

**Supervised Externship – Virginia Practice
Fall 2025 Syllabus**

Course Numbers: 179-001 (three credits)

Professor: Michael L. Davis, Assistant Professor/Senior Lecturer in Law

Contact Information: Room 315
George Mason University Antonin Scalia Law School
3301 Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22201
703-993-8039
mdavis4@gmu.edu

Learning Objective:

Under the externship program, students supplement their academic experiences by using their knowledge and skills in the legal field under the supervision of an attorney or judge. By the end of an externship students will improve lawyering skills, including legal research, analysis, and writing; oral communication skills, and assignment management; increase their knowledge of a particular area of the law; and develop stronger interpersonal and professional skills.

Course Details:

1. **Information Packet:** Students and supervisors must review and agree to all externship requirements. Students should review and provide their Supervisors with the **Externship Information Packet**, found at <http://www.law.gmu.edu/academics/clinics>. Please pay particular attention to the items that must be submitted in order to receive credit for your externship at the end of the semester.
2. **Signed Service Agreement Required Forms:** All approved externship students and their supervisors should sign the **Service Agreement found in the Externship Information Packet (<https://www.law.gmu.edu/academics/clinics/>)** no later than the second week of the semester, unless permission was given to submit the document at a later date. Please make sure your agreement includes the email and phone number of your actual onsite supervisor. Signed Service Agreements should be scanned and added as an attachment to your Externship Information Form in the Symplicity Externship module. As a reminder, you can find your Externship Information Form by logging into Symplicity and selecting the Externship module.
3. **Updated Supervisor Information:** Current supervisor information must be included on your Externship Information Form on Symplicity (please be sure to list your supervisor's email address). If your actual supervisor turns out to be someone other than the person who signed the service

agreement or your supervisor changes for some reason during the externship, **please update your Externship Information Form on Symplicity as the system will contact the person identified on the form for a final evaluation.** As a reminder, you can find your Externship Information Form by logging into Symplicity and selecting the Externship module.

4. **Tutorials:** There will be four 50-minute tutorials for the class spread out over the semester. Each student must **attend two tutorials**, even if the student has participated in an externship program previously. Students should ensure their attendance is recorded at tutorials. The tutorials will begin at 5:00 pm. The tutorials will take place in October and November; on occasion, one tutorial will take place the last week of September. Dates for the tutorials will be announced the week of August 25.

5. **Mid-Semester Meeting:** Each student must schedule a mid-semester remote meeting to discuss how the externship is progressing. Meetings should last no longer than 10-15 minutes and typically take place in October. You will be notified via your student email accounts of sign-up times and steps in late September.

6. **Mid-Semester Employer Evaluation:** Each student must arrange for his or her supervisor to provide a written mid-semester evaluation by email. These mid-semester checks may be short – 4-6 sentences summarizing the student’s performance to date. Mid-semester evaluations should be sent by email to mdavis@gmu.edu. **Mid-semester employer evaluations are due no later than Friday, October 10 unless alternative timing has been requested and approved.** The evaluation should briefly address:

1-2 sentences on the nature of the assignments given for the externship hours

1-2 sentences about the student’s performance on the assignments

1-2 sentences about the student’s overall professionalism. Please address any strengths or weaknesses related to timeliness of work product, communication with supervisors about work schedule, project updates or completion, and interaction with clients or other professionals in the workplace.

7. **Final Items: Self Evaluation, Hours Log, Externship Program Evaluation and Final Employer Evaluation:** In order to receive credit for this course, students must meet the final requirements set out in the Externship Information Packet. **Students must complete the final Self Evaluation, Externship Program Evaluation, and track hours (i.e., an online timesheet form) on Symplicity in the Externship module.** The hours must be entered/tracked in the Symplicity module and must include general descriptions of your tasks. Descriptions should include the general area of work and duties; simply listing “researched” or “drafted” is insufficient. Hours and tasks should be entered into Symplicity weekly if not more frequently. The sample of your written work product should be

added to your Self Evaluation as an attachment. The supervisor identified in the Externship Information Form will receive a system-generated email to complete the final Employer Evaluation online, which includes approving the time entered by the student into the Symplicity hours tracker. Students are responsible for ensuring supervisors submit timely final online evaluations.

The Symplicity system will generate reminder emails to students and supervisors for the final items as we approach the end of the semester. **In all cases, final items must be completed by Monday, December 1, unless permission was given ahead of time for submission at a later date.**

Attached for your convenience at the end of this syllabus is a helpful checklist of the steps you must complete to receive externship credit. Please email with any questions or concerns that arise before or during your externship. Email is the best way to reach me and don't hesitate to re-email if you don't hear from me within 48 hours.

ADDITIONAL SCHOOL POLICIES AND RESOURCES:

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: It is expected that students adhere to the Antonin Scalia Law School Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing. This includes a student obligation to never represent the work of another as their own, and to never provide or accept unauthorized assistance on any school related assignment. The Honor Code is available here: [Academic Standards](#).

In accordance with Academic Regulation 4-3, students in the externship courses may NOT use Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) in their research, writing, or other work generated for their employer **unless** the site supervisor expressly agrees to its usage on a project(s), and supervisor approval is shared with the externship professors in writing (by email). In these instances, supervisors must specify the parameters of the usage and disclosure obligations. Students are reminded that using GAI may expose client or employer confidences, and some employers are prohibiting the use of GAI in any writing samples submitted as part of an application process.- Failure to abide by this policy and Academic Regulation 4-3 is a violation of the Honor Code

Psychological Services (<https://caps.gmu.edu/>), **Student Health Services** (<https://shs.gmu.edu/>), and the **Student Support and Advocacy Center** (<https://ssac.gmu.edu/>). For more information about University Life on the Arlington Campus, please visit: <https://ularlington.gmu.edu/>

Externship Requirements Check List

Name: _____

Employer: _____

Course Number: _____

Externship Information Form (on Symplicity) _____

Signed Service Agreement and Covid Forms (sign, scan and upload to your Externship

Information Form on Symplicity): _____

Mid-Semester Meeting with Professor: _____

Mid-Semester Employer Evaluation (by email) _____

Tutorial Attendance

Fall/Spring Semester (two) _____

Summer Term (one) _____

Final Items

Track Hours and Tasks (on Symplicity; update weekly if not more frequently) _____

Self-Evaluation (on Symplicity) _____

Sample of your Written Work Product (attach to your Self Evaluation on Symplicity;
waivers granted with prior approval) _____

Student Externship Program Evaluation (on Symplicity) _____

Final Employer Evaluation (on Symplicity) _____