

Supervised Externship – Virginia Practice Fall 2026 Syllabus Law 179-001 (3 credits)

Professor

- Judge Penney S. Azcarate
 - Associate Professor of Law/Director, Externship Program
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Externship Program Overview

Learning Objectives

- Apply academic knowledge and legal and professional skills in a real-world legal setting under the supervision of an attorney or judge.
- Strengthen key lawyering skills including:
 - Legal research, analysis, and writing
 - Oral communications
 - Assignment management
 - Deepen understanding of a specific area of law, including ethical matters and professional conduct rules.
 - Develop interpersonal and professional skills for the workplace, including professional interactions with supervisors, colleagues, clients, and members of the legal profession.

Course Details

1. Information Packet:
 - Students and supervisors must review and agree to all externship requirements.
 - Access the Externship Information Packet at [Externship Packet](#)
 - Pay special attention to required submissions for credit.
 - All items due by **Friday, December 4** unless an extension is granted.
2. Signed Service Agreement:
 - Signed by student and supervisor (see packet at [Externship Packet](#)).
 - Due by the second week of the semester unless permission for later submission is granted.

- Include supervisor's email and phone number.
 - Upload the signed agreement to your Externship Information Form in Symplicity.
3. Updated Supervisor Information:
- Ensure supervisor info (including email) is current in Symplicity.
 - Update promptly if your supervisor changes.
 - The supervisor listed will be contacted for the final evaluation.
4. Tutorials:
- Four 50-minute tutorials offered during the semester; **attend at least two**.
 - Attendance must be recorded on the sign in sheets.
 - Tutorials are in-person and begin at 5:00 pm (late September, October and November) in person. Dates announced in late early September.
5. Mid-Semester Meeting:
- Schedule an in-person or Zoom meeting (10–15 minutes) with Judge Azcarate in October.
 - Sign-up information will be sent to student email accounts in late September/early October.
6. Mid-Semester Employer Evaluation:
- Arrange for your supervisor to email a brief written evaluation (4–6 sentences) to Judge Azcarate at pazcarat@gmu.edu
 - Evaluation should address (1-2 sentences each):
 - Nature of assignments
 - Your performance
 - Professionalism (timeliness, communication, colleague and client interactions, etc.)
 - Any strengths or weaknesses related the above.
 - Due by **Friday, October 2** unless other arrangements are made.
7. Tracking Hours:
- Record all hours and duties in the "Track Hours" section of Symplicity.
 - Include detailed descriptions (e.g., "researched evidentiary matter for memo," "attended client meeting for X case," "drafted white paper on y," "looked up caselaw on x for y person," "continued compiling research on y issues," "attended staff meeting on x").
 - Update hours weekly or more frequently.

8. Final Items:

- To receive credit, complete the following in Symplicity by **Friday, December 4** (unless an extension is approved):
 - Self-Evaluation (attach a sample of your work product)
 - Externship Program Evaluation
 - Online timesheet (track hours form in Symplicity)
 - Final Employer Evaluation (supervisor will be sent a link; ensure timely completion)
- System-generated reminder emails will be sent as deadlines approach.

Communication & Support

- A checklist of steps is included at the end of the syllabus.
- Email professor with any questions or concerns—email is preferred; please follow up if you do not receive a reply within 48 hours.

Additional School Policies & Resources

- Academic Integrity: Adhere to George Mason Academic Standards (no lying, cheating, or stealing; do not represent others' work as your own). The Academic Standards are available here: [Academic Standards](#).
- Generative AI Policy: Do not use Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) for research, writing, or employer work unless your site supervisor gives explicit, project-specific permission. Supervisors must specify usage parameters and disclosure obligations.
- Some employers prohibit GAI in writing samples; using GAI in violation of this policy or Academic Regulation 4-3 is a standards violation.
- General Support: Reach out to professors for externship support at any time.
- GMU resources:
 - Counseling and Psychological Services [CAPS](#)
 - Student Health Services [SHS](#)
 - Student Support and Advocacy Center [SSAC](#)
 - University Life & Arlington Campus resources [ULAR](#)

Externship Requirements Check List

Requirement	Completed
Track Hours (on Symplicity; update weekly if not more frequently)	
Externship Information Form (on Symplicity)	
Signed Service Agreement (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 required)	#1 #2
Tutorial Attendance (Summer Term: one required)	

Final Items	
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)	