

International Externship Program

A Wealth of Opportunities



LAW
WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW
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AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC



Dear Colleague:

American University Washington College of Law has long been recognized as one of the premier centers of experiential learning through our clinical programs. We have continued this tradition of preparing our students for practice through our Externship Program, which provides them with the opportunity to earn academic credit for legal work.

As one of the largest externship programs in the country, we have hundreds of students working each year in government agencies, courts, and non-profit organizations. Our students are concurrently enrolled in related externship seminars under the instruction of over 20 full-time and adjunct faculty, including the director, Avis Sanders.

We are now taking this important educational tool a step further through our International Externship Program. Through this program, we are addressing the increasing demand from employers who seek to hire attorneys with multi-jurisdictional experience. By working in the field of international law, both in the United States and in other countries, our students are prepared to participate in an increasingly global legal marketplace.

This booklet will give you a small sampling of the opportunities that are available to students through this excellent program, as the Washington College of Law continues to engage the community, the nation and the world through legal education.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Claudio Grossman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Claudio Grossman, Dean

experience to last a lifetime

International Externship Program

The Externship Program provides students with an array of legal opportunities outside of the United States. Here are just a few of the projects available.

Protect children against human rights violations. Externs at **Casa Alianza of Guatemala** will become familiar with the Guatemalan legal system, interview clients and draft briefs and legal memoranda in civil and criminal cases.

Assist refugees bound for the United States. The Vienna office of the **Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society** works with persecuted Iranian religious minorities bound for the United States. Externs will interview clients and will assist in writing up cases and applications.

Work directly with the legal department and deputy secretariat of the most important tribunal in Latin America. Externs at the **Inter-American Court of Human Rights** in Costa Rica will be given a caseload and/or will assist in research projects and investigations into human rights violations pending before the Court.

Process claims for individuals who lost property during the Nazi regime. **The International Organization of Migration** is a German foundation created to provide financial compensation to former slaves and forced labourers and other victims of National Socialist (Nazi) injustice. Externs will assist in the processing of claims for compensation.

Develop world health care policies. The **World Health Organization** is the United Nations' specialized agency for health care. Externs will travel to Switzerland to research current mental health laws, assist in developing new laws and in training mental health legislators.

Research comparative intellectual property laws. At the **Chilean Ministry of Education** externs research such issues as U.S. compliance with free trade agreements related to copyright and the enforcement of intellectual property laws, fair use, public domain, and open software.

Prosecute the perpetrators of genocide. The **Documentation Center of Cambodia** (Khmer Rouge Tribunal) is an independent NGO responsible for putting former officials of democratic Kampuchea on trial. Externs will assist in the documentation of the history of the Khmer Rouge and in the development of independent legal commentaries germane to proceedings.



THESE AND MANY OTHER OPPORTUNITIES are offered to students at the Washington College of Law who wish to earn academic credit for their international work experience. Here is a sampling of some of the organizations for which students can extern.

Inter-American Court of Human Rights (Costa Rica)

U.N. Sub-Committee on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (Switzerland)

Center for Human Rights and Environment (Argentina)

Castan Centre for Human Rights Law (Australia)

Mexican Environmental Law Center (Mexico)

International Labour Office (Switzerland)

International Chamber of Commerce (France)

Netherlands Institute for Human Rights (Netherlands)

Pan American Health Organization (Latin/Central America)

Chilean Ministry of Education (Chile)

International Commission of Jurists (Switzerland)

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (Switzerland)

Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (Sweden)

World Health Organization/Mental Health Department (Switzerland)



Please visit the Externship Program Web site **www.wcl.american.edu/externship** for a complete list of international field placements. New listings are added regularly.

The International Externship Program offers law students an opportunity that is unique in American legal education. During the summer semester, students may earn academic credit for work performed in legal organizations around the world. Linked to faculty supervisors and their classmates via the latest distance-learning technologies, they learn not only the law and culture of the country where their own externships take place, but explore the law and culture of the countries in which their fellow students are working, gaining a truly global perspective on the practice of law.

The International Externship Program provides an opportunity for law students to learn on-site with some of the best international lawyers and most prestigious legal institutions in the world and to meet with an extraordinarily diverse group of practitioners and policy-makers in a wide variety of legal fields.

a global perspective

Academics

The academic component of the International Externship Program consists of two parts—the field placement and the long-distance seminar.

THE INTERNATIONAL FIELD PLACEMENT

Taking advantage of the wealth of connections WCL has with legal organizations outside of the United States, the Externship Program assists qualified students in finding international legal placements that will meet their academic and career goals.

In recent years, students participating in the International Externship Program have monitored and reported on human rights violations, researched international trade disputes, worked with indigenous cultures, investigated war crimes, and clerked with U.S. District Court judges located in U.S. territories.

Students can earn 1, 2, or 3 academic credits for their field placements, depending on the number of hours they work. To qualify for credit:

- The placement must be located in a not-for-profit organization (NGO), government agency, or tribunal.
- The student must be engaged in substantive, law related work and must be supervised by an attorney.
- The student may not be paid by the employer or receive outside funding, beyond normal financial aid, except for limited, out-of-pocket expenses, such as travel expenses.
- The externship must be completed over the course of the summer semester—approximately the months of June and July.



THE INTERNATIONAL EXTERNSHIP LONG DISTANCE SEMINAR

Students’ fieldwork experiences are enhanced by the close supervision they receive from faculty members through participation in externship seminars. Externship seminars allow students to share perspectives on the work experience and to discuss assigned readings selected to promote reflection on the externship. The seminars ensure that, in addition to learning “on the job,” students learn to think more critically and constructively about the work of a lawyer—and about themselves as lawyers - in a structured educational setting. In the process, students gain essential direction and insight for their postgraduate legal careers.

Students participating in international externships gather in Washington, D.C. in mid-May for a 3-day intensive seminar. Seminar requirements include reflective journals, a substantial writing assignment and may include class presentations or other assignments.

At the conclusion of the seminars students disperse to their externship sites where they normally work full-time for 8-10 weeks. During this portion of the program, students and WCL supervising faculty are linked via an Internet “virtual classroom” for continuing discussions of the students’ experiences. Students submit weekly journal entries and communicate on-line to discuss the progress of their externship and to ensure that their educational goals are being achieved in the work placement.

In mid-August, students gather again in Washington, D.C. for a 3-day intensive debriefing of their summer experiences. During this week, study focuses on drawing lessons from their work as well as from their observations about the legal profession, legal institutions, and cultures of the various regions and countries where they worked.

All students participating in the U.S. Long Distance Externship Program or the International Externship Program must attend each of the three day seminars prior to, and at the conclusion of the field placement.



just the facts

Details You Need to Know

PARTICIPATING IN FIELD PLACEMENTS OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES

Finding an International Externship

Students searching for an international externship should begin by reviewing the list of available placements provided by the Externship Office. Drawing on the WCL's global network of contacts, the Externship Program has compiled a list of legal organizations throughout the world which will host students.

After reviewing the list of placements, students should fill out an Intake Questionnaire, available at the Externship Office, and make an appointment with the Director of the Externship Program to discuss their interests, the application process, and to obtain contact information.



It is important to apply early for international externships. Many non-governmental organizations (NGO's) are very popular and competitive placements are filled months in advance of the semester's start. A good rule of thumb is that the search and application process for a summer international externship should begin in October or November.

Requirements

Because there is substantial paperwork involved with international placements, students must discuss their plans with the Externship Office at least 8 weeks prior to the beginning of the summer session.

All students who plan to receive academic credit for travel overseas must obtain the approval of the University prior to departure. Students must provide the University with a travel itinerary and contingency plan in case of emergency, and must complete a Consent and Release form. Travel to countries that are deemed to be a high security risk may not be approved. Forms should be provided to the University with sufficient lead time for alternative plans to be made. Upon approval, the University will provide the mandatory health insurance. The travel request forms are available on the Externship Program Web site.

Credits

WCL's Summer Externship Program is accredited by the American Bar Association. Typically, program participants earn a total of 6 credits— 3 graded credits for the seminar portion of the program, and 3 ungraded (pass/fail) credits for the fieldwork portion. The number of credits earned for fieldwork may vary based on the total number of hours worked in the externship.

Application for visiting students

Applications for admission for visiting students are accepted on a continual basis. Student applicants from other institutions must be enrolled in good standing at an accredited law school, as demonstrated by a letter of good standing to be submitted with the application. Instructions and the forms for the visiting students' applications are available on the Externship Program Web site or by calling the Externship Program office.

Registration

Students may register for the International Externship Seminar as they would for any other course. Students should sign up early for the Long-Distance Seminar, as it may fill up. To register for the field placement credits, students should follow the instructions found under "Request for Approval" at www.wcl.american.edu/externship.

Eligibility

Both full-time and part-time JD candidates who have completed their first year of study and candidates for graduate law degrees are eligible to enroll in the program.



Tuition/Expenses

The cost per credit for the Summer Externship Program is the same as other academic courses. Students may apply for financial aid through the Office of Financial Aid [Suite 505; (202) 274-4040] as they would for any other course. Under ABA rules, students earning academic credit are not permitted to receive payment from the employer, nor from outside sources in the form of grants, except for reasonable expenses (such as travel costs).

Travel and Housing

Participants must make their own arrangements for travel between their field placements and home countries and are responsible for all costs. They are generally responsible for locating their own housing although some externship employers in foreign countries provide housing or assistance in locating housing.

OPPORTUNITIES IN INTERNATIONAL LAW IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

Washington, D.C.: The Heart of the International Community

Students staying in Washington, D.C. can work in some of the most important and prestigious international legal institutions in the world and are provided with an unparalleled wealth of opportunities for “hands-on” experience in the area of international law.



Externships in the international context include placements in organizations practicing immigration and asylum law, international development, international environmental law, public international law, human rights, and international trade.

Externship placements in the international context could lead you to perform tasks as varied as:

- Preparing a brief for a case pending in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.
- Drafting decisions in the United States’ Immigration Court.
- Monitoring and reporting on the activities of various congressional committees.
- Researching areas of international trade and settlement of international disputes.
- Investigating alleged human rights abuses.
- Advocating for battered immigrant women.

Due to its proximity to numerous national and international institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the nation’s capitol, the Externship Program provides an extraordinary array of opportunities with an international focus to students throughout the academic year and during the summer.

Externship students attend weekly seminars taught by full-time faculty or adjunct professors with specialized practice experience and are closely supervised throughout the course of the externship. The seminars encourage critical analysis and reflection on the externship experience. Faculty supervision is an integral part of the externship experience and is required of all students earning academic credit for their legal work experience at WCL.



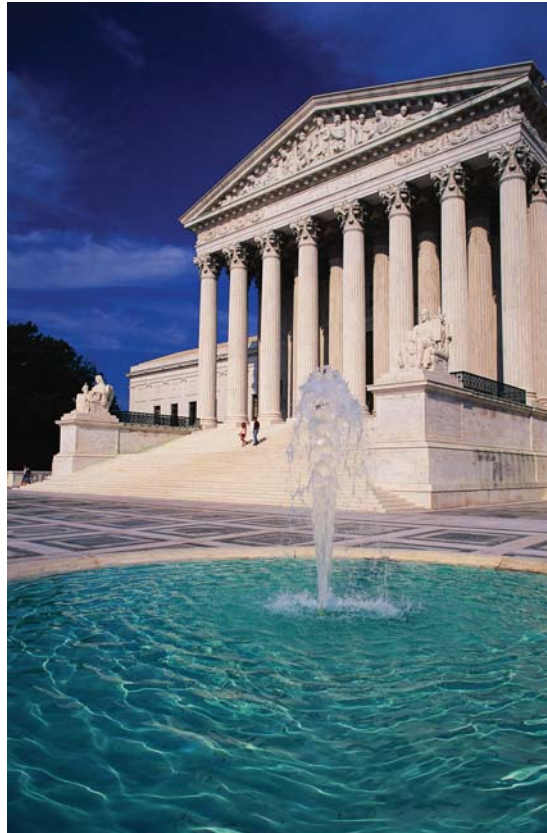
HOW DO I PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERNATIONAL EXTERNSHIP IN WASHINGTON, D.C.?

Students can participate in externships in Washington, D.C. during the fall, spring and summer semesters. Interested students should read the Externship Program “Nuts and Bolts” available from the Externship Office or go on the Externship Program web site <http://www.wcl.american.edu/externship/> which includes detailed information about the Program for students, employers and faculty members.

The Externship Program database has a wide array of suggested field placements, many of which focus on areas of international law. Students apply for externships on their own, as they would for jobs. They may earn one, two or three pass/fail credits for their field placements, depending on the number of hours worked (140 hours = one credit; 210 hours = two credits; 280 hours = three credits).

All students earning academic credit for field placements must be concurrently supervised by a faculty member. Most students will enroll in one of the externship seminars offered by the Externship Program each semester. These graded three-credit seminars are taught by full-time professors or by adjunct faculty selected from a wide variety of practice areas.

Students register for the seminars as they would for any other class. To register for the field placement, students must fill out the request for approval form on the Externship web site, which generates the paperwork for the registration process.



Externs can apply their legal education to work experience in a variety of government agencies, not-for-profit organizations, courts and law firms engaged in pro bono matters.

Many students learn about participating in international issues by working with not-for-profit organizations (non-governmental organizations), international organizations, and tribunals. There are hundreds of organizations listed in the Externship Program Database. Some of those relating to international law are listed below.

domestic posts

Washington, D.C.

INTERNATIONAL LAW FIELD PLACEMENTS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

International Trade

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agriculture Service
U.S. International Trade Commission, Office of the General Counsel
U.S. Department of Commerce
Export-Import Bank of the United States
United States Trade Representative
Institute for Policy Studies
Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of International Affairs
Washington International Trade Association
Federal Trade Commission, International Antitrust
International Law Institute

Immigration and Asylum

U.S. Department of Justice, Executive Office of Immigration Review
Ayuda, Inc.
Central American Resource Center (CARECEN)
Washington Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights
Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition

Public International Law

U.S. Department of State
Organization of American States
American Society of International Law
U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Armed Forces, International Affairs and Intelligence
U.S. Department of Treasury, General Counsel for International Affairs
U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
International Crisis Group
ABA Central and East European Law Initiative

Development

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
Pan-American Health Organization
U.S. Information Agency
U.S. National Academy of Sciences, Office of International Affairs
U.S. President's Council on Sustainable Development

International Environmental Law

Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of International Affairs
Friends of the Earth
Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund
Wilderness Society
Natural Resources Defense Council
International Wildlife Federation
Environmental Law Institute

International Human Rights

Center for Justice and International Law
Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights
Human Rights Watch
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
United Nations Development Program
Amnesty International
Refugee Women in Development

Avis L. Sanders, Director
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