

SPRING SEMESTER-IN-PRACTICE AT FLORIDA APPELLATE COURTS

SPRING SEMESTER-IN-PRACTICE AT FEDERAL DISTRICT COURTS

LAW 6945, Class # 25436/LAW 6933, Class # 25439

Spring 2023

Bridge Course Policies & Syllabus

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I. The Levin College of Law Externship & Semester-in-Practice Program.

A. Field Placement: The Levin College of Law’s Externship and Semester-in-Practice Program allows you to step out of the classroom and to work closely with judges and/or practicing attorneys while earning academic credit. You will learn by doing and observing, and in the process, learn essential lawyering skills. You will be monitored by an attorney field supervisor, and will be required to record hours using the forms provided to the UF Law Externship & SIP Program at externships@law.ufl.edu.¹

B. This Course: In addition to the field placement, your Semester-in-Practice includes a required, co-requisite Bridge course (this one). This class – **LAW 6933, Class #25439** – serves as the academic component of your externship, and is designed to supplement and enhance your experience at your field placement.

C. Assignments: This class component will include weekly assignments consisting of: 1) required readings identified in this Syllabus; 2) short journal submissions relating to what you have been doing at your placement; and 3) two essays of 7-10 pages that discuss what you have learned in the readings. In addition, we will have at least two (required) telephone or Zoom conversations where we will discuss the readings and your field experiences.

D. Instructions for Completing Regular Journals: Please copy the format identified below, and fill it in for each day you work. If you have an assignment that continues over more than a single day, you may combine those entries. You will send your submission to me by e-mail (mclendon@law.ufl.edu). If you will not start your placement until after the first journal

¹ For the ABA rules governing these placements, please see pages 18 and 19 at the following link:
http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/misc/legal_education/Standards/2015_2016_aba_standards_for_approval_of_law_schools_final.authcheckdam.pdf.

entry is due, please submit something reminding me of that, and begin your entries on the first day that you work.

Because you are working at a judicial placement, you need to be careful to remove any information from your journal that might identify the specific case or parties. This should still allow you to provide basic information to the Faculty Supervisor about the kind of work you are doing while at the court where the extern has been placed. You may want to show this to your Field Supervisor if you have any questions about the information you are providing.

Sample journal entry:

Name:	Externship: (judge & court)
Day/Date:	Weekly Journal Week #
(time period) – description of work done	
(time period) – description of work done	

Provide a brief description of what you have done during each part of the day (*e.g.*, legal research, bench brief preparation, preparing a memorandum of law, reviewing briefs, other). This should still provide the Faculty Supervisor with some idea about how you occupied your time while at your placement.

Journal entries are due on the following dates:

1st submission: Friday, 9. February, at 11.59pm (end of Week 2)

2nd submission: Friday, 1. March, at 11.59pm (end of Week 5)

3rd submission: Friday, 22. March, at 11.59pm (end of Week 7).

Final submission: by Monday, 15. April, at 11.59pm.

E. Essays: In addition to the regular journals, you are required to complete two essays of 6-8 pages each on some area discussed in the assigned readings below. The required and suggested readings provide some basis for discussion, but you are free to use other sources as well. Remember, however, your obligation to be discreet and use only published sources!

Essays are due on the following dates:

1st Essay: Friday, 8. March, at 11.59pm (end of Week 6).

2nd Essay: Tuesday, 22. April, at 11.59pm.

(As an alternative to the essay requirement, you may elect to write a single research paper of 15 pages, exclusive of footnotes, on some subject relating to the Florida Constitution, the Florida court system (or federal court system if relevant to your SIP), the jurisdiction or operation of the courts, to be agreed between you and the faculty sponsor. If you elect this option, you should notify your faculty supervisor. This research paper must be submitted to the faculty sponsor prior to receiving a grade.)

F. Telephone Conversations with Faculty Supervisor: Each student taking part in this Bridge course will need to participate in at least two telephone conversations (or teleconferences) with the Faculty Supervisor. Each conversation should last no more than half an hour, and will be scheduled either over lunch or in the early evening of Weeks 3-5 for the 1st Conversation, and Weeks 6-8 for the 2nd Conversation. In addition, the Faculty Supervisor may schedule a short conversation with the student’s Field Supervisor to discuss the student’s performance. These conversations should begin during or after Week 3.

II. Learning Outcomes & Course Objectives.

ABA & Levin College of Law regulations require the Faculty Supervisor to provide students with the formal “learning outcomes” and “course objectives” for externships. **This is relevant as well for your semester-in-practice experience.** That information is as follows:

A. Externship/SIP Program Learning Outcomes:

#1: Operation	Students will be exposed to the practice of law and able to tie the field experience to the study of law.
#2: Evaluation	The Faculty Supervisor and the Field Supervisor will evaluate students based on performance in the field placement and work in the course.
#3: Experiential Quality	The Faculty Supervisor will determine the overall quality of the placement and the student's experience based on the type of work given to the student, the opportunities provided by the placement, and the assignments completed by the student.
#4: Contemporaneous Reflection	Students will reflect on their experiences and goals, through regularly scheduled classroom assignments and synchronous discussions with their Faculty Supervisor.
#5: Application of Laws, Policies, Procedures, and Operational Techniques	Students will recognize the purposes for, and be able to ethically apply, laws, policies, procedures, and operational techniques to law.
#6: Legal Research and Analysis	Students' research and analysis skills will be refreshed and used effectively in their placements.
#7: Utilization of Information	Students will use practice area or subject matter information to write briefs, orders, and other documents for the field placement.

B. Course Objectives:

The work you will be assigned in your field placement should be the type typically handled by a lawyer or judicial clerk, intellectually challenging, and contribute to your professional growth and development. To promote these objectives, throughout your field placement and this Bridge course, you should:

1. Examine the purpose and function of legal professionalism in a (court / private practice / government office / public interest organizational) setting.
2. Engage in legal research and produce legal writings.
3. Demonstrate a greater understanding of the technical and human aspects of the practice of law.
4. Understand the links between the study of law and the practice of law.
5. Examine various laws, regulations, and other legal sources and develop a better understanding of their practical application.
6. Become more aware of your power, responsibility, and professional identity as a lawyer.
7. Become more aware of the critical importance of acting ethically and professionally in all settings, but especially in the court setting.
8. Build a relationship with your judge and his or her staff, and learn from their experiences.

III. Hours requirement.

The Levin College of Law requires you to complete 45 hours of verified work at your placement for each credit you receive. The chart below displays the number of hours you will need to work depending on the credits you seek:

Number of Credits	Required Number of Hours
5	225
6	270
7	315
8	360
9	405
10	450

It is your responsibility to work these hours. A template for reporting hours will be placed on the Canvas page for the SIP. You will need to complete this form and have the hours verified by your field supervisor. Submit the hours form to the UF Law Externship & SIP Program at externships@law.ufl.edu. If there is a problem meeting your hours, please let your faculty supervisor know as early as possible so that adjustments can be made in your SIP.

IV. Grading Policies.

To receive passing credits for this Bridge to Practice course, you must do the following:

1. Work the requisite number of hours at the field placement in a timely and professionally manner. Note that if you know you will be absent, you must let your field supervisor know ahead of time. Under no circumstances should you simply not show up to work without previously informing your supervisor.
2. Complete all reading or other assignments on time.
3. Submit to the Externship & SIP Program Coordinator time sheets professionally completed and on time (at externships@law.ufl.edu).
4. Furnish bi-weekly journal entries to the Faculty Supervisor on time and of professional quality.
5. Participate in all telephone conversations and/or video conferences with the Faculty Supervisor on time and professionally.
6. Perform work field work on time, and of professional quality.
7. Behave in an ethical and professional manner at all times during the period while you are at your placement. Students should consider their entire semester-in-practice as an extended interview and behave accordingly.

In addition, you must comply with the following provisions (copied below) contained in the agreement you signed when you registered for this course:

I have reviewed and agree to the following requirements and responsibilities:

1. I will follow the rules and policies established by the Field Supervisor and the Levin College of Law, including but not limited to the rules for hours of office operation and absences, rules governing office procedures, requirements governing the submission of time logs, and all other requirements established by my Field Supervisor and my Faculty Supervisor.
2. I will meet with my Faculty Supervisor before starting my externship, in order to understand the requirements for the academic portion of my semester-in-practice.
3. I will complete all of the work hours required for my semester-in-practice placement.
4. I will complete all documentation required by the Field Supervisor and the Levin College of Law.
5. I understand that the Field Supervisor will supervise me while I am at my placement.
6. I understand that I must act professionally and ethically and that I must maintain the confidentiality of information provided to me while at my placement and while taking part in the semester-in-practice program.

7. I will prepare for and participate in all meetings, including orientations, tutorials, and evaluation meetings scheduled by my Field Supervisor and my Faculty Supervisor.
8. I will participate with my Faculty Supervisor in an on-line course, or other form of guided reflection, related to my externship and I will complete the written assignments necessary to satisfy this requirement. I understand that I must observe restrictions mandated by confidentiality and privilege when describing my work to my Faculty Supervisor.
9. I will prepare and submit regular time logs to the UF Law Externship & SIP Program using the forms provided (at externships@law.ufl.edu).
10. I understand that I am responsible for my own health, accident, and automobile insurance.
11. I understand that I may not receive financial compensation for the work I perform during the period of my semester-in-practice.
12. I understand that I cannot receive credit until I complete and report all of my hours or fail to complete any work assigned by my Faculty and Field Supervisors.

V. UF Levin College of Law Standard Syllabus Policies.

Other information about UF Levin College of Law policies, including compliance with the UF Honor Code, Grading, Accommodations, Class Recordings, and Course Evaluations can be found at this link: <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/427635/files/74674656?wrap=1>

VI. Readings for Semester-in-Practice, Spring 2024.

Note that 3 separate readings will be provided for students at the three placements: 1) Florida District Courts of Appeal; 2) Federal District Courts; and 3) Federal Tax Courts.

Note also that these readings will be provided once I have the final list of where students have been placed. But the first week for purpose the readings & journals will not be until the week of 22.-26. January.