connected to any related readings and experiences), as well as any issues on which feedback might be useful, on a weekly basis to your Faculty Supervisor.

Required Reading:

The student must read the recommended reading (below) or read from a reading list created by the student in conversation with the Faculty Supervisor.

Learning from Practice: A Professional Development Text for Legal Externs. Ed: Ogilvy, J.P

Required Chapters:

Chapter 1, Learning From Experience	Chapter 15, Management Skills
Chapter 2, Setting Goals for the Externship	Chapter 17, Balancing Personal Life and Professional Life
Chapter 3, Learning from Supervision	Chapter 18, Externships and Career Planning
Chapter 10, Creative Problem Solving	Chapter 20, Looking Backward, Looking Forward
Chapter 11, Journals	

The text is available for purchase in the bookstore, and copies are on reserve in the library.

Work Product

You must submit a completed work product at the end of your externship. The work product can be a sample of work done as a part of the externship, or it can be a product created for the Faculty Supervisor based on work done during the externship. The work product must be submitted to your Faculty Supervisor by your externship end date.

WRAPPING UP YOUR EXTERNSHIP

Final Self-Evaluation

During the final week of your externship, you must complete your Final Self-Evaluation and discuss the content of the evaluation in your final meeting with your Mentor, then submit the signed form to your faculty supervisor. The form is available on the externship webpage: www.vermontlaw.edu/masterseexternships.

Letter of Evaluation

At the end of the externship, your Mentor will submit a letter of evaluation by mail or email to your Faculty Supervisor, with a copy to Shannon Leach. The letter must include the following: an overview of the student's work, an assessment of the student's strengths and any weaknesses, a confirmation that the student worked the full hours indicated on page one of your Contract, and a recommendation of a Pass or Fail grade to the Faculty Supervisor. It is a good idea to remind your supervisor that these letters are due a week after the end of your externship in order to make sure the letter arrives in time for you to receive a grade.

Student Evaluation

Each student must complete and turn in an evaluation of the externship and their experience to the Externship Coordinator (sleach@vermontlaw.edu) upon completion of the externship. A template is available on the externship webpage: www.vermontlaw.edu/masterseexternships.

Grade

Your Faculty Supervisor will determine your grade (Pass/ Fail) through assessing your journals and work product, and reviewing the letter of evaluation from and proposed assessment from your Mentor.

Questions? Contact Shannon Leach, Externship Coordinator, at sleach@vermontlaw.edu.