

UCLA School of Law
EXTERNSHIP & FIELD PLACEMENT PROGRAM

Information for Placement Sites

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**These portions have been adapted from the SoCalEx 2020 Manual*

Introduction

The Externship Program places 2L, 3L and LLM law students at workplaces across Los Angeles during the fall and spring semesters. As externs, students have the opportunity to do the work of an entry-level staff attorney, while earning academic credit. Students simultaneously enroll in a seminar that emphasizes critical reflection, professionalism, and professional identity development.

JD candidates may complete one full-time externship, or up to two part-time externships during their tenure at the law school. LLM candidates may complete one part-time externship. Part-time externships range from 2-8 credits (2-5 for LLM students, and 3-8 for JD students), with each credit representing 52 hours of field placement work over the course of the semester. This means that 4 credits is roughly a two day a week commitment, and 8 credits is roughly 4 days a week.

The Program adds new placements on an ad hoc basis, particularly when a new placement site either fills a gap in our existing offerings, or works closely with existing UCLA School of Law Centers or Programs.

Externship Learning Goals

By including externships in UCLA School of Law's curriculum, the faculty rely on attorney-supervisors at externship placements to assume partial responsibility for the legal education of UCLA law students. With that in mind, the faculty has developed the following educational objectives to help ensure and evaluate the educational value of the externship:

1. To develop students' writing and research skills by intensive work on drafting documents such as complaints, answers, trial and appellate briefs, agreements, legal memoranda, opinion letters, and so forth.
2. To expose students to lawyering activities such as interviewing, counseling and negotiating, advocacy, formulation of strategy and development of facts.
3. To develop students' oral skills through participation in court proceedings under student practice rules and through giving oral reports on matters they are working on.
4. To give students a broader legal experience from which to deepen their understanding and mastery of materials taught in the classroom upon their return to school and to enrich their contribution to class discussion.
5. To give students the opportunity to study legal process through their participation in the work of a legal institution.
6. To expose students to issues of professional responsibility within the context of actual practice.
7. To encourage student exploration of lawyering roles.
8. To permit students to gain experience in specialized areas of the law through practical experience that will supplement elective course work.

Placement Site Obligations

In order to ensure that the program meets the above educational objectives, the American Bar Association's requirements regarding experiential work for academic credit, and UCLA School of Law's own Academic Standards, the Externship Office requires the following from host agencies:

1. To appoint one attorney to be responsible for the supervision and activities of the extern. This supervisor must provide the law school with a current resume.
2. The supervising lawyer and student must work together on-site in the same place of business that is not a private residence; and ensure the student has a designated

workspace and access to the tools (e.g., telephone, computer, library) and support reasonably necessary to complete their assignments. Students may extern remotely if a significant percentage of the staff attorneys also work remotely; the idea is to give the student the experience of joining the team.

3. The supervising lawyer must be available as necessary for regular consultation with the student. At a minimum, the **supervisor must meet with the student at least once a week** to discuss assignments, provide feedback and make suggestions.
4. The supervising lawyer should ensure that the student is given a variety of meaningful and interesting work assignments. When the first draft of any work is completed, the supervisor (or the lawyer in charge of the project) should give the student feedback as to the adequacy of the research, mastery of relevant facts, accuracy, style, clarity and persuasive content. The student should be required to edit his or her work as many times as necessary to achieve a product that meets the supervisor's own standards of performance.
 - a. If the lawyer giving the critique is not the supervising lawyer, the supervising lawyer should be informed as to the character of the critique given.
5. **Student assignments should be similar to those given to lawyers working at the agency – assignments should not be clerical in nature.** (Of course, all students should be fully supervised and certified, as appropriate, under student practice rules.) Assignments could include document drafting, preparation of pleadings, legal research, preparation of legal memoranda, fact investigation and development, negotiation with and on behalf of clients, client and witness interviewing, participation in conferences with outside parties, and observation of meetings, hearings or court proceedings.
6. Whenever possible, the supervisor should choose assignments that will permit the students to be involved in a matter from its inception to its final disposition. Every effort should be made to include students in the strategic decision-making process concerning matters on which the students are working.
7. Whenever possible, the extern should be included in staff meetings and staff trainings, as any entry-level attorney would be.
8. Observation assignments such as going to court or meeting a client are encouraged but should generally take place in conjunction with work assignments. Students should also be given an opportunity to develop their communication skills by encouraging oral presentations to clients, to the supervising lawyer, or during staff meetings.
9. The supervisor must meet, more formally, with the student at the mid-point of the academic term to evaluate the externship and file a mid-term report with the law school. The agency must also file a final evaluation of the student's work at the end of the term. (Forms for these evaluations are provided by the school.) It is important that these evaluations are returned promptly.

10. The Host Agency shall defend, indemnify, and hold students harmless from and against any and all liability, loss, expense (including reasonable attorneys' fees), or claims for injury or damages arising out of the performance of this Agreement.

In addition to the direction and feedback you give externs regarding their performance on assigned tasks, we also ask you share your experiences with and observations about the greater legal system. As many of the externs you will supervise will have little prior legal experience, what they learn from you will often become the foundation of their understanding of what it means to be a lawyer.

We also expect students to reflect on their experiences in journals that they keep for themselves and submit to their faculty supervisors. It is therefore important for you and the extern to have a discussion at your earliest convenience regarding the scope of confidentiality for the written journals. This provides an excellent opportunity to discuss with the student the ethical and legal parameters of client confidentiality and any specific rules that your office may have regarding confidentiality and privilege.¹

Partnership with UCLA's Externship Program

While we at the Externship Program are confident that our students will be an incredible asset to law practices in LA and beyond, we understand that supervision can be a heavy lift, and will involve growing pains if it is done right. We are grateful that you are a part of our team of dedicated placements and supervisors!

The Externship Director is here to support you as you navigate supervising our students. We are prepared to provide trainings on the pedagogy of supervision and providing feedback, anti-racist and inclusive supervision, etc. The Director is also at your disposal to address any issues that may arise, and to work in partnership with supervisors to address them.

In sum, though your organization is embracing a significant responsibility, we hope that you expect to do so in *partnership* with the Externship Program. We are limited by the rules outlined by our faculty, our Academic Standards, and the ABA, but where flexibility is possible, we believe in leaning into it, as long as we can do so without sacrificing our students' experience. Please let us know every step of the way how we can strengthen both your work, and the educational experience for our students.

¹ SoCalEx 2020 manual, available at lexernweb.org/site-supervisor-materials-1.

Posting the Position, and Selecting your Externs

While there is no hard deadline for posting positions, we recommend that you try to post available positions a few months prior to the start date, targeting late spring/early summer for fall positions, and October for spring positions.

Most students learn about available externships through Symplicity. You can find a guide to posting your own positions on Symplicity [here](#).

Once you post your position, you will start receiving applications. You and your team should make a plan for identifying top candidates, and scheduling interviews. You are welcome to include the Director in these conversations if you would like guidance on selecting your externs, or structuring your selection process. We recommend following up an informal offer with a short but formal offer letter. The student will then follow up with a copy of UCLA's Externship Agreement,² which the Externship Program requires in order to finalize the enrollment process. Filling out the Agreement will help you and the extern finalize the logistics of the externship: start and end dates, weekly schedules, direct supervisor, etc. Externships generally run for 13-15 weeks. While students have some flexibility to extend their end date, they cannot generally start early.

² See the Appendix for an updated copy.

Rough Fall and Spring Semester Timelines

Though the dates change annually, the academic year proceeds approximately as follows in the table below. Your student should provide you with semester-specific dates at the beginning of their externship.

What	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summary of Expectations
Externship begins	Last week of August	Last week of January	Have on-boarding (email, phone) ready to go. Have a training materials and a case or two ready for assignment, as well as one low-priority task ready for when things inevitably get slow, and you're not reachable. Ensure you're on-site for onboarding, and provide a schedule of staff meetings/trainings for the extern to put on his/her calendar.
Learning Plan Review	First week of September	First week of February	Students' first externship seminar assignment is to prepare a learning plan that sets forth the student's learning goals for the externship and a plan for meeting the goals. Students identify not only what they want to achieve during their externship, but ways in which they might attain those goals. Externs may seek your input or approval of their plans, in writing or informally. Offer suggestions based on your own experience and what your placement can offer, and work with the student to identify specific experiences, tasks and opportunities that could help the student work towards their learning goals.
Weekly supervision meetings	Weekly	Weekly	Encourage student to draft a weekly agenda for these meetings, where the student can ask questions, receive assignments, and receive meaningful feedback on their professionalism, substantive work, etc.
Timesheet Reviews	Monthly	Monthly	Review timesheet printouts for accuracy, and communicate your approval via email. The student will submit a pdf of your emailed approval to the Externship Office.
Posting for Next Semester	Early October	Early March	If you'd like to have your current extern's spot advertised for the following semester, reach out to Director Davidson so that she can facilitate posting.
Midterm Evaluation	Mid-October	Second week of March	Both the midterm and final are meant to be hour-long intensive feedback sessions. In the midterm, the supervisor and student should think carefully about the learning plan drafted at the beginning of the semester: what needs to happen to address the remaining goals by the conclusion of the extern's time? What changes does the supervisor believe the student should be making? Both the supervisor and the student can prepare for their midterm evaluation using the google forms provided, or can fill out the google forms after the evaluation itself. The deadline set

			for these evaluations is a deadline for both the conversation, and the forms.
Final Evaluation	First week of December	First week of May	See “midterm” above.
Conclusion of Externship	End of November	Last week of April	Ensure the student is aware of any limits on his/her ability to use work product for a writing sample, and if you’re willing, welcome them to stay in touch with you as they progress in their careers. We also recommend that you take a moment to write down anything you may want to remember for future letters of recommendation.

Creating an Appropriate Environment and Orienting Your Externs

The physical workplace environment is extremely important to a successful externship experience. Students who feel comfortable and welcome are more productive. While it may not always be possible to assign each extern with his or her own workspace, we recommend, at a minimum, that students be provided:

- A desk or other secure workspace;
- A phone or easy access to a phone;
- A computer, or sufficient access to one, to allow prompt completion of assignments;
- Access to online research tools and relevant hard copy legal research materials;
- Sufficient office supplies;
- Copier and fax access, if necessary.

The following should be provided to all students, including remote workers:

- An email address
- Login information for zoom, teams, or any other required software
- Login information for any required case management system

Equally important to getting the extern started on the right foot is orienting them to the office or chambers and the staff. On the externs’ first day, provide them an orientation so that they feel welcome and understand how things work. This should include:

- A brief orientation to the office or chambers, including a tour of the office and introduction to all staff they are likely to encounter during the workday;
- Letting them know if they can ask for assistance from any of the support staff to accomplish a task;
- Written office procedures and policies, if available;
- An introduction to the office’s digital workspace: how are shared files saved? How are files sent between colleagues? Where should the student save their documents?

- Office keys or restroom keys, if necessary;
- Clear instructions regarding parking or reimbursement for parking expenses;
- Instructions as to any workplace limitations, such as areas that may be off-limits or files or materials that may be sensitive or confidential.

Along with the setup of the office and a first-day orientation, it is important to include the student in the office culture throughout the externship. The more the student is treated as part of the team, the better the learning experience will be for the student. To help integrate the extern to the greatest extent possible, please consider doing some or all of the following:

- Invite externs to meetings, hearings, conference calls, and any other activity that may be relevant to the student's work or may enhance understanding of the project or task;
- Circulate general office memoranda to externs, if appropriate;
- Include externs in the informal matters of the workplace, such as celebrations or group luncheons.

Throughout the Semester: Assignments, Feedback, and Continuous Communication

The following are some suggestions for maximizing the externship's educational value to the student as well as the value of the student's contribution to the legal work of your office, chambers, or organization.

Streamline Your Assignment Process: Consider filtering all assignments through a single supervising attorney or judicial clerk. This approach will ensure that no one student has too much or too little work and, in the long-term, will increase educational value. In addition, this system will help track the variety and nature of assignments each student is getting so that there is progression (when warranted) toward more complex assignments. Finally, the supervising attorney can also ensure that the assigning attorney has provided an adequate description of the work and has equipped the student with enough background information to complete their assignment.

Give Meaningful Assignments: As described in the Three-Party Agreement, the assignments you give to an extern should be similar to that of a law clerk or entry-level staff attorney, including exposure to a broad range of lawyering skills. Assignments may include, but are not limited to, drafting documents and pleadings, researching and writing memoranda, interviewing clients and witnesses, attending conferences, negotiations or mediations, and observing or participating in meetings, depositions, or court proceedings. Administrative work should be kept to a minimum.

Have Back-up Assignments Ready: Think about a few low-priority assignments that you could give to the extern to work on during slow periods. With a few of these long-term or non-pressing assignments in your pocket, you can keep an extern busy when otherwise they might be waiting

for their next assignment.

Make Assignments Clear: To ensure that you communicate the assignment clearly and completely, you might use the following checklist of information to share with the extern:

- Objectives of the assignment
- How the project fits into the overall case, deal, or project
- How much time you expect to be spent on the assignment
- How often and at which junctures they should check-in during their assignment
- Where they might begin researching (such as in a specialty treatise)
- What the finished product should look like (consider sharing a sample memo, for example)
- Who they may contact for assistance if you are not available
- Due date

Continuous Communication: Frequent communication with the externs, both about specific assignments and in general, is critical to the student's educational experience. Open communication can prevent misunderstandings, clarify expectations, and ensure that your extern becomes an integrated member of your team. To ensure clear and open communication, consider doing some or all of the following:

- Set a weekly meeting time to check in with your externs about their work and solicit questions they may have;
- Send a quick email or stop by the extern's desk at least once a week to check their progress on any pending assignments and see if they have any questions;
- Tell externs if you have an "open door" policy, and if you do not, what is the best way for them to approach you with questions or concerns (some prefer email, others text, etc.);
- Let externs know whom they can approach with questions if you are not available.

Effective Feedback: Providing timely and constructive feedback for all assignments is critical to the extern's academic experience. It is important to begin providing feedback early in the semester so the student can use the feedback to continuously improve her performance. Note that providing feedback is not merely pointing out strengths and weaknesses; truly productive feedback is a collaboration between the supervisor and student where both are responsible for thoughtful evaluation.

We know your time is valuable, and that sometimes you may not be able to do more than markup the extern's draft and return it for revisions. At least on several assignments, however, we recommend taking the time for a collaborative approach to feedback that helps students become self-directed learners. We suggest the below six-step model, developed to assist externship and clinical supervisors in giving students constructive feedback.³ The primary goal of this model is to teach law students to self-critique their own work and to develop critical self-awareness in performance. The Six-Step Model is as follows:

³ Beryl Blaustone, Teaching Law Students to Self-Critique and to Develop Critical Clinical Self-Awareness in Performance, 13 CLIN.L.REV. 601 (2006).

Step One – The Student Identifies Strengths of the Performance: The student should identify those aspects of the work that he or she feels they did well, including explaining what their work or performance accomplished.

Step Two – The Supervisor Responds Solely to Those Items Raised by The Student: Giving only positive feedback, the supervisor at this stage confines remarks to those items raised by the student.

Step Three – The Supervisor Identifies Other Strengths in the Performance: The supervisor now adds additional points that were done well. This wide-open stage explores all facets of the performance that were accomplished satisfactorily or that show a potential for success, with specific illustrations of why these aspects were successfully executed.

Step Four – The Student Identifies Difficulties and/or Changes to be Made: The student now takes the initiative in identifying areas in need of improvement, supported with specific comments.

Step Five – The Supervisor Responds to the Identified Difficulties: Confining remarks to areas identified by the student for improvement, the supervisor comments on how the areas of weakness could be handled differently next time.

Step Six – The Supervisor Indicates Additional Difficulties: This final stage involves another wide-open exploration of all facets of the performance. The discussion focuses on aspects that were not satisfactorily accomplished, again with specific illustrations and concrete analysis.

Evaluations: Your formal evaluation of the students' effort and performance is an essential part of the externship course. If you have met with your extern regularly for feedback on assignments, the formal evaluation process will simply be a summation of the earlier formative assessments. The midterm evaluation is very helpful as it provides an opportunity to address concerns and correct (if necessary) any behavioral or work product issues. The final evaluation should be comprehensive and document the externs' progress and areas of growth. We recommend that our students use this final evaluation as part of their law school record. Accordingly, it is helpful to have your candid and thorough feedback on the final evaluation form. We know that the online form format can make it seem like each question only requires a phrase, or sentence in response. Please try to offer at least brief paragraphs at several points, so that the student is left with a meaningful, substantive document to rely on.

Appendix

A. New Placement Site Application

If you are applying to be a placement site, please fill out the questions in this section, and return this page (or the whole document, whichever is easier for you) to the Externship Director.

1. Name of Proposed Placement Site: _____
2. Address of Site: _____

3. Website: _____
4. Do you intend to offer a position every semester? If so, for roughly how many students? Part-time or full-time? _____

5. Who should students send applications to? _____
6. Is there a backup contact person? _____
7. What should students include in their applications? _____

8. Who will be the initial supervising attorney? Please summarize their experience, or attach a CV: _____

9. What type of work will the extern be doing? *Please be as specific as possible:* _____

10. Will the student have client contact? _____
11. Will the student have courtroom or hearing experience? _____

12. Are you able to offer positions to international students? _____
13. Please describe your supervision plan, including how the supervisor will allot time to spend with the extern, how feedback will be handled, how assignments will be generated, etc.: _____

14. Which, if any, other law schools currently participate in your program? _____

I hereby certify that on behalf of _____, I have read the attached document entitled "Information for Placement Sites, and that my office and I agree to fulfil the responsibilities of the placement site as detailed therein.

B. Supervisor's Midterm Evaluation Questions (to *supplement* an hour-long mid-semester feedback session)

1. What is your extern's name?
2. What is your extern's greatest strength?
3. What is a concrete example of something that the extern has excelled at?
4. What is a concrete example of something the extern needs to work on?
5. Are you satisfied with the extern's timely responsiveness?
6. Is the extern appropriately responsive to feedback?
7. In your assessment, how is the extern progressing towards their learning goals, which they developed with you earlier in the semester?
8. What should the extern focus on for improvement, going forward?
9. What experiences, if any, do you think the extern should prioritize in coming semesters, if they plan to pursue this career path?
10. Do you anticipate the extern's duties may change at all for the remainder of the semester?

C. Supervisor's Final Evaluation Questions (to *supplement* an hour-long mid-semester feedback session)

1. Extern's Name
2. How should future externs apply to your organization?
3. Please rate your extern's skills in the following areas:
 - a. Research
 - b. Writing Ability
 - c. Initiative
 - d. Independence
 - e. Legal Analysis
 - f. Effective use of time
 - g. Investigation
 - h. Dependability
 - i. Attention to Detail
4. For any skills that you rated 1-3, please provide more comments about what the student needs to work on.
5. How was the student's professionalism, both in email/memo writing, and over telephone/zoom?
6. Any additional comments about the extern's skills?
7. Please describe the extern's specific contribution(s) to your placement site.
8. Any further suggestions for improvement?
9. Lastly, is there anything the Externship Program should be doing to offer additional support to supervisors like yourself?

D. 2022-23 Externship Agreement Form