

2008 Spring Term Externship Class
Syllabus

Professors:

Jolie Russo and Mindy Wittkop

Your externship experience has three or four components (depending if you are a full-time or part-time extern): (1) your actual externship in chambers; (2) four class sessions; (3) a total of 7 journal entries; and (4) if you are a full-time extern - a 15-20 page paper.

In order for the law school to provide academic credit for an externship, we are tightly controlled by specific ABA requirements.

Required Work Hours:

If you are full-time you are required to work approximately 40 hours per week in chambers, over a 14-week semester qualifying for 12 credit hours. If you are part-time, you may enroll for between 3 and 9 credits. Each hour of credit awarded must represent approximately 55 total hours of work in chambers over a 14-week semester. So in order to extern part-time (6 credits), you must work approximately 24 hours per week, or 12 hours for three credits.

As law students you are on your honor to work the required number of hours in order to qualify for the credit you will be receiving. We will either meet with or telephone all of the judges mid-term to evaluate how your externship is progressing. We will also ask you to ask your judge or supervising law clerk to complete a written evaluation at the end of your externship.

The 14-week externship class officially begins the week of January 7, 2008, and ends Monday, April 21, 2008. One journal entry is required for every two weeks of the term, for a total of 7 journal entries.

Class Meetings: (4 sessions - mandatory)

Fridays from Noon to 1:00pm (you are welcome to brown bag)

(1) January 25, 2008 - Room 242

Introductions, class expectations, confidentiality, conflict of interest, proactive experience

(2) February 8, 2008 - Room 242 * See Reading assignment below

The pro se litigant, the roles and relationships between judges and staff

(3) March 14, 2008 - Room 242 * See Reading assignment below

Observations/discussion of good and bad lawyering

(4) April 4, 2008 - Room 242 or Lane County Courthouse

Guest Speaker: A U.S. Federal District Court Judge or Lane County Circuit Court Judge

Because we only have four class sessions, attendance is mandatory. For students externing in Portland, Salem, or out of state, we offer a teleconferencing option for all but the final class when a guest speaker is scheduled. For our last class on April 4th, we strongly prefer that students attend in person.

If you have to miss a class due to illness or some other reason, please notify us via email and we will excuse your absence. You must then submit to us a one-page written discussion on the topic of your choice reflecting in some capacity on your externship.

Teleconferencing information: At 12:05pm (allowing Jolie or Mindy an opportunity to first call in as "hosts" of the conference call), please dial:

1-866-285-7778 (toll-free)

Access code: 8743794# (there will be prompts to follow).

Journals:

You are required to turn in a total of 7 journal entries, one for every two weeks of your externship. Journal entries typically range from 3/4 to one-page in length. The journal entries should be reflective of your externship experience. We are not interested in your day-to-day activities but interested in bigger themes. For example, your entries may summarize your experiences of the week and then record your reactions to those experiences. Specifically, what did you do/see/learn, and what insights did you gain? What criticism or praise do you have for the system and for those individuals involved in it? The purposes of the journal entries (as mandated by the ABA) are these: (1) to require you to take time to reflect on what you have been doing in connection with your externship; (2) to provide us with information for discussion during the course component of the externship; and (3) to keep us informed of what's going on with you, so we can help if need be.

Suggested journal topics: Judges' impartiality (or not), effect of public opinion on the decision-making process, pro se litigants, zealous advocacy (how much is too much), staff roles and effective team interaction (judge, law clerk, bailiff, judicial assistant), whether the jury system really works to dispense "justice?", collegiality between judges, the effect of cameras in the courts, sentencing dilemmas, whether there is a judicial role in settlements and how that role should be defined, ADR versus trial, advantages and disadvantages of "career" law clerks vs. appointments of 1-2 years, advantages or disadvantages of elected judges vs. lifetime appointments.

Your first journal entry is due Monday, January 14, 2008, by 9:00am to Kay Bailey in Career Services. We realize that many of you will have only been oriented at that point or worked just a couple of days. You may comment on your first impressions of chambers or the court system, or outline your expectations for your judicial externship. Please email your journal entries directly to Kay at kbailey@law.uoregon.edu. Your final journal entry is due Monday, April 21, 2008, for the prior week beginning April 14, 2008.

Kay requests that you label each journal with the journal number (ie, numbers 1-7). For instance, if you start work (or are oriented) the week of January 7th, email your journal to Kay by 9:00 a.m. on the following Monday, January 14th and label it "Journal 1." Please make each journal entry a separate document for record-keeping purposes.

Please submit in a Microsoft Word attachment, if possible. It is also helpful to Kay if you include your last name at the beginning of the title of your file. If you work in WordPerfect, please copy your journal into the body of the email. After recording that you submitted your journal entry, Kay will then forward your journal to Jolie and Mindy for review. Kay may send you a follow-up email with additional suggestions regarding submission of your journals.

Reading Assignments:

We have several copies of our course text on reserve at the library. The title is: Judging: A Book for Student Clerks, by Louis J. Sirico. There will be two reading assignments from the book over the course of the semester. Those are:

Class #2, February 8, 2008: Chapter 2, The Decision Making Process

Class #3, March 14, 2008: Chapter 9, Judges and Lawyers

The readings are available on line at: <http://www.law.uoregon.edu/career/jereadings.php>

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