

THE UNIVERSITY OF TULSA COLLEGE OF LAW
STANDARDS FOR SUPERVISION OF JUDICIAL EXTERNSHIP STUDENTS

The American Bar Association Standard 305 relating to law school field placement programs has been interpreted to require that any law school permitting students to participate in activities or studies away from the law school develop and publish a statement defining the educational objectives of externship programs. We have prepared this statement of educational objectives and supervision standards for the assistance of all supervising judges and students who participate in judicial externships. The College of Law educational objectives of judicial externships are:

1. To further develop student research, writing and drafting skills through work on legal documents such as legal memoranda, bench memoranda, opinion drafting, and motion evaluation;
2. To expose students to the judicial decision making process through participation in the various activities of judicial chambers such as case evaluation, legal research, evaluation of attorney performance and oral advocacy, and case conferences;
3. To develop students oral advocacy skills through observation of court, discovery and administrative proceedings, and through making informal presentations to the judge in matters upon which the student has worked;
4. To give students practical legal experience and to enhance their understanding of the application of the principles learned in law school to the resolution of legal problems through the judicial process;
5. To give students the opportunity to participate in, and reflect upon, the work of legal institutions;
6. To expose students to issues of professional responsibility within the context of legal practice;
7. To encourage students to explore and consider different roles for lawyers and to expose them to the range of career opportunities available in the law;
8. To permit students to gain practical experience in specialized areas of the law through experience that will supplement their course work within the law school; and
9. To instill fundamental values of the legal profession, including the provision of competent representation, the promotion of justice, fairness and morality, and the commitment to an on-going process of professional self-development and growth.

A. The Role of the Supervising Judge in Achieving Educational Objectives

In any externship program, the student's ability to achieve the goals stated above depends in large measure on the quality of the student's daily relationship with his or her supervising judge and the supervisory methods used by the judge. The success of judicial externship programs depends on the willingness and ability of the supervising judges to serve as available role models and teachers. An essential element of effective supervision is a reasonable supervisor-to-student ratio. In judicial chambers, we recommend that judges always perform primary supervision of externs, including work assignments, supervision of work in progress and critiques of student work. Day-to-day details regarding student workflow or time management may be delegated to law clerks. In judicial chambers, we recommend that clerks with less than two years' experience limit indirect supervision to no more than the equivalent of three law students per chambers in any semester or summer session, with direct supervision of externs performed by the chambers judge.¹

B. Guidelines for Judicial Externship Supervision in the Field Study Externship Program

The College of Law recognizes that by including the Judicial Field Study Externship Program in the law school curriculum, we rely heavily on judges to assume responsibility for the legal education of law student externs. We have developed and endorsed the following guidelines to help assure the educational value of the externship and to allow the law school to monitor and evaluate the student's progress during the semester or summer term:

1. The extern should be provided with an orientation to the court's work and the extern's role in it;
2. The extern should be assigned a progression of challenging, varied, and increasingly complex legal projects associated with ongoing work in chambers. Routine and repetitive work should be avoided as much as possible. In most respects, the work assigned to the extern should be the same as that given a law clerk, making due allowance for the extern's relative inexperience at the beginning of the semester;
3. The externs should be encouraged to observe court proceedings including, as appropriate, trials, motion practice, settlement conferences, and appellate arguments, particularly when the extern has worked on a matter before the court;
4. Externs should be provided with detailed critiques of their written work. Rewrites should be encouraged to assure a high standard of final product. The College of Law requires that at least one copy of a student's written work product be provided to a faculty

¹ Under ABA standards a full-time faculty member of the placement school is required to document a site visit to the chambers of all Judicial Field Study Externship placements. A review of student supervision standards is an essential component of the site visit. Additionally, all such placement sites must be evaluated in writing by a full-time faculty member every three years, and a review of student supervision standards is again an essential component of the evaluation.

supervisor for review during or at the end of the externship. It is the responsibility of the extern to comply with all chambers' confidentiality concerns;

5. The extern should work directly with the judge in matters such as supervision of work in progress and critique of work product. Such regular direct contact with the judge provides the extern with the unique insights into the judicial process that make a judicial externship a valuable educational experience;
6. To the extent that the extern receives additional supervision by a law clerk or research attorney, the extern should be assigned, if practicable, to the most experienced law clerk or research attorney;
7. The College of Law requires regular written reports of and reflective journals about the extern's activities and work hours.