

SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL
EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM:
Legal Knowledge, Skills & Professionalism

WHAT IS AN EXTERNSHIP?

- Great opportunity for hands-on education in real world of legal practice
- Supervised by experienced attorney or judicial officer
- Has academic component to complement the field placement
- **Elective course that provides Credit/No Credit units**

WHAT TYPE OF PLACEMENTS ARE AVAILABLE?

- Lots of opportunities available - Including Student Certification
 - Public Interest (e.g., immigration, housing, children and family law)
 - Governmental (e.g., Public Defender, City Attorney)
 - Judicial (e.g., California Superior Court, federal courts)
 - In-house legal departments (e.g., legal dept. of entertainment or music companies)
- Note: No law firms
- Note: Cannot repeat an externship just like cannot repeat an in-class course

WHAT ARE THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY FOR AN EXTERNSHIP?

- Check online for Policies & Guidelines and application details -- <http://www.swlaw.edu/academics/extern>
- Must be in good academic standing
- Some placements only open to top 10-30% (e.g., state app. courts; fed. judicial and government)
- Prepare resume with help of CSO; need writing sample for some placements
- Research available placements – lots of information at above webpages
- Discuss interests with faculty and/or Externship Office staff
- Apply early (at least 6 mos.) for state app. courts; fed. judicial and government
- Some placements require background check (lead-time required; must get clearance by start of semester/session)
- Note: Summer is always very competitive
- Note: Register for an in-class course in case don't get an externship

WHAT IS THE APPLICATION DEADLINE and HOW MANY UNITS ARE EXTERNSHIPS?

Following first year for FT students; following second year for PT students:

SESSIONS	UNITS	APP. DEADLINE
Fall semester	3, 4 or 10 units (13, 18 or 40 hours/week)	March 1
Spring semester	3, 4 or 10 units (13, 18 or 40 hours/week)	Sept. 15
Summer (concurrent with 8-week summer session)	2, 3, 4 or 5 units (16, 23, 32 or 40 hours/week)	February 1

- During fall and spring, 4-unit externships are with the Superior Court or Cal. Ct. of App., and 10-unit externships are with the federal judiciary. During summer, the full-time externships are usually with the judiciary.
- For summer, when interviewing or accepting an externship, make sure the placement will have enough legal fieldwork for you to satisfy the required hours for the eight weeks.

WHY SHOULD I DO AN EXTERNSHIP?

- “Try on” a practice area
- Learn the law through hands-on experience – including court appearances!
- Observe attorneys and judges in action
- Not only develop skills but also a sense of professionalism
- Network; get recommendation letters
- Get credit units, and satisfy the professional skills requirement
- Get invigorated! Connect the classroom to the real world!
- Join about 300 fellow Southwestern students who extern each year!

CAN I GET PAID?

- You cannot receive any compensation
- You pay for the Externship course units similar to other courses

WHAT IS THE PROCESS AFTER I APPLY?

- The Externship Office confirms your eligibility.
- Students are generally submitted to placements in groups -- e.g., DA, or California Superior Court -- at an appointed date specified by the placement (i.e., some placements do not accept applications prior to an appointed date).
- If the placement is interested in your application, the supervising attorney or the externship coordinator will contact you directly, at the contact information you provide on your resume. Some may ask for a telephonic interview; others may schedule an in-person interview.
- Some placements will request your participation in a background check process, including fingerprinting (e.g., City Attorney’s Office). This process could take anywhere from two to six weeks (sometimes longer – e.g., US Trustee). Also, if your requested placement provides an opportunity for student certification, make sure to apply immediately.
- To maximize your chances of getting an externship, take advantage of “Interviewing” and other workshops offered by CSO.
- If you get an interview and/or offer, please notify the Externship Program Office at externoffice@swlaw.edu, or by phone at 213.738.6802.
- If you do not hear from any placements, please notify the Externship Program Office. Depending on the particular placement, on a periodic basis, we can follow up to inquire about the status of Southwestern students submitted for externships.

WHERE DO I GET FURTHER INFO, APPLICATION, ETC.?

- The Externship Office – W231, ext. 6802, externoffice@swlaw.edu
Mon.-Thurs., 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Fridays, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Ms. Elizabeth (Liz) Peisner, Assistant Director of the Externship Program
Ms. Mitzie Vitela, Externship Program Manager
- Professor Anahid Gharakhanian, Director of the Externship Program – BW313, ext. 6786,
agharakhanian@swlaw.edu
- <http://www.swlaw.edu/academics/extern>

Come to:

- **THE 20th ANNUAL JULIA MASON EXTERNSHIP OPEN FORUM – January 19-20, 2011.**
12:30 p.m., in the BW Lobby. Meet representatives from a number of Externship placements and find out about the educational experience each offers.