

EXTERNSHIP PROGRAMS

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For more information and Application Packets please go to:
<http://www.usfca.edu/law/externships/judicial/>

Judicial Externship Program

The Judicial Externship Program offers students who meet certain requirements to receive academic credit for unpaid externships with federal and state courts. Judicial externs are required to attend a Judicial Externship Orientation, submit evaluations and weekly timesheets, and complete other assignments. Below are answers to commonly asked questions regarding academic eligibility and the application process.

FAQ's

1. When can I participate in the Judicial Externship Program?

- **Full-time students:** last three semesters of law school (starting spring semester of second year)
- **Part-time students:** during the third and fourth years (i.e. starting the summer following the spring semester of their second year)

Note re International Students: Before submitting an Externship Application, students with visas are advised to consult with the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) regarding any off-campus work authorizations that may be required. (415) 422-2654. See <http://www.usfca.edu/iss/employmentoffcampus/>.

2. Are there any pre-requisite courses?

Students must either already have completed Evidence or be concurrently enrolled in Evidence during the semester of the externship.

3. Is there a minimum GPA requirement?

Minimum Cumulative GPA Requirements:

No. of Academic Units	Minimum GPA
Full-Time Externship for Full-Time Students (13 units)	3.00
Full-Time Externship for Part-Time Students (11 units)	3.00
Half-time (6 units)	2.70
Part-time (3 or 4 units)	2.50

4. How many credits can I get and how many hours of fieldwork are required?

Full-Time Externship for Full-Time Students	13 units = 576 hours → 40+ hours/week (not permitted for externships with superior courts; unavailable during summer session)
Full-Time Externship for Part-Time Students	11 units = 480 hours → 35+ hours/week (not permitted for externships with superior courts; unavailable during summer session)
Half-Time Externship	6 units = 288 hours → 21+ hours/week (unavailable during the summer session)
Part-Time Externship	4 units = 192 hours → 14+ hours/week during fall/spring or 30+ hours/week during summer
Part-Time Externship	3 units = 144 hours → 11+ hours a week during fall/spring or 22+ hours/week during

5. Are there limits to how many out-of-classroom units I can apply toward my J.D. degree?

Yes, keep in mind these Law School policies:

- **Students entering prior to Fall 2011:** to obtain the Juris Doctor degree, students must complete 86 course units including at least 65 units in regularly scheduled law school classroom courses. Non-classroom units include, but are not limited to, the In-House Clinics, Civil Law/Criminal Law/Judicial Externship Programs, school-sponsored international internships, Moot Court, Advanced Moot Court, ASP Tutors, Street Law, the *Intellectual Property Law Bulletin*, the *Maritime Law Journal*, and the *USF Law Review*. Please note that any activity listed under “Special Programs” in the Registrar’s Course Schedule is non-classroom credit.
- **Students entering Fall 2011 and thereafter:** to obtain the Juris Doctor degree, students must complete 84 course units including at least 65 units in regularly scheduled law school classroom courses. Non-classroom units include, but are not limited to, the In-House Clinics, Civil Law/Criminal Law/Judicial Externship Programs, school-sponsored international internships, Moot Court, Advanced Moot Court, ASP Tutors, Street Law, the *Intellectual Property Law Bulletin*, the *Maritime Law Journal*, and the *USF Law Review*. Please note that any activity listed under “Special Programs” in the Registrar’s Course Schedule is non-classroom credit.
- Although you may take advantage of all of these programs during the course of your law school education, you can take only one in-house clinic, civil/criminal law or judicial externship, or Street Law, in any given semester.

6. I’m a full-time student who wants to do a full-time judicial externship. Can I still register for one class as well?

Yes, you may enroll in up to three (3) units in addition to the externship (13 units) for a maximum total of 16 units for the semester, subject to the law school policies above.

7. Can I get a judicial externship outside of the Bay Area?

All externships during the fall/spring semesters **must** be in the San Francisco Bay Area, which includes the counties of San Francisco, Marin, Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo and Santa Clara. During the summer session *only*, students may apply to receive credit for externships outside these counties.

8. Can I get credit for two judicial externships while I’m in law school?

Assuming that the student and court meet all other criteria and requirements, a student may apply to receive academic credit for a second judicial externship as long as 1) they take place in different semesters, and 2) the second externship is with a different type and level of court. For example, a student who previously externed at a state superior court for credit could later apply for credit for an externship at a U.S. District or state/federal appellate court. An externship with a different judge but within the same type and level of court as the previous externship is insufficient; *e.g.*, a student could not receive credit for externships with two different U.S. District Court judges, even if they are located in different cities.

If planning to apply for credit for several externships, please also keep in mind the law school’s policies regarding non-classroom units (see Question 5).

9. Where can I find information on courts?

Attached to the Judicial Externship Application Packet is a list of courts and their contact information that have hosted USF students recently. You may download the Packet from the law school website, which is listed on the cover of the FAQs. Hard copies of the packet may be picked up from Room 235 and outside the FSO in Room 300. The Office of Career Planning also has written guidelines on how to locate and apply to courts for externships.

10. Am I limited to applying to this list of courts?

No. The list attached to the Application Packet contains several links to search for additional courts, and the Office of Career Planning can help you in this search.

11. Are there student evaluations of past externships?

Student evaluations of past externships are on www.USFLawLink.com. Please follow these instructions to view these student evaluations:

- Once logged in, click on the “Resources” tab.
- Once on the Resources page, search using the “Type” field for the externship you are interested in (i.e. Student Externship Evaluation – Judicial Externship).

Please note that if you have a particular court in mind, you may type in the name of the court in the “Keywords” search field.

12. How do I apply to these courts for a judicial externship?

Federal and appellate courts usually prefer to receive by mail a cover letter, resume, writing sample, copy of the transcript, and references. Some superior courts may not require writing samples or transcripts at the outset.

Addressing a court in a cover letter is different than addressing other legal employers. The OCP has written guidelines, which include sample cover letters. The OCP guidelines also include sources to locate court opportunities and judicial profiles. We also recommend that you make an appointment with an OCP counselor to review your cover letter and resume.

The United States District Court for the Northern District of California has an online application website (go to <http://www.cand.uscourts.gov/> and type “Extern Application” in the search box), but note on this website which judges prefer to receive hard-copy applications.

13. How far in advance should I apply for a judicial externship?

The earlier the better. The courts have yet to agree upon uniform deadlines for accepting applications, and judges are free to hire whenever they choose, so anything that delays your application can make a difference. We recommend that you apply to the courts at least 2-3 months in advance of the semester of the externship at a superior court, and at least 3-6 months for an externship with a federal or appellate court.

14. Should I send my applications to the courts based on order of preference?

Yes. If you receive an externship offer from a court, you should respond to the offer within a day or two of receipt. For this reason, we advise that you stagger the mailing of your applications based on the order of interest in these courts.

15. I have an externship offer from an employer. Now what?

Download the Application Packet from the law school website. Complete (typed format is preferable) and submit forms by the deadline listed on the Packet. Please note that some forms need to be completed and signed by your judge or law clerk supervisor. The following forms must be submitted:

- __ *Student Application for Judicial Externship*
- __ *Orientation Attendance and Assignment Confirmation*
- __ *Extern Supervisor and Extern Agreement*
- __ *Statement of Educational Goals for the Judicial Externship*
- __ *Current resume*

16. After I secure an externship offer, by when do I have to submit an Externship Application to your office?

Deadlines are listed on the cover of the Application Packet. The deadline for Fall semesters is usually in early August; deadline for Spring semesters is usually in early December; and the deadline for Summer terms is usually in early April. Please check with the Externship Programs Office for specific deadlines.

17. How do I register for the externship units?

If your externship application is approved, you will receive an email notification from the Externship Programs Office.

** Since most externship applications are submitted and/or approved after the initial class registration period closes, it is recommended that you register for classes as if you are not taking an externship. Once you have been notified by both the Externship Programs Office that your externship has been approved, you will drop your previously registered classes and add the externship units and corresponding class. This process can be done during the add/drop period.**

18. Other than completing my fieldwork hours at my externship, what else do I have to do to earn credit?

Judicial externs must attend an Orientation, which is designed to prepare students for the externship ahead. Students who fail to attend will not receive credit. In addition, externs are expected to complete weekly timesheets and evaluations of their experience, and complete other assignments as directed.

19. I'm interested in receiving credit for a summer judicial externship. Can I do that?

While this is possible, please consider the following:

- Summer externships are treated like any other summer school course. You must register for the externship at the beginning of the summer and you must pay for tuition for each unit. *The unit options during the summer term are 3 and 4 units.*
- *Please see Financial Aid Office for more details about submitting your Intent to Enroll.*
- The last day to register for summer school is usually in May. See Registrar's Course Schedule for official date.
- Full-time students must still pay tuition for subsequent semesters at the Law School. Thus, if you are a full-time student, it may not make financial sense for you to get course credit for summer work. Instead, you might consider performing the work on a volunteer basis. You will still obtain valuable experience while avoiding an increase to your overall costs/debt burden.
- All the aforementioned rules about student eligibility, academic standing, course credit, hours of work required, pre-requisites and co-requisites still apply.