



PennState
Dickinson Law

Externship Program Handbook
For Law Students & Supervising Attorneys
2025-2026

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EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM HANDBOOK

I. INTRODUCTION

An externship is more than just a job; it is a structured learning opportunity in the real-world practice of law. Externships have multiple benefits for students, among them: (1) to see how the theory studied in the classroom translates into practice; (2) to do substantive legal work for credit, in offices outside the law school, supervised by Supervising Attorneys; (3) to receive feedback, supervision, and opportunities for performance and reflection; (4) to learn about different practice areas; and (5) to develop their professional identity.

This Externship Program Handbook explains Penn State Dickinson Law's Externship Program – its goals, its procedures, and the roles and responsibilities of participants.

II. GOVERNING RULES

Penn State Dickinson Law's Externship Program is governed by (1) the American Bar Association Standards and Rules of Procedure for Approval of Law Schools Standard 304, (2) Penn State Dickinson Law's Student Academic Handbook ("Academic Handbook"), and (3) this Externship Program Handbook. Any conflicts between this Handbook and the Academic Handbook should be resolved in favor of the Academic Handbook.

III. EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM DEFINED PERSONS & CONTACTS

- A.** Supervising Attorney: The "outside" attorney supervising the student at the externship site.
- B.** Supervising Faculty: The faculty member teaching the student's respective section of the Academic Classroom Component.
- C.** Recruitment Manager:
Jenna K. Ciambotti
jkk5050@psu.edu
814.863.2550
- D.** Director of Externship Program ("DEP"): Director of Externship Program at the student's respective location.
Prof. Gopal Balachandran, University Park
Gzb39@psu.edu

Prof. Bethany Schols, Carlisle
Schols@psu.edu

- E. Associate Dean of Experiential Education ("ADEE"):
Assoc. Dean Lucy Johnston-Walsh
lj12@psu.edu
- F. Associate Dean of Academic Affairs ("ADAA"): The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at the student's respective location.
Assoc. Dean Jeffrey Dodge, Carlisle
jad6742@psu.edu
Assoc. Dean Michele Vollmer, University Park
mrv3@psu.edu

IV. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES: LEARNING OUTCOMES

To accomplish the following Learning Objectives, Penn State Dickinson Law's Externship Program uses the following methods: 1) Immersion in Real Practice; 2) Dual Supervision; 3) Guided Reflection; and 4) Self-Directed Learning. All Externship students, Supervising Attorneys and Supervising Faculty must engage in these program methods, as described here and in other Externship Program written agreements.

A. Professional Identity: Students will be able to articulate the concept of professional identity and begin to cultivate their own professional identity.

Students will use a Learning Agenda to articulate their goals for their externship experience and will reflect on the relationship of those goals to their own professional identity development. Supervising Attorneys and Supervising Faculty will provide feedback on the goals and the opportunities within the externship and the tutorial, to meet those goals. Supervising Faculty will give students opportunities for reflection, feedback and evaluation on professional identity development, using reflection essays and other tutorial interaction.

B. Professional Conduct: Students perform ethically with attentiveness to all relevant rules of professional conduct and self-awareness.

Students will examine their professional responsibilities as lawyers in context. This includes analysis of legal ethics and compliance with the Rules of Professional Conduct, and with leadership and the uses of power and influence which a law degree makes possible. Students will begin to exercise judgment and responsibility in their lawyering roles. They will learn to recognize common ethical and professional liability dilemmas and resolve those dilemmas with high professional standards.

C. Substantive Law: Students will improve their knowledge and practice skills in a particular area of substantive law.

Students will identify and build selected and focused lawyering skills and doctrine particular to their placement type, as part of a lawyering process to promote transfer. Students will gain a greater understanding of the legal theory and doctrine pertaining to the areas of law in which their placements focus. They should be able to integrate this substantive knowledge with the actual work of their placement and reflect on this with their Supervising Faculty.

D. Reflective Learning: Students will engage in reflection that fosters learning from experience and learning for transfer.

Students will practice reflective lawyering by focusing on their tasks and observations in the externship placement and then analyzing those with guidance from their Supervising Attorneys and Supervising Faculty. This reflective learning will follow a conscious process: experience, reaction, theory, and application. Students will use reflective writing, guided discussions with supervisors, faculty and peers, time and matter tracking, and self-evaluation tools. Students will demonstrate the ability to transfer those lessons to more complex problems and to other settings.

E. Lawyer Competency: Students will develop and practice entry-level lawyer capabilities and competencies.

Under the supervision of the Supervising Attorney, students will develop and practice entry-level lawyer capabilities and competencies, including, but not limited to:

- Communicating with clients and others;
- Working collaboratively;
- Understanding the important role that cultural competency plays in a lawyer's ability to deliver competent legal services to clients;
- Managing projects within time and resource limitations; and
- Presenting orally outside of litigation; and
- Strategizing to achieve client objectives while anticipating potential consequences and assessing risk of negative outcomes.

F. Justice System: Evaluate the justice system and examine their role in it.

By participating in the legal system, students will gain an appreciation of its strengths and weaknesses. Through critical examination they will reflect on their opinions about its quality, effectiveness, and fairness. Depending on their placement, students may learn first-hand about the impact of the justice system on clients and others, such as witnesses and victims, who are directly affected. The externship's reflective learning experiences will allow students to evaluate the ways legal institutions function in society and analyze their own role in strengthening the justice system.

V. EXTERNSHIP STANDARDS

A. Program Requirements Summary

Externships are open to students who have completed at least one year of legal education and are in good academic standing. Students are encouraged but are not required to enroll in Professional Responsibility or have already taken and passed Professional Responsibility. To receive academic credit for working at an externship placement site, students must: (1) complete legal work at their externship site for a required number of hours per credit and log their time; (2) enroll in, attend, and participate in the academic companion course; and (3) complete assigned readings and all required course assignments. Students are required to attend and participate in any ABA Standard 303(c) programming in connection with their externship.

B. Experiential Credit

To earn a J.D. degree, a student must earn a set number of experiential course credits as set forth in the Penn State Dickinson Law [Academic Handbook](#), accessible on the Penn State Dickinson Law website. An approved externship will count toward the experiential course credit requirement. Students may enroll in no more than twelve credit hours in externship courses. Note, Semesters-In-Practice are not subject to the twelve-credit hour limit.

C. Co-Curricular Credit Caps

Externships (like Clinics) are subject to the Academic Rules regarding the maximum co-curricular credits in which a student may enroll. Students must consult the Academic Handbook, accessible on the Penn State Dickinson Law website, for the current rules on co-curricular

credits, which are binding. The DEP, a student's Faculty Advisor, or the ADAA can provide further guidance for students.

D. Course Credit and Hours Requirements

1. **Credit:** All externships are on a credit/no-credit basis.
2. **Fall/Spring Semester:** Students work at least **10 hours per week** for a total of 140 hours (exclusive of travel to and from the field placement) over the course of **14 weeks** per semester to earn **3 credits**. Externships shorter than 14 weeks will be considered on a case-by-case basis to avoid undue hardship and upon consultation between DEP and the ADEE.
3. **Summer Semester:** International students on an F-1 visa may apply for a summer externship. If approved, students will need to work at least **120 hours** over the course of **6 to 10 weeks** (exclusive of travel to and from the field placement) during the summer to earn 1 credit. See Section IX G for more information.

As set forth in the Student Handbook, under rare circumstances, to avoid an undue hardship, a student without an F-1 visa may apply for a summer externship when an employer requires a student to receive academic credit to be eligible to receive an offer for a summer position. In those circumstances, the ADEE may grant approval for a student without an F-1 visa to earn 1 credit for a summer externship. Before granting approval, the ADEE or DEP will contact the employer to discuss the academic credit requirement to determine if it can be waived or removed.

4. **Semesters-In-Practice:** Students who meet the qualifications set forth in the Academic Handbook, may apply for a Semester-In-Practice as detailed in Section VIII below.
5. **Holidays, Weather:** Students **must** make up any hours missed for legal holidays, inclement weather, law school holiday or other absences, arranged with their Supervising Attorney. Failure to do so can result in the student being withdrawn from the Externship course by the Supervising Faculty and/or the DEP and receiving a grade of "NC" on their transcript.

E. Academic Classroom Component

Students must participate in the academic classroom course taught by their Supervising Faculty. The purpose of the academic classroom component is to provide ongoing, contemporaneous faculty-guided

student reflection to reinforce the learning of professional skills in the workplace. Students will participate in regularly scheduled group discussion, self-evaluation, readings, reflective essays, and/or other individual assignments.

F. Orientation

Students must attend and participate in the externship orientation coordinated by the ADEE and the DEP. Beginning in Spring 2026, only first time externship students must attend and participate in orientation.

G. No Simultaneous Clinic and Externship

Due to the potential for conflicts of interest and the difficulty managing law practice in two different contexts while undertaking classroom coursework, a student is not permitted to:

1. Enroll in a clinic and an externship in the same semester;
2. Enroll in more than one externship in the same semester; or
3. Enroll in more than one clinic in the same semester.

VI. EXTERNSHIP PLACEMENTS

A. Externship Placement Qualifications

To qualify as an approved externship placement for academic credit under the ABA Standards, a placement must provide a substantial lawyering experience that:

1. Is reasonably similar to the experience of a lawyer advising or representing a client or engaging in other lawyering tasks in a setting outside a law clinic;
2. Is directly supervised by an attorney licensed or otherwise authorized to practice law;
3. Provides opportunities for performance, feedback and self-evaluation; and
4. Can be evaluated by a faculty member based on each student's educational achievement.

B. Externship Setting

Externships may be in person, hybrid, or remote. The setting must be

clear in the offer letter.

C. Compensation

Public sector externships for academic credit may be paid or unpaid. Externships with law firms and other private sector placements must be paid.

D. OCI Externship Placements

During each semester's OCI process, Penn State Dickinson Law, with its two locations, provides students with the opportunity to apply to a robust set of previously approved externship placements in a variety of legal settings, including federal and state judicial chambers, state and federal prosecutors/public defenders state and local government administrative offices, Penn State University legal offices, legal service offices, and non-profit legal organizations. This OCI process is set forth in Section VII below. A current list of externship opportunities is available on Law Lion Careers.

E. Proposing Your Own Externship ("PYO") Placements

Students may propose an externship placement outside of PSDL's OCI by using the "Propose Your Own Externship Placement Application" for review and approval by the DEP in consultation with the ADEE. To be approved, an externship must satisfy the Externship Placement Qualifications set forth above. The Propose Your Own Externship Placement Application is available on the Externships page of the Penn State Dickinson Law website.

Deadline for PYO Placements:

Spring Semester: December 1st
Fall Semester: August 1st

Students are encouraged to seek out externships in their areas of interest. Those could include government agencies, public interest organizations, or almost any entity that performs legal work. Many offices need legal assistance and welcome the opportunity to train and work with Penn State Dickinson Law students. Students may consult members of the faculty for suggestions of entities that could provide a specialized field placement, and possibly for facilitation of contact with their colleagues in those entities. The Career Services Office also provides tailored advice for each student.

F. Repeat Placements: Students are encouraged to pursue new and different lawyering experiences through the Externship Program.

Students who would like to receive credit for work completed at an externship site where the student previously externed must submit the Application to Repeat Placement Form to the DEP. The student must clearly demonstrate how the externship placement will provide an opportunity for significant educational development through a different experience that offers increased responsibility and legal tasks of increased nuance and sophistication; however, meeting this criterion does not guarantee approval of a repeat placement. The DEP will review the application and submit it to the ADEE with their recommendation. Repeat placements must be approved by the DEP and the ADEE.

Some externship placements require or recommend a two-semester commitment. Students are responsible for determining if their placement has this requirement and for seeking approval for a repeat placement *before* committing to the first semester. Students applying to an Externship through OCI (Section VII) are exempt from this requirement.

Students may spend no more than two semesters at the same externship site. Students should note that a Semester-in-Practice is considered an "externship site" under this rule.

G. Family Members: Students may not work in a placement where the student's family member or relative is an attorney or member of the staff. In exceptional circumstances and upon a showing that the relationship will not create an unfair advantage and that all supervision will be conducted by someone other than the family member such placement may be approved by the DEP.

H. Externship Site Examination

Penn State Dickinson Law has the sole discretion to approve an externship site and review and/or visit externship sites periodically to ensure compliance with its educational objectives and reserves the right to discontinue an externship at a site if it concludes that the site is not serving the Externship Program's educational objectives. Penn State Dickinson Law may require Supervising Attorneys to participate in training sessions to participate in the Program.

VII. EXTERNSHIP APPLICATION PROCESS

- A. Process:** The Career Services Office facilitates the application and interview process for OCI externship employers. Students applying for externships at new placements not yet approved by Penn State Dickinson Law or not through the OCI process must submit a proposal to the DEP as set forth in Section VI E. Externship placement is competitive and is not guaranteed.
- B. Application:** Students apply for an externship with the pre-approved externship employers included in OCI through Law Lion Careers (12Twenty).
- C. Timing:** Deadline dates for each semester are disseminated each semester and included on Penn State Dickinson Law's website for Experiential Learning and Career Services.
- D. Materials:** Required application materials and interviews are determined by the externship employers.
- E. Informational Session:** The ADEE will hold an informational session each semester for students interested in exploring externship options, understanding the OCI process, and learning the requirements of any externship opportunity.
- F. Acceptance:** Once an externship placement is approved by the DEP and accepted by the student, the student **must** input the specifics of their externship in Law Lion Careers (12Twenty). Then, the DEP will notify the Registrar to register the student for the appropriate externship section.
- G. Withdrawal:** If after accepting a placement, the student no longer wishes to proceed with the externship, for rare, compelling, or hardship reasons, the student must meet with the DEP prior to taking any steps to terminate the externship. Upon approval of the termination by the DEP, the student must notify and seek approval from the Supervising Attorney. Failure to follow this protocol prior to terminating the externship and/or dropping the class could result in the course being recorded as "NC" on the student's official transcript.

VIII. SEMESTERS-IN-PRACTICE

- A. Eligibility:** Students who wish to participate in the Semester-in-Practice Program must:

1. Be in good academic standing per the Academic Handbook and not the subject of an Honor Code investigation or proceeding;
2. Be on track to complete the third year of law school with at least the 88 credits required to graduate;
3. Not be in danger of exceeding the limit on co-curricular credits with inclusion of the Semester-In-Practice externship; and
4. Have taken doctrinal and skills-based courses that adequately prepare them for success on the bar exam.

B. Requirements:

1. Credits/Hour Requirement: Students must work at least 467 hours (exclusive of travel to and from the field placement) over the course of 14 weeks per semester, or approximately **33.3 hours per week** for 14 weeks to earn **10 credits**.
2. Academic Classroom Component: Students must participate in the academic classroom course as set forth in Section III E.
3. Additional Course Requirement: To earn 12 credit hours required for full-time status, students must also take at least one other 2 credit course. In planning for a Semester-In-Practice students should discuss the course options with the DEP or the ADAA..

C. Placement Sites: A Semester-In-Practice placement site should be a federal or state government, a nonprofit entity, or a public interest office. Paid Semester-In-Practice placements at for-profit entities will be considered on a limited case-by-case basis.

D. Process:

1. When a student decides to explore a Semester-In-Practice, they should meet with either the ADAA or the DEP to discuss the process, the placement opportunities the student is targeting, and the pros and cons of doing a Semester-In-Practice for that student.
2. Students are responsible for requesting a degree audit from the Registrar's Office to ensure eligibility.
3. Students are responsible for finding, communicating with, and applying to placement sites.

4. Students must submit a written proposal in the form of a memorandum to the DEP setting forth, among other things, how the proposed Semester-In-Practice will provide a substantial lawyering experience and help the student build skills and values, develop experience, and/or establish networks relevant to a student's desired practice area.
 5. The DEP reviews the Semester-In-Practice proposal, investigates the proposed placement, and works with the student to identify any missing information or infirmities in the proposal. Then, the DEP makes a recommendation to the ADAA and the ADEE.
 6. Semesters-In-Practice must be approved by the DEP, the ADAA, and the ADEE.
- E. Timing:** A student should begin the process as soon as they recognize that they want to consider a Semester-In-Practice, so that the student can make an appropriate academic plan in consultation with the DEP and/or the ADAA.

IX. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Eligibility and the Application Process

Students are responsible for reviewing the externship placement qualifications, time deadlines, and required materials. Students are responsible for meeting deadlines, ensuring they meet the qualifications, and providing the required materials.

B. Participation in the Academic Classroom Component

1. Attendance: Attendance is required. This is an important and *required* component of a student's externship experience.
2. Camera: To provide students with Supervising Faculty who practice in the same or substantially similar areas of law in which students are externing, Penn State Dickinson Law groups students into sections based on their externship placements and assembles experienced practitioners to serve as adjunct faculty to lead the sections. The classroom component is, therefore, taught remotely. The classroom component sessions should be treated as in-person classes, with students appearing on camera and engaging in the discussions.
3. Work Product: Students' externship experience will be enriched through assignments including learning agenda, reflective essays,

self-evaluations, work reports, and/or a substantial research paper. These assignments are required, as they are integral to the learning experience.

C. Professionalism

Professional conduct is a critical component of participating in the externship program. Students will hold themselves to a high standard of professionalism in applying for, accepting, and participating in an externship and associated courses. A lack of professional conduct may prevent a student from participating in the externship program and associated courses. Among other things, students should ensure that they:

1. Communicate promptly, clearly, and professionally.
2. Demonstrate tolerance, express disagreement thoughtfully and respectfully, and adhere to professional appearance and behavior norms.
3. Be prompt, honor commitments, pay attention to detail, take ownership of projects, and make appropriate use of resources (including colleagues and supervisors).

D. Externship Placement Office Policies & Procedures

Students will be expected to comply with the same office policies and procedures as other employees. Students should familiarize themselves with the externship office's policies on use of computer, cell phones, smoking, casual dress, obtaining supplies, and so forth. Most law offices have strict policies prohibiting confidential files from being taken out of the office. The office may also require specialized forms and templates for legal writing, and students must comply with those requirements.

Students must follow the work schedule set out by their Supervising Attorney and notify them in advance if they will not be at the office on any particular day. Failure to appear on the designated day(s) for the externship could result in the student being dropped from the course and receiving a "NC" on their transcript. Students should accompany their Supervising Attorney to hearings, meetings, interviews, and other assignments out of the office when possible. Working at the externship office will allow students to observe the daily routine and workstyle of the lawyers there. In addition, being present in the office provides the opportunity to develop relationships with mentors and colleagues, and other intangible benefits. Students should expect to spend more than

the minimum time, especially when responsible for a case or project with a deadline. For students working remotely, they should try and get the same or similar types of experiences as a student working in person.

E. Professional Responsibility

Externship students work on actual legal matters and must conform with the applicable rules of professional responsibility of their externship's jurisdiction. The Pennsylvania Rules of Professional Conduct's Preamble, for example, provides that "lawyer[s] should strive to attain the highest level of skill, to improve the law and the legal profession and to exemplify the legal profession's ideals of public service." The rules regarding confidentiality, competence, and diligence are of primary importance, and the following is a summary of Pennsylvania's Rules on those issues:

1. Confidentiality

PA Rule of Prof. Conduct 1.6(a) explains that "a lawyer shall not reveal information relating to representation of a client unless the client gives informed consent, except for disclosures that are impliedly authorized in order to carry out the representation..." This duty of **confidentiality** continues even after the lawyer-client relationship has ended. Confidential client information that students learn in their externship must be kept secret, even from Supervising Faculty or other students. Cases and clients should never be discussed outside the externship office. However, students *may* discuss their externship experiences in general and matters that are on the public record. Respecting confidentiality is especially important in externship class discussions because of the variety of law offices represented in the externships program, some of which may even have cases against each other.

2. Conflicts of Interest

Students should be alert to any possible **conflicts of interest** between the externship and past, present, or future employment, externships, clinical experiences, and/or volunteer opportunities. Having worked in one legal office does not disqualify a student from obtaining a job on "the other side." Indeed, such experiences have distinct benefits. Students must, however, notify their Supervising Attorney if 1) the student has worked with or against any client or on any matter that is *pending* in the externship office or 2) the student has worked with or against any client or matter that arises in the externship office. If such a

situation occurs, the student may be reassigned to other projects and walled off from the client/matter to prevent disclosure of any confidential information.

3. **Competence**

PA Rule of Prof. Conduct 1.1 states: "[a] lawyer shall provide competent representation to a client. Competent representation requires the legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness, and preparation **reasonably** necessary for the representation." Externship student assignments ordinarily bear significant responsibility, and Supervising Attorneys expect high quality, professional work. Students must communicate with their Supervising Attorneys to clarify the expectations for each assignment, the issues to be researched, the relevant facts and any other material that should be studied. Students must clarify their deadlines and nature of the expected work product (e.g., a brief or internal memo, a neutral discussion of the law on an issue or a persuasive argument, or a discussion of policy).

4. **Diligence**

Busy lawyers—and students—can procrastinate and delay projects until the last minute. The Rules, however, directs lawyers to avoid undue delays, because they can damage the client's interests. A missed deadline can terminate a client's case and is grounds for a malpractice claim. PA Rule of Prof. Conduct 1.3, for example, states: "[a] lawyer shall act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client." Students must therefore manage their time to produce professional work without delay. If a student anticipates difficulty meeting an assigned deadline for any reason, they *must* contact a Supervising Attorney immediately. Attorneys can then ensure the project is completed timely without prejudicing the client.

F. Student Certification to Practice

1. Summary: Under PA Supreme Court Rule 321, a student who has completed three semesters of law school may apply to become a Certified Legal Intern (CLI). CLIs may appear in PA courts and prepare court pleadings under close supervision of their Supervising Attorney.
2. Necessity: Students are responsible for determining whether Legal Intern Certification is necessary for their externship and, if

so, for *timely* applying.

3. Process: Students whose externships require or allow Legal Intern Certification must download the application from the PA Board of Law Examiners at:
http://www.pabarexam.org/non_bar_exam_admission/321_322_app.htm Students must submit their completed application to the Career Services Office, who will get the application signed by a law school official and forward the application to the Prothonotary of the PA Supreme Court. This process may take several weeks.
4. Limitations: Students must review Pennsylvania Bar Admission Rules 321 & 322 prior to submitting an application, and again upon receiving the certification. Students must understand the limits of the practice rule and stay within them. Students and their Supervising Attorneys should discuss those limits as to all student Externship work. Students are responsible for abiding by the Rules' limits on their permission to engage in limited practice, and the precise requirements of the Rules. Students should never base a decision about whether an activity is permissible under the Rules on what other Students or Supervising Attorneys are doing.

G. International Student Work Authorization

1. Summary: Students who plan to work off-campus in either a paid or unpaid position and are on a F-1 visa, will need to ensure they have the appropriate work authorization. **Curricular Practical Training** ("CPT") is work authorization under an F-1 student visa during full-time academic program that is related to the major/curriculum of study. A student is eligible to apply for CPT after one year of study. Students authorized to work under CPT must also receive credit for their work.
2. Application: To apply for CPT, a student must:
 - a. Disclose: Disclose their visa status to perspective employers and confirm that the perspective employer will support CPT and participate in the Externship Program.
 - b. Offer: Receive an offer letter from the externship employer on letterhead containing the following:
 - i. the student's job title;

- ii. the exact start and end dates of student's employment, which may be the start and end dates of the respective semester;
 - iii. the number of hours the student is expected to work per week;
 - iv. the place of employment, including the employer's address and/or location if the student will be working in person at that location; and
 - v. a brief description of the student's duties to illustrate the educational intent of the position.
- c. Placement Approval: Notify the DEP and seek approval of the externship placement.
- d. CPT Approval: Apply for CPT through the University's iStart systems. In the iStart system, the student will enter the DEP's name as the advisor for the externship program in the CPT application. Students should consult with their advisor at the **Penn State Global Office of International Student and Scholar Advising** on any specific questions. It typically takes approximately 2 weeks for the university to process CPT requests, so prompt submission of requests is important.
- e. Social Security Number: **Apply for a Social Security number** if the externship is paid and the student does not already have one. To allow sufficient time for the processing, the request should be submitted as soon as possible after an externship placement has been approved.

X. SUPERVISING ATTORNEYS

A. Summary of Role

Each externship site is required to identify one lawyer to be the student's Supervising Attorney. Supervising Attorneys play a key role in the externship program. Overseeing the student's day-to-day work, the Supervising Attorney provides direct legal training and constructive feedback that complements the academic component of the externship program. For a complete list of site supervisor responsibilities see Part II of the *Memorandum of Understanding*.

B. Responsibilities

1. Provide the student with a substantial lawyering experience that is reasonably similar to the experience of a lawyer advising or representing a client or engaging in other lawyering tasks.

There should be a distinction made between giving students a greater volume of work versus work that will lead to growth opportunities and will present a challenge that will allow the student to further develop their skills. This is especially important in an externship placement where the student is externing for a second term.

Remote externships should be as similar as possible to an in-person placement and provide students with opportunities to observe hearings, participate in meetings, etc.

2. Supervise the student, meet with the student initially about their Learning Agenda, and regularly discuss assignments & provide written and oral feedback. Supervision by the Supervising Attorney can be delegated to another attorney at the placement with corresponding feedback on assignments, but the Supervising Attorney must complete the student's evaluations, review their self-evaluations and review their Learning Agenda.
3. To give the student opportunities to participate in and observe the day-to-day work of licensed attorneys in the placement entity and the legal system(s) in which it operates, including participating in, e.g., client interviewing and counseling, discovery, arbitration, negotiation, pre-trial conferences, witness preparation, fact investigation, case strategy development, legal research and writing, and trial preparation.
4. Each Externship office is required to give students instruction in the body of law, including the procedural framework that forms the office's practice. Students should have the opportunity to gain experience in the full range of functions performed by lawyers in the office in which they are placed.
5. Students should be involved in the research, preparation, and drafting of documents that are generated by lawyers in the office including, but not limited to, motions, pleadings, discovery documents, internal office memoranda, legal opinions, and drafts of legislation and regulations.

6. To give the student opportunities to represent eligible clients or governmental agencies in formal legal proceedings, if the student is certified as a legal intern, with attorney supervision consistent with Rules 321 and 322 of the Pennsylvania Bar Admission Rules or another state's rules governing the student practice of law. Penn State Dickinson Law will assist in obtaining certification for any student who has completed three semesters and is academically eligible for certification.
7. To permit the student, if they are not eligible for certified legal intern or analogous student practice status, to observe and receive instruction concerning administrative and judicial proceedings.
8. To notify the DEP and Supervising Faculty if the student is not performing competently at any time during the externship.
9. To provide the student with adequate workspace, a safe environment, and research facilities.
10. To provide malpractice insurance to the extent that it is required by the Externship placement entity, because Penn State University does not provide malpractice insurance for students.
11. To acknowledge that the externship is primarily for the educational benefit of the Extern; the student is not displacing or substituting for any employees.
12. To submit evaluations of the student's performance at the middle and end of the externship, using evaluation tools and submission methods provided by Penn State Dickinson Law, to the DEP and/or Supervising Faculty. This includes reviewing and giving feedback about the student's self-evaluations and their Learning Agenda.

C. Method of Communication

The ABA requires that all externship programs for academic credit have a method for selecting, training, evaluating, and communicating with Supervising Attorneys to ensure the quality of the student educational experience. The Dickinson Law Faculty Supervisor will communicate with Supervising Attorneys via email, phone, or in-person visits on the following timeline throughout the semester:

1. Through email during the recruitment and application process;

2. At the beginning of each semester to distribute program materials (including any relevant training materials) and send a reminder about the initial meeting requirements and deadlines, and a notification if a particular site will be subject to a site visit for that semester;
3. Subsequent email to arrange for a site visit (if applicable);
4. Throughout the semester, on an as-needed basis and to follow-up, to remind Supervising Attorneys about program form deadlines.

D. Providing Effective Supervision & Feedback

1. **Importance:** The Supervising Attorney assumes primary responsibility for overseeing the student's experience at the externship site, including providing assignments, giving meaningful and timely feedback, monitoring student progress and regularly meeting with the student to discuss their individual development. One of the externship course objectives is for students to learn the expectations of employers and others with respect to lawyers' knowledge, skills, qualities, and behavior. As the Supervising Attorney, your constructive feedback is essential for helping students to meet this goal. The ABA Standards for law school accreditation require that an externship program include a method for training Supervising Attorneys. We recognize that many Supervising Attorney have previous experience supervising externs. However, since receiving constructive feedback is integral to assuring the educational quality of the experience for the student, Supervising Attorneys should utilize this guide when providing feedback as part of the for-credit externship program.
2. **Skills-Based Assessment:** The Penn State Dickinson Law Externship Program has developed basic competencies upon which students should be evaluated which include: communication, emotional intelligence, legal thinking and application, problem-solving, project management, professionalism, workplace skills, drive, and meeting goals.

In addition, students are asked to assess these and other skills at the beginning of the semester using the Initial Skills and Competencies Assessment and reflect on their progress through the semester. Students then use this skills assessment to set specific goals as part of an Individual Development Plan for the semester. The skills that make up this survey were taken from the

ABA MacCrate Report which outlines several fundamental lawyering skills:

Problem-Solving	Oral Communication
Workplace skills	Written Communication
Legal Research	Ethical Decision-Making
Factual Research	Public Policy Advocacy
Legal Analysis	Negotiation
Client Interviewing	Litigation
Business transactions	

Overall Supervising Attorneys should undertake a customized approach with each student. Students should be evaluated with the general performance standards and fundamental lawyering skills in mind but also based upon how attorneys at the externship placement site are evaluated. Supervising Attorneys should provide feedback in both the macro and micro contexts.

- **Macro Context:** Feedback regarding the student's overall performance and goal progress.
- **Micro Context:** Feedback regarding each individual assignment. Make sure to provide context for the assignment. Why are you asking the question in the first place? How will you be using the student's work?

3. **Providing Constructive Critique:** Supervising Attorneys should strive to provide coaching feedback although appreciation and evaluation are also useful forms of feedback. For students to get the most out of their externship experience, please follow these guidelines when providing feedback to students on overall performance or on individual assignments.
 - a. **Timely:** Providing timely feedback is a key component. This ensures that feedback is provided when the events/assignments are fresh in mind and allows the student to learn from the experience and make corrections prior to new assignments.
 - b. **Scheduled:** Schedule an appropriate uninterrupted time to speak (or allow the student to schedule an uninterrupted dedicated time to speak with you about their performance).
 - c. **Prepared:** Prepare for the meeting to ensure that you have the facts and can provide detailed feedback.
 - d. **Inquire:** Ask the student for (and listen to) their self-assessment before offering your feedback.

- e. **Direct:** Be direct and offer specific comments and examples.
- f. **Big Picture:** Explain how the assignment/work product impacts the case, other work, common goals, and why it matters, and/or how it will be used.
- g. **Understanding:** Have the student paraphrase your comments back to you to ensure that the student understands the critique.
- h. **Plan:** Ask the student how they can have a positive impact on the situation and, together, identify a clear plan for going forward.
- i. **Consequences:** Make sure that the student understands the consequence of not making corrections or following through with the plan.
- j. **Goal-Setting:** Set goals for improvement and explain what the course of action will be if change is unsatisfactory or if the change exceeds expectations.

Especially when providing corrective feedback, Supervising Attorneys may find the acronym, DESUSA, helpful:

DESCRIBE behavior in a nonjudgmental manner using **EXAMPLES** that are **SPECIFIC**. Ask questions to **UNDERSTAND** what the students was trying to accomplish and listen to why the choices were made. Characterize your reaction to the student's choices in a **SUBJECTIVE** manner. For example, "I think . . .," "In my opinion . . ." If you are giving corrective rather than affirming feedback, describe the **ALTERNATIVES** that you think would have been better with enough specificity to clarify your meaning. Ask the student for suggestions of other alternatives now that discussion may have made the task and your thoughts clearer. Supervising attorney or externship teacher and student may brainstorm together on alternative courses.

XI. TECHNOLOGY USE

A. Externship Placement Office Computers

Students and Supervising Attorneys should discuss office policies about computers at the beginning of the Externship, and students must abide by them carefully. Students should not use computers at Externship

offices for personal matters. Because numerous Penn State Dickinson Law communication and other reporting methods for timekeeping and the like, which are integral parts of the externship experience are available online, using office computers for those tasks should be discussed.

B. Online Research

Online research can be valuable in Externship work, and the law library provides access to a wealth of resources (e.g. <https://pennstatelaw.psu.edu/library/research>).

Students and Supervising Attorneys should be aware of the limits of some online resources. Many of the online vendors (such as Westlaw and Lexis) provide unrestricted access to students, but access is based on the use of a PSU IP address (most often meaning that you are using a computer on campus). Remote online access may be limited by the vendor. Students and their Supervising Attorneys should discuss the allowable use of the online legal research tools available at their Externship office. Students normally may use their law school-related passwords for projects for which they are receiving credit towards graduation, but they must comply with the limits set by the vendors on online access, use of passwords and related issues. Any questions should be directed to the vendors' representatives. If further questions arise, students or their Supervising Attorneys may consult the Supervising Faculty or DEP.

Students should respect that their Externship placement offices may have limited budgets to pay for computerized legal research, so they may lack the extensive computer research capabilities available at the law school. Traditional legal research using statute and rule books, secondary sources and even internally generated resources such as brief banks and other templates, is part of a well-rounded attorney's skillset, and students should engage in it under the guidance of the Supervising Attorney.

Students and Supervising Attorneys should discuss the placement's policies regarding the use of artificial intelligence. Students are responsible for following those policies.

XII. SUPERVISING FACULTY

The Supervising Faculty will teach the academic companion course, evaluate the students' academic performance, and maintain regular communication

with the student and the DEP to ensure the quality of the educational experience. For a complete list of the Supervising Faculty's responsibilities see Part III of the *Memorandum of Understanding*.

XIII. DIRECTOR OF EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The DEP of each location will work together to oversee all aspects of the externship program to ensure the quality of the educational experience. Those responsibilities include: (1) reviewing applications for externship placement, (2) vetting proposed supervisors and placements, (3) supporting Supervising Attorneys and placements, (4) maintaining regular communication with the Supervising Attorneys, and (5) together with Supervising Faculty, evaluating the students' externship performance.

XIV. EMERGENCIES

In case of an emergency with a client, case, or assignment, contact the Supervising Attorney promptly. If appropriate, students should also notify their Supervising Faculty and/or the DEP.

XV. PENN STATE DICKINSON LAW POLICIES

A. Non-Discrimination

Discriminatory conduct and harassment, as well as sexual misconduct and relationship violence, violates the dignity of individuals, impedes the realization of the University's educational mission, and will not be tolerated. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Office, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802-5901, Email: aao@psu.edu, Tel 814-863-0471.

B. Education Equity/Report Bias Statement

Penn State and Dickinson Law take great pride in fostering a diverse and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Acts of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment due to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or veteran status are not tolerated and can be reported through the Office of Student Services or via the Educational Equity Report Bias webpage: <http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/> (Links to an external site.). Sexual or gender-based discrimination, harassment or misconduct may also be reported via the Title IX Response Incident Report Form: <https://titleix.psu.edu/filing-a-report/> (Links to an external site.)