

SPRING 2019 BRIDGE-TO-PRACTICE CLASSROOM COMPONENT LAW6930

COURSE POLICIES & SYLLABUS

Instructor's Contact Information:

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WELCOME!

The Levin College of Law's Semester in Practice Program enables students to head off campus to work for academic credit in non-profit agencies, government offices and public policy organizations. In these placements, they may do legal research and writing, client interviews, and make court appearances under the supervision of a licensed attorney. In conjunction with this unpaid work, students participate in a companion externship course which allows them to reflect and learn from their experience in a guided pedagogical setting.

The Objectives of this Externship Course include:

- Enabling students to develop their professional goals through practicing, and reflecting upon, their work at their state and federal PD and Prosecutor placements;
- Improving students' lawyering skills, including research, writing, and oral advocacy by putting into action these skills and receiving detailed feedback;
- Developing lifelong habits of reflective learning and self-awareness to help students make good decisions regarding their professional growth in the future;
- Teaching the rules of professional responsibility and the importance of professionalism through participating in, and observing, work in a real-life setting;
- Expanding students' substantive legal knowledge and analytic skills through their work at the PD and Prosecutor's offices as well as through course readings and discussions; and
- Emphasizing that public service offers a rewarding legal career.

These goals are achieved by structured reflection and learning opportunities during this companion course, in which we will:

- study and discuss substantive and criminal law practice-focused readings;
- complete exercises that enhance practical skills like communication, time management and cultural competence;
- discuss and share student experiences at externship PD and Prosecutor sites;
- write weekly reflection papers.

This course allows you to step out of the classroom to work closely with practicing State and Federal Prosecutors and Public Defenders while earning academic credit. The work you will be assigned in your field placement should be the type typically handled by a prosecutor or public defender--intellectually challenging, and it should contribute to your professional growth and development. You'll learn by doing and observing, and in the process, garner essential skills for becoming an ethical and skilled lawyer.

You'll be monitored by an attorney field supervisor, and will be required to submit time sheets every two weeks via fax or email. At some point during the semester, you will establish an account with ELMS and submit time sheets electronically. Our class includes weekly

assignments consisting of readings and journal submissions describing your field placement experiences at your office. In addition, we'll have four required online synchronous chat sessions where we'll discuss the readings, your field experiences and anything else that may be of interest to you related to the criminal justice system in which you are working.

Externship Course Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the mechanics of criminal prosecution, including arrest and charging, research and writing, witness interviewing, pre-trial motions, jury selection, trial and appeal;
2. Resolve evidentiary issues both in the courtroom and pre-trial;
3. Understand the roles of a prosecutor and public defender in our criminal justice system and the relationship between prosecutors, police, defense lawyers and the court;
4. Conduct accurate legal research and write competent legal memoranda;
5. Exemplify professionalism with unimpeachable ethical behavior; and
6. Develop lifelong habits of reflective learning and self-awareness.

Grading Policies:

This course is graded pass/fail. In order to obtain passing credits for your externship, I expect you to:

1. Work the requisite number of hours at the field placement and report them in a timely and professional manner via fax, email and/or ELMS. If you know you will be absent, you must let your field supervisor know beforehand. Under no circumstances may you fail to appear at work without telling your supervisor;
2. Satisfactorily and timely complete all reading and assignments;
3. Furnish weekly journal entries to me on time and of professional quality;
4. Participate in, and be prepared for, all synchronous chat groups;
5. Perform work in the field of professional quality.
6. Conduct yourself in an ethical and professional manner at all times during the externship program. This externship is a fantastic opportunity for your host organization to interview you and see your work over an extended period--make the most of it!

University Policy on Academic Misconduct:

The University of Florida College of Law Honor Code represents a commitment by students to adhere to the highest degree of ethical integrity. Teaching and learning flourish best in an environment where mutual trust and respect form the bedrock of relationships. The Honor Code helps create a community in which students can maximize their intellectual and

academic potential. Please be sure that you understand the UF Honor Code, which may be found at: <https://www.law.ufl.edu/life-at-uf-law/office-of-student-affairs/additional-information/honor-code-and-committee/honor-code>.

Student Course Evaluations:

It is appreciated and students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester.

Statement related to accommodations for students with disabilities:

Students requesting special accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible.

SYLLABUS

A summary of assignments is below. Please complete your work in a timely manner and complete all assignments prior to our chat sessions.

1. Weekly Reflection Journals

Beginning in the second week of the semester, you must write a paper reflecting on your experiences in your externship over the previous week or on the criminal justice system more broadly. Reflection papers are due each Sunday at midnight. Delivery via Canvas upload is best, but email is also acceptable. You may take off one free week during the semester. It is helpful—but not required—to begin these papers with a brief description of what you did or saw in the previous week. Please do not merely recite events. The purpose of these papers is to encourage you to comment on the justice system as you see it. Ask yourselves whether the system is working, whether the various players are doing their jobs, and whether defendants are getting a fair shake. How could the system work better? Do you like your role?

If it's been a slow week at the office or if something else in the news or in the class readings or in your life experience bearing on the criminal justice system has grabbed your attention, please feel free to discuss these other matters. Again, the aim is to reflect on the justice system. Within that realm you are free to explore widely. These papers also may serve as a forum for you to air concerns or suggestions about your externship or its classroom component. You may note that you would prefer a different classroom focus; that you would like different kinds of cases; or that you are having difficulties and want extra guidance. There is no page restriction on these papers, but it is unlikely you could reflect well on a week's work in less than three double-spaced pages. Please be sure to include your name and indicate the dates covered in your report. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding your weekly reflection assignments.

2. Online Chat groups

Our four synchronous group chats will be conducted via Zoom and take place on the following dates and times:

Tuesday, January 22nd 6-8pm

Tuesday, February 26th 6-8pm

Monday, March 18th 6-8pm

Monday, April 15th 6-8pm

Notwithstanding these scheduled chats, please feel free to contact me via email or telephone at any time during the semester to talk about issues which arise during your externship. This is an outstanding learning experience and opportunity to explore a time-honored, deeply respected profession--enjoy it!

Your chat group participation is mandatory, in order to receive credit for your externship. If you believe that because of a work or academic conflict, you will not be able to participate at any of the times I have set you need to let me know as soon as possible, and I will try to work with you to accommodate your schedule.