

Mitchell Hamline School of Law
Externships for Blended Learning and Other Part-Time Students
Guidelines for Finding and Planning a Field Placement

To guide you in identifying a field placement:

Learning Goals

Each student interested in an externship is encouraged to reflect on their own learning goals and be intentional in seeking a placement that will help them meet those goals. We encourage students to think creatively about the kind of work that might accomplish learning goals. Once the placement has been identified, each student will be asked to develop an Education Agreement that describes their learning goals and how the work at the selected placement will help achieve those goals.

Keep the following things in mind when considering your learning goals and deciding what kind of a placement will be a good fit for you.

- Learning goals include goals for the skills, knowledge, and professional development growth that you would like to acquire through the externship.
- In establishing learning goals, you should consider:
 - The work environments or settings that interest you (e.g. government, business, courts, private practice, size of organization, organization's mission and audience it serves).
 - The areas of law about which you would like to learn.
 - The specific skills you would like to gain or improve.
 - The kinds of experiences you would like to have.
 - The kinds of activities you like to do.
 - The relationship of the externship experience to your future career goals as a lawyer.
 - The professional connections you would like to develop and career exploration you would like to conduct.
- Examples of common lawyering skills and experiences that may help define learning goals: writing; problem solving; legal analysis and reasoning; legal research; factual investigation; communication; counseling; negotiation; litigation and alternative dispute resolution procedures; organization and management of legal work; and recognizing and resolving ethical dilemmas.
- Work for which you are compensated may qualify as work appropriate for an externship if it meets all requirements for externship placements.

To guide you in developing a work plan with your field site supervisor:

Field Activities

- You and the site supervisor will review your learning goals and work together to develop a list of specific field activities, as well as a description of how those activities will contribute to meeting your learning goals.
- The field activities should provide you with opportunities to:
 - Learn the values and responsibilities of the legal profession.
 - Experience a variety of activities, as opposed to overemphasis on research and writing (note administrative work must be kept to a minimum).

- Be involved as a direct participant, not merely as an observer.
- Develop your ability to assess your performance and level of competence.
- Further your work in career exploration and professional development.

Site Supervision

- A site supervisor with a J.D. must be identified at the externship placement site and agree to supervise and guide you throughout the externship.
- Periodic meetings between you and the site supervisor will be scheduled to discuss the work assigned and review your learning goals. If you are being compensated for externship fieldwork, there must be a synchronous mid-semester meeting among yourself, your faculty supervisor and your site supervisor, which may be held using video conferencing technology.
- You will complete a written Education Agreement in collaboration with your site and faculty supervisors to identify and record the learning goals, field activities, and supervision plans and detail the manner in which the learning goals are to be advanced through your interaction with the site supervisor. The plan for meetings between you and site supervisor is to be included.

Next Steps:

If you would like some guidance in finding a site, please contact your Career and Professional Development Advisor through your Success Network on Starfish. You can also send an email request to careers@mitchellhamline.edu.

Once you have a placement site in mind, please complete the online Proposal Form available through your [Student Records](#). The Office of Career and Professional Development will contact your chosen site to ensure they meet the externship requirements. Once your site has been approved, you will get a notification and the Registrar will register you for the appropriate Blended Learning externship course (now open to other Part-time students as well).