



FORDHAM LAW GRADUATE EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Guidelines for Host Institutions and Placement Supervisors

This document sets forth Fordham Law School's guidelines and expectations for the Graduate Externship Program. All Placement Supervisors and others at the Host Institution who will be involved in administering the externship placement should read this document carefully and, as applicable, abide by the guidelines set forth herein.

Educational Objectives

Fordham provides its LL.M. and M.S.L. students with the opportunity to earn academic credit by participating in legal or compliance work in government organizations, judges' chambers, non-profit organizations, corporate legal and compliance departments, and law firms. Such placement experiences are intended to enrich the educational experience students receive in the Law School's doctrinal courses and to promote students' professional development by assisting them in integrating legal theory with skills and professional values. The educational goals of Fordham's Graduate Externship Program are as follows:

- *Training Students in Lawyering or Compliance Skills:* Placements should offer opportunities for students to appreciate some of the competencies required for legal or compliance work in the U.S. (for international students) and/or to learn and explore competencies required in a particular practice area or setting. Placements also frequently offer exposure to skills such as time management and law or compliance office operations.
- *Development of Professional Identity:* Placements should offer a platform from which students will consider their professional role and the responsibilities that accompany that role. This includes not only analysis of and compliance with relevant ethical rules, but also identification of professional values that extend beyond the codified rules.
- *Growth of Students' Self-Evaluative Skills:* Placements should provide opportunities for active learning through experience, feedback, and reflection. Placements should, therefore, stimulate development of self-evaluative skills and the ability to learn from experience.

Placement Supervisor

Because student externs receive academic credit for their fieldwork, it is essential that they have opportunities to observe and participate in the legal or compliance work of the placement, receive clear and challenging assignments, and are provided with ongoing feedback. Thus, each graduate extern must have a designated Placement Supervisor at the Host Institution. Placement Supervisors are an essential part of the educational and professional development of student externs and should, therefore, be attorneys or compliance professionals with sufficient experience to enable them to guide and counsel student externs.

Placement Supervisors will act as the primary point of contact for the student with the organization, as well as between the Host Institution and the Graduate Externship Program.

Supervision

Primary Point of Contact: Placement Supervisors must be available on-site to provide and explain assignments, answer questions, and give substantive feedback on student work. If the Placement Supervisor is unavailable when a student extern is scheduled to be in the office, appropriate assignments and instructions should be left, and alternate coverage should be arranged. A student may work with one or more attorneys or compliance professionals in a particular placement, but the Placement Supervisor is responsible for keeping track of the student's work assignments and for communicating with every attorney or compliance professional who assigns work to the student, and ultimately for evaluating the student's work.

Initial Meeting: The Placement Supervisor must schedule an initial meeting with the student extern at the very start of the first week of the fieldwork in order to orient the student to the nature of the work and the set-up of the office and to set the tone for the supervisory relationship. In particular, we recommend that the following issues be addressed at this meeting:

- *Confidentiality and Professional Responsibility:* Professional obligations such as confidentiality, conflicts of interest, and permissible communications with those outside the office should be discussed with student externs at the outset of the fieldwork. If there are particular ethical policies that govern your office, please share them as well. Student externs should be informed of the title they are expected to use on communications, *e.g.*, "Legal Extern" or "Corporate Compliance Extern."
- *The Function of the Agency, Office, or Organization:* Although your office or organization's role within the legal system may seem obvious to you, it may not be so clear to the new student extern. A description of the services provided by your office, the organization's clients (if relevant), and the particular subject matter that the office focuses on, should be provided. This will help orient the student extern to his/her new work environment.
- *The Student's Work and Role in the Office:* Student externs should be informed about the nature of the assignments they might expect during the semester and the particular cases or projects on which they might be expected to work. Student externs also should be told about any resources available to support them with their assigned tasks.
- *Relevant Office Policies and Expectations and Chain of Command:* Student externs should be made aware of relevant office policies and expectations such as dress code, working hours, deadlines, use of office equipment, and lines of authority. Student externs also need to know the chain of command for assignments, *i.e.*, from whom they should accept work. It is always best if assignments go through the Placement Supervisor, even when a student works with others in performing a task. Student externs also should be informed about the review process for their work and whether there are any tasks they may carry out without a supervisor's review or approval.

- *Layout of the Office and Introduction to Others:* Please take the time to show your externs around your office. A tour should include a brief overview of the office space, including the library and other areas where resources for research are available. Student externs should be introduced to all staff members with whom they will interact.

Assisting in Development of Statement of Goals: At the very start of the semester, student externs and Placement Supervisors are expected to collaborate in the development of the extern's Statement of Goals.¹ The Placement Supervisor should ensure that the goals established by the student are realistic and appropriate and, if necessary, help the student to identify assignments and activities that might help him/her meet those goals.

Periodic Meetings and Evaluation: Placement Supervisors are expected to meet with student externs formally at the mid-point and end of each semester to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the student's performance, and are also encouraged to have at least weekly meetings during which they can review the extern's work and discuss other matters. The Placement Supervisor will also be responsible for evaluating student externs' work at the end of the semester.

Assignments

We ask that Host Institutions consider the following guidelines in assigning work to student externs:

- *Nature of the Work:* Student externs should be assigned a variety of meaningful lawyering or compliance tasks. Such tasks might include, with appropriate supervision, the following: conducting legal research or fact investigation, performing internal audits or investigations, drafting legal documents, performing due diligence, interviewing and counseling clients, and negotiating. Student externs should not, as a general rule, be asked to perform clerical duties such as photocopying, phone coverage, or other non-lawyering, non-compliance tasks. Student externs should be included in the activities of the office to the extent possible. They should be invited, as appropriate, to attend meetings, conferences, and administrative hearings and trials, either as observers or active participants.
- *Use of Electronic Databases:* Student externs may only use their student LexisNexis, Westlaw, and Bloomberg accounts if the research being performed is in furtherance of a field placement project and if no third party is being charged for the work performed by the LL.M./M.S.L. extern.
- *Assigning Work and Setting Expectations:* All assignments should be explained to the student in detail and specific deadlines should be set. Placement Supervisors should inform externs of available resources that might be helpful and should provide some context for each assignment, *i.e.*, how the work product fits within the larger picture.
- *Tracking Progress:* Placement Supervisors should keep track of whether the extern completes assignments in a timely fashion. For relatively complex assignments, the extern should check in early and often to report on his/her progress.

¹ Available online at law.fordham.edu/llm/extern/forms.

- *Giving Meaningful Feedback:* Placement Supervisors are expected to make sufficient time to provide individual specific feedback on student work. Effective feedback consists of providing specific information about the effectiveness of a student’s performance and, when necessary, suggesting alternatives to enhance future performance. The feedback should be detailed in terms of both substance and process. It is important to identify those aspects of the student’s work that are effective, as well as those aspects that require improvement. Specific examples of the things that were effective or upon which the student might improve are particularly useful. In contrast, generalizations such as “good job” are usually not helpful.

Addressing Concerns

In the vast majority of placements, both student externs and Placement Supervisors reap the benefits of a successful mentor-student relationship; however, there are occasional instances when a student or supervisor will have concerns about the externship. The faculty and administrators at the Law School will intervene only in situations in which a supervisor and student are unable to resolve the problem. If you have any concerns about a particular student extern and have addressed them with the student but they remain unresolved, please contact the Graduate Externship Program at llm@law.fordham.edu.

Pro Bono Requirement

New York State has adopted a Pro Bono Requirement for Bar Admission, applicable to those who apply for admission on or after January 1, 2015 (see Rule 520.16 of the Rules of the New York Court of Appeals for the Admission of Attorneys and Counselors at Law²). Many current law students will rely on the fieldwork performed in their externship placements (to the extent applicable) to meet this new requirement. If applicable, Placement Supervisors should be prepared to certify such student work, in compliance with Rule 520.16.

Student Workspace

Each student extern should have his/her own individual workspace, including a computer. It is important to also advise others in the office where the student is situated.

Student Work Schedule

For externships performed during the fall and spring semesters, graduate student externs must perform and document a minimum of 130 hours of fieldwork for the semester. Student externs may not work more than 13 hours in any given week.

For externships performed during the summer term, LL.M. and/or M.S.L. student externs must perform and document a minimum 20 hours of fieldwork per week for at least 8 weeks. The work should be performed, to the extent possible, roughly within the timeframe of the law school’s

² Available at http://www.nycourts.gov/attorneys/probono/Rule520_16.pdf.

summer session: generally, the third week of May through the third week of July (for exact dates each year, please see the law school's academic calendar at law.fordham.edu/registrar).

The Placement Supervisor should work with the student extern to create a specific work schedule. Scheduled hours may not conflict with the student's course schedule. Student externs are required to submit bi-weekly time sheets to the Graduate Externship Program, which must be signed by the Placement Supervisor.

Credit Granted

Graduate externs are enrolled in a Graduate Externship Fieldwork course, for which they receive two academic credits. Graduate externs are required to simultaneously enroll in a one-credit seminar course which explores various topics and skills that will help student externs succeed in their field placements.

Payments to Student Externs

Student externs may not be paid for their work. They may, however, be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses, including travel to and from the office.

In-Person Meetings with the Fordham Graduate Externship Program

The Graduate Externship Program may occasionally request in-person meetings with Placement Supervisors, either at the site of the Host Institution or in our offices, to discuss the students' and Host Institutions' experiences with the Graduate Externship Program. In that case, the Host Institution would be contacted and a mutually agreeable time would be scheduled for the meeting.

Reporting Requirements and Important Dates

Host Institutions and Placement Supervisors should be aware of the following requirements and deadlines in association with the fieldwork placement:

Document	Due Date	Submitted By
Designation of Placement Supervisor and Acknowledgement of Program Requirements	End of the First Week of Classes	Student (must be signed by Placement Supervisor)
Statement of Goals	End of the Second Week of Classes	Student (must be signed by Placement Supervisor)

Time Sheets	First Time Sheets Due Wednesday of the Third Week of Classes (covering the first two weeks of the semester); time sheets due bi-weekly (every other week) on Wednesdays thereafter	Student (must be signed by Placement Supervisor)
End of Semester Evaluation by Placement Supervisor	Before the End of the Final Examination Period (Placement Supervisors will be informed of the exact date for each semester)	Placement Supervisor

All forms are available online at law.fordham.edu/llm/extern/forms. Forms may be submitted in person in Room 8-131 of the Law School or via email to tfine@law.fordham.edu (or cbasri@fordham.edu for compliance placements). For documents that are submitted by the student but must be signed by the Placement Supervisor, email submissions can be done in one of two ways: (i) the student may print the form and have it signed then scan the document to a PDF and attach it to an email; or (ii) the student may attach the unsigned document to an email addressed to tfine@law.fordham.edu (or cbasri@fordham.edu for compliance placements) with the Placement Supervisor in cc and the Placement Supervisor can reply to all that he/she approves the form. In the case of (ii), the email confirmation by the Placement Supervisor will serve as the "signature." All email submissions should say "Externship Form Submission" in the subject line.

Questions/Contact

If any questions or issues arise, you may contact the Graduate Externship Program at llm@law.fordham.edu.
