

At what types of organizations outside of the law school may a student work for academic credit?

A student may earn credit for work at a government agency, judicial chambers, non-profit organization, congressional office, corporate general counsel's office, trade association, or any other organization that does legal or law-related work. This includes private law firm that do not bill for the student's time. The organization must commit to support the student's and the law school's educational goals and to comply with standards set by the American Bar Association (ABA) and the law school's requirements.

Placements with private firms or attorneys are approved on a limited basis. Factors for approving a placement include, but are not limited to, length of time the attorney or firm has been in practice (5 years minimum), their reputation in the legal community and the primary areas of practice. Preference is given to private firms or attorneys that have a significant number of pro bono cases or work in specific areas. You can find the complete [Private Firm Policy and Certification Form](#) online.

How is an externship different from a part-time law clerk job?

The primary purpose of an externship is to provide educational opportunities for the student extern. While an extern will do much work that is useful to the organization, the work is structured to maximize the learning opportunities for the student. This differs from a paid law clerk position, where the primary purpose is for the student to perform tasks needed by the employer.

What does the law school require of extern supervising attorneys?

- Every semester, the supervisor is required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding for each student acknowledging their responsibilities.
- Every placement should recognize that an extern is working without pay for academic credit and should try to structure the experience to maximize learning opportunities for the student.
- Every extern must be supervised by an attorney, or the circumstance of J.D. preferred positions such as compliance another professional person, with experience is to be the primary supervisor and mentor.
- Even if a student will work with several lawyers, one must be designated as a supervisor for the student and as a point of contact with the law school. The supervisor should meet with the extern at least once a week to answer questions, review progress on assignments, and provide feedback.
- An extern must be provided with a desk and an appropriate work space.
- Student externs should not be asked to do administrative work, except for administrative tasks normally performed by other lawyers in the organization.
- At the midterm and end of the semester, the supervisor must complete an evaluation form provided by the Office of Experiential Learning, describing the work that the student has done and evaluating the student's performance. This evaluation should be discussed with the student.
- Site supervisors must respect that student externs have numerous obligations outside of their externships and should not ask them to spend more time on work for the placement than the students need to obtain credit, unless the placement made clear at the outset that a larger number of hours per week was required by the placement than by the law school.
- Students follow the [academic calendar](#) for holidays and breaks. Students and site supervisors are encouraged to discuss the student's schedule for the semester before the externship begins.
- Law firms that host externs working for credit may not bill out the student's time to clients.
- Placement organizations may not pay students for work done for academic credit, except that they may cover the cost of local transportation and incidental expenses. Placements may sponsor fellowships for students who wish to work in your designated field.

How should an organization advertise for applications from student externs?

Prospective placement supervisors can seek AJMLS students as externs by completing and submitting the **Extern Request Form** by email to croan@johnmarshall.edu or by fax to (678) 873-3802. The position(s) will then be posted to the **AJMLS Symplicity** system where students will view your job announcement and submit application for your consideration. The best times to advertise for law student externs are October or November (for the spring term) and February or March (for the summer and fall terms). Placements should also contact the Office of Career Development (678-916-6211 or njones@johnmarshall.edu) if you are interested in participating in AJMLS on-campus interview programs.

At what point in law school is a law student eligible to do an externship for credit?

Once a student has completed 45 credits including all of his/her required first year law school courses (either full-time or part-time), s/he is eligible to take an externship for credit. Externship classes are offered in the fall, spring and summer. These are limited to the number of credits an extern may enroll in. Students are aware of what these limits are and minimum GPA requirements.

Does the law school assign students to placements, or do students find their own placements?

Students are responsible for identifying placement options, making applications and for making a selection from organizations that have given them a formal offer for a position. The Office of Experiential Learning is available to assist students in identifying options.

Where can I get more information?

Information also is available in the **Externship Handbook for Supervisors**. Also, you may contact the office by telephone at (678) 916-2600 or email Bridgett Ortega, Assistant Dean of Experiential Learning at bortega@johnmarshall.edu or Carolyn Roan, Experiential Learning Program Administrator at croan@johnmarshall.edu.