

PLACEMENT AND ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Vermont Law School employs a placement and enrollment process that applies to every externship for JD credit offered in the fall and spring semesters through the Semester in Practice (SiP), Judicial Externship, and Part-Time JD Externship courses.*

**These courses are not offered during the summer term.*

The placement process is described briefly in this document. The purpose of the process is to ensure fairness to all students seeking to enroll, to maintain maximum flexibility for students so they may work for credit in a location that best suits their goals, and to affirmatively meet VLS and ABA requirements. The process is described here in steps. Please refer to the FAQ for more detailed descriptions of the process, as well as the reasons the process is employed for all externships awarding JD credit.

You must follow this process or you will not be eligible for an externship.

FIRST STEP: COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION BY THE DEADLINE

First and foremost, you must submit an application to the JD Externship Program by November 1, 2016 to be eligible to enroll in an externship for the 2017-2018 academic year. Please refer to the program application requirements, deadlines, and eligibility standards described here.

This deadline is firm. No exceptions will be made. If you miss the deadline, you will be placed on a numbered waitlist behind all other eligible students.

SECOND STEP: LOTTERY – SEMESTER PREFERENCE

Your November 1 application materials include a questionnaire that asks you to identify which semester you prefer for your externship during the next academic year. If the total number of applicants suggests an enrollment imbalance between Fall and Spring semesters, the questionnaire will be utilized to create a pool of students from the preferred semester who will be subject to a lottery to equalize enrollment between the two semesters. The results of that lottery will be announced by December 1, 2016. Those students moved to a non-preferred semester by lottery will be placed on a waitlist for the preferred semester. The waitlist will be numbered based on the number received in the lottery.

THIRD STEP: PLACEMENT PROCESS – START DATE BY SEMESTER

Students on a waitlist need to know as soon as possible of any change back to their preferred semester. To ensure early notice is available to those waitlisted students, the following additional deadline will apply to all students who submitted a timely application:

When classes resume for Spring '17, all students scheduled to enroll in an externship for the 2017-2018 Academic Year will be required to confirm their intention to enroll no later than February 1, 2017. That deadline is firm, and if you miss the deadline you will no longer be eligible to enroll in an externship during the 2017-2018 academic year.

To confirm your intention to enroll, email Externship Program Officer, Shannon Leach, sleach@vermontlaw.edu.

FOURTH STEP - IDENTIFYING IDEAS OF INTEREST - DATABASE AND SPREADSHEET**

Once you have confirmed that you plan to enroll in an externship for your assigned semester, we will provide access to a database that lists past externships by VLS students. We will provide you with a spreadsheet to complete, listing placements of interest from the database. If you are interested in options not in the database, you will be asked to do web-based or other research (within the restrictions of the placement process) and include web addresses and other information about those options in your spreadsheet.

The spreadsheet should be emailed to the JD Externship Program, as directed.

**If you learn of an externship placement option that has or appears to have a very early application deadline (earlier than the deadlines referenced above) please let Shannon Leach know and link her to the notice you see online or have received via other sources.

We often find that externship postings that appear to require early or immediate application do not apply to the semester of interest to students. We can easily contact most placement sites to determine timing, and clear up confusion created by “rolling deadline” or general postings.

If there is an urgent need to apply or we are unable to clear up any confusion, we will encourage you to apply and assist in any way we can. **However, understand that early application to a site is not a guarantee our office will approve the placement. Even if you receive an offer based on an early application, you will still have to go through our placement process and the placement will need to be approved.**

FIFTH STEP: INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS WITH STUDENTS

Once a spreadsheet is submitted, you will be scheduled to meet with an externship faculty member in the semester preceding the semester in which you seek to enroll. **No meetings will be scheduled with externship faculty earlier than the resumption of fall or spring classes for an externship in the following semester.** See the FAQ for an explanation about timing of the process.

Faculty will meet with every applicant to determine both geographic and substantive areas of interest. One immediate goal is to **determine overlapping interest within the applicant pool** as of the confirmation deadline, or as soon as possible thereafter so the placement process can move forward. A first meeting with all eligible students is typically completed prior to the confirmation deadline for the semester of interest. See the FAQ for an explanation about timing of the process.

SIXTH STEP: CONNECTING YOU WITH POTENTIAL SUPERVISORS***

In order to fairly address both overlapping and general interest in externship sites, externship faculty will manage the logistics and timing of all student contact with potential supervising attorneys, judges, and JD professionals. **Unless you have explicit permission from an externship faculty member, DO NOT INITIATE CONTACT WITH POTENTIAL SUPERVISORS.** For more detailed information about this approach, see the FAQ.

******What to do if you are offered, invited to apply for, or recruited for an externship outside of the placement process***

We know that students are often approached by lawyers who seek to recruit them for externship work or simply mention the option in conversation. Sometimes a summer job effort does not pan out, but you might be invited instead to do an externship in the fall or spring. Other times, VLS alums or others with whom you are “networking” will offer or suggest you do an externship with them through our program.

Be flattered by the offer or suggestion, and thank whoever makes the gesture or suggestion. Also **let that person know you are not authorized to accept an externship offer or to set up your own externship outside the Vermont Law School placement and enrollment process.** You are free to express interest in the idea, as well. Then, you must promptly notify externship faculty of the invitation or offer.

SEVENTH STEP: APPROVAL OF PLACEMENTS

Prior to any placement being finalized, externship **faculty must approve the placement.** This is both a VLS and ABA requirement. Externship faculty will discuss the externship requirements with the potential professional supervisor with whom you would like to work. We may ask for some written information from the potential supervisor. We may contact other law schools that have sent externs to the lawyer, judge, ect., or we may contact lawyers who know the potential supervisor. Those discussions and requests for information are part of our best efforts to determine whether the experience is likely to be a valuable opportunity, that program/course requirements can be satisfied, and that JD credit can be awarded for the experience.

EIGHTH STEP: REGISTRATION

Once externship faculty approves the placement, our office will send out a confirmation letter to both you and the supervising professional. Before that letter goes out, you must schedule a meeting with financial aid to go over your budget for the externship. Once your meeting with Financial Aid is complete, we will contact the Registrar to confirm your enrollment in the externship course.

Do not register for an externship course when planning your schedule. It is not required, and it may eliminate any back-up courses you want to take if your plans change. Once you are confirmed, the Registrar will contact you to confirm your course schedule for the externship semester and beyond.

Please let us know if you have any questions that are not answered by this summary or FAQ, or if the summary or FAQ do not offer a clear description of the placement and enrollment process and the reasons behind it. We want to make sure you understand the process completely before agreeing to abide by the limitations and restrictions set out in this document. Your first point of contact for questions is Shannon Leach, Externship Program Officer, sleach@vermontlaw.edu, x1259, Rogers House, 2nd Floor.

I have read this Placement and Enrollment Process document, understand it fully and completely, and I agree to abide by the process as a condition of my eligibility for and enrollment in one or more externship courses.

Signature

Date