

Field Study for International Students Fall 2026 Syllabus

Course Number	025
Academic Credit/Grading	This course is graded Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) and is worth one class credit.
Professor	Courtney Dinsmore, Adjunct Professor
Contact Information	cdinsmor@gmu.edu
Eligibility	Available only to JD students who are participating in a field study after their first year of law school in a country that is not their home country. Professor approval is required prior to enrollment.

Description:

- This program allows students to apply their academic knowledge and skills in a legal or policy field outside their home country, enhancing real-world experience.
- Global Legal Practice: Practicing law internationally gives attorneys the chance to learn about local laws, admission requirements, and immigration systems unique to each country.
- Building Relationships Across Cultures: Attorneys working abroad develop client relationships in diverse cultural environments and navigate cultural or language barriers to effectively represent clients.
- Professional Conduct and Service Delivery: Rules, norms, and practices for professional conduct and client service can differ depending on the country and legal setting.

Learning Objectives

- Deepen engagement and exploration of transnational legal practice.
- Improve lawyering skills: research, analysis, writing, oral communication, and assignment management.
- Expand knowledge in a legal or policy area and increase awareness of ethical matters and rules of conduct.
- Develop stronger interpersonal and professional skills.

Course Requirements

- **Eligibility:** Open only to JD students who will complete an internship after their first year of law school in a country other than their home country. Internships may be paid or unpaid.
- **Compensation:** Both paid and unpaid field studies qualify.
- **Deadlines:** All assignments must be submitted by **December 4** unless prior permission is granted for a later date.
- **Hours:** Complete at least 60 hours of work. Keep a detailed log of hours and duties, suitable for client billing if required. Submit documentation to the professor.
- **Meetings:** Meet with the professor twice during the semester:
 - Once at the beginning of the semester
 - Once mid-semester to discuss externship progress
- **Reflective Project:** Complete a reflective project (e.g., paper, tutorial attendance, or presentation) approved by both the professor and student.
- **Final Evaluation:** Ensure your supervisor submits a final evaluation, confirming hours worked and using the form provided by the professor.

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, and the approval is shared with the professors. 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](#)