

**GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR EXTERNSHIPS**

**Field Placement Requirements:**

Through participation in the Externship Program, students can earn academic credit working for a **nonprofit organization**, a **government agency**, or a **member of the judiciary**. (**Note:** In most cases, a student is not permitted to receive credit for working at a field placement for which the student has worked for credit previously.) Students must be engaged in **substantive legal work under the supervision of a licensed attorney** to receive academic credit. The Externship webpage includes a listing of potential placements. If you find a potential placement not on the list, please contact the Director of Internship & Externship Programs before accepting the position to ensure that the placement meets the requirements for credit.

**Student Prerequisites and Restrictions:**

- **Prerequisites:** To receive academic credit, a student must have completed first-year law courses and have a minimum 2.33 GPA (i.e., be in good academic standing). Some placements may have additional prerequisites.
- **Compensation Restriction:** Generally, students may not receive credit for externships where they also receive compensation, scholarship/fellowship money, etc. Stipends are permitted occasionally on a case-by-case basis.
- **Multiple Externships/Clinics Restriction:** Generally, students may not do more than one externship per semester or do both an externship and a clinic during the same semester. Limited exceptions are permitted on a case-by-case basis.

**Externship Course:**

Students must be enrolled in the proper externship course to receive academic credit for their work. The Director of Internship & Externship Programs will enroll approved students in an externship course (see “Application Procedure” below). *As with any other course, students must pay tuition for the credits.*

- **Coursework:** Students must work for their placements for **60 hours per academic credit**. Students will submit time sheets, writing assignments, and other assignments as required by the professor. First-time externship students will be required to attend an orientation session. The course is Pass/Fail.
- **Fall, Spring, or Full-Summer Placements:** Students may receive two (2) to four (4) academic credits for a single placement during the fall, spring, or Summer I (entire summer) semester. If a student wishes to seek more than four (4) credits for a single placement, the student must contact the Director of Internship & Externship Programs for permission before accepting the position. A student may not receive more than six (6) credits for a placement.
- **Half-Summer Placements:** Students may receive two (2) or three (3) academic credits for a single placement during an abbreviated summer session (i.e., one-half of the summer or 5-6 weeks).

## **Course Credit Limits:**

Per the Student Handbook, students may not count more than 21 special course credits towards the 90 credits necessary to receive a J.D. degree. Externships count towards the 21 credit special course limit. Students may count up to 12 externship course credits towards their degree. Students may count three (3) externship credits towards the six-credit experiential learning requirement. LLM students may participate in one externship, for no more than four (4) credits. Please see the Student Handbook for more information on course credit limits and graduation requirements; contact Student Services with credit limit and graduation requirement questions.

## **Financial Aid:**

During the summer, students must take at least six (6) academic credits to qualify for financial aid. If your externships add up to fewer than six credits, you will need to take an additional course, or do a special research paper for a UHLC professor. Generally, there are a number of evening courses available during each of the summer sessions. Contact Financial Aid and Student Services for more information.

## **Application Procedure:**

1. Secure a field placement at a qualifying agency, organization, or judge. Placements have their own application deadlines and requirements. Contact your CDO career counselor for assistance in applying.
2. Submit an externship application located on the externship website (<http://www.law.uh.edu/externship/>). Your application will be reviewed and, if approved, the Director of Internship & Externship Programs will enroll you in an externship course. **Note:** After the semester deadline to add a course, you will not be able to change the number of credits you are seeking from the externship. When applying, please carefully consider your schedule and the number of hours at your placement you will have to complete for the credits you are seeking.
3. Deadlines: If you know you will be seeking credit for your work, *please submit the application as soon as possible*. **Applications for the Externship Program are due no later than two (2) weeks before the beginning of the semester.** Contact the Director of Internship & Externship Programs *immediately* if you are experiencing difficulty in meeting the deadline.

## **QUESTIONS?**

Please contact Bill Powers, Director of Internship & Externship Programs, at [wapowers@central.uh.edu](mailto:wapowers@central.uh.edu) with any questions.