

# Rules for Practicum Courses

## General Rules for All Practicum Courses

- Second year JD students, rising second year students, and third year students are eligible to participate in Practicum courses.
- All students enrolled in a Practicum must be doing substantive legal work under the supervision of an experienced licensed attorney.
- Students may take more than one Practicum course during their time at the law school, but not in the same semester. Students may not take any individual Practicum course more than one time. For example, students may only take the Civil Government Practicum one time, but a student who has taken the Civil Government Practicum may take the Judicial Practicum in a different semester.
- Students enrolled in a Practicum may not receive payment for their externship work unless the externship site requires payment and provides the payment itself.
- Final papers in a Practicum class may not be used to satisfy any law school writing requirement.

## Practicum Placements and Registration

- All externship placements must be approved by the faculty member teaching the class prior to enrollment.
- For the Civil Government, Criminal Law, and Public Interest Practica, students are generally responsible for finding and securing their own externships with Chicago area organizations that meet the criteria for those courses. The professors for those courses are available to discuss placements and applications.
- For the Judicial Practicum, the professor collects resumes and transcripts in October (for the spring semester), in January (for the summer semester), and in March (for the following fall semester) to send to the Chicago area federal district court and magistrate judges. Externships with a judge in the state court system must be approved by the professor and must involve significant opportunities for research and drafting. Most of these opportunities arise in the Chancery division and appellate courts in Illinois.
- Externships in the High Tech Practicum, the Mediation Practicum, and the Media Law and Government Accountability Practicum are arranged by the professor for those courses. Students interested in those externships should contact the professors directly.
- For the Corporate Counsel Practicum, students should the professor for assistance securing a qualifying placement or to learn about existing placements.
- The Practicum courses are not part of the Northwestern Law bidding system. To enroll in a Practicum course, students must first receive approval from the professor teaching the course. To request approval and enrollment in a Practicum course, please e-mail the professor teaching the Practicum course associated with your placement. The professor will send a list of approved students to the Registrar, who will enroll them at a cost of 100 bid points for each student during Open Enrollment. Students without sufficient bid points will be denied enrollment.

## **Rules for the Externship**

- For all Practicum courses other than the Intensive Practicum, students are required to work 12-15 hours each week of the semester at their externship placement during regular business hours. Students should plan their class schedule accordingly.
- Students should plan to start their externship before or during the first week of class. Students must start their externship no later than the end of the second week of class. Students must make up any hours missed due to a starting date after the first week of class.
- Externships do not include any vacation or sick time, so any hours missed must be made up.
- Students must be physically present at the externship agency for the majority of their externship hours unless granted an exception by the Center for Externships Director.
- Requests to participate in a fully remote externship will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. All such requests should be directed to the Director of the Center for Externships. Factors that will be considered with such requests include:
  - Whether similar externship work is available at an organization where in-person work is possible.
  - Whether the lawyers at the externship site are working remotely or in person.
  - Whether the organization will have any in-person externs.
  - The organization's plan for providing frequent and comprehensive feedback and supervision to a remote student.
  - How the organization proposes to allow the extern opportunities to participate in or observe: internal meetings, external meetings, court appearances, and networking opportunities with lawyers in the office.

## **Enrollment in Other Experiential Courses While Taking a Practicum**

- Students may not enroll in both a Practicum course and an in-house Clinic course during the same semester without the permission of the externship site and both the in-house Clinic and the Practicum professors. The professors will help ensure that there will not be any conflicts between the two workplaces and that the student has sufficient time to devote to each course.

## **Practicum Credits**

- Students receive four credits for completing each of the non-Intensive Practicum courses. Two (2) of those credits are attributable to the field work and count as “outside the classroom” credits. The other two (2) credits are attributable to the work in the Practicum seminar and count as “classroom” credit. The ABA limits the total number of credits earned outside the classroom at twenty (20) (of the total number required to graduate).
- Practicum courses count toward the required six credits of experiential education required for graduation.

## **Intensive Semester Practicum**

- Students interested in the Intensive Semester Practicum must secure an externship in a non-profit or government agency (not including a judicial chambers) doing substantive legal work under the supervision of a licensed and experienced attorney. Students must also identify a residential faculty member who agrees to supervise the academic component of the course.
- Enrollment in the Intensive Semester Practicum is available only to those students whose application has been approved by the Director of the Center for Externships and the Director of the Bluhm Legal Clinic. Applications for the fall semester are generally due in the summer, and applications for the spring semester are generally due in October.
- Students receive twelve credits for successful completion of the Intensive Semester Practicum. Nine of those credits are attributable to the fieldwork and are graded on a Credit/No Credit basis. Those nine credits are considered “outside the classroom” The other three credits are attributable to the academic work the student completes with the supervising faculty member and are graded with a letter grade. These three credits are considered “classroom” credits for purposes of the ABA limit on credits earned outside the classroom.
- Students enrolled in the Intensive Semester Practicum must work at their externship for forty hours per week during regular business hours for the entire thirteen week semester.
- Students enrolled in the Intensive Semester Practicum may not enroll for credit in any other courses during the semester in which they are enrolled in the Practicum. They may, however, enroll in Intersession classes.
- Students who enroll in the Intensive Semester Practicum may enroll in a maximum of two other Practicum classes, or three other Practicum classes if one of the classes is a summer term Practicum.