Externship on the Federal Government in Washington, DC
Fall 2017 Notice & Application

INTRODUCTION

The Externship on the Federal Government in Washington, DC is a full-semester offering for third-year law students in the fall semester and second- and third-year law students in the spring. The Externship is a hands-on complement to the Law School’s more conventional courses in public law, affording students the opportunity to study federal government lawyering at the highest levels first-hand.

Admission is by application only. Up to fifteen students will be selected. Rachel Pauley, Director of Government Programs for Social Justice Initiatives, will oversee externship placements, including the application process and term-time counseling.

Externs will apply to participating federal government law offices on a guided basis following admission to the program.

This document describes the Externship, including the application, selection and placement process. Please read it carefully.

The deadline for applications is
Monday, February 13, 2017 at 3pm

Please email your application to rachel.pauley@law.columbia.edu by 3pm on February 13th. Applications should be submitted as a single PDF document.

MANDATORY PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The Externship will be coterminous with the fall 2017 semester. It will include four core components for a total of 12 credits.

1. Intensive Seminar on Ethics in the Federal Government (1 graded academic credit)

   This one-week intensive seminar will explore the unique challenges and responsibilities of ethical law practice in the Federal Government. Topics will include the challenges
of providing legal advice, identifying attorney-client relationships, working with political clients and transitioning between government and related private work. It will also cover statutory and other sources of ethical rules for federal employees and consider opportunities for reform. The course will examine key case studies in depth and may include guest presentations.

Although it covers important ethics topics, this seminar is intended to supplement, not replace, three-credit on-campus courses that satisfy the Law School’s professional responsibility requirement.

This course WILL NOT satisfy the Law School’s professional responsibility requirement.

2. Seminar on Federal Government Lawyering (3 graded academic credits)

This substantive weekly seminar will engage students in a critical examination of the multiple roles lawyers play in federal government offices in DC. Classes will draw heavily on the students’ own experiences and those of guest speakers. Substantive and reflective writing will be required. Class attendance is mandatory. The seminar will meet weekly in the evening, usually on Mondays.

3. Field Placements (8 ungraded clinical credits)

Externs will work full-time (a minimum of 40 hours per week) at their placements for the duration of the spring semester. More information below.

4. Experiential Learning Component

Externs will meet with the Director of Government Programs several times to lay out their semester goals and track progress. Activities will include two breakout sessions, two individual meetings, a visit by the Director to each student’s placement, a retreat and several goal-setting assignments, all with the purpose of enriching students’ learning experience.

OPTIONAL PROGRAM COMPONENTS

1. Optional Supervised Research Paper (1-3 credits + eligibility for Major Writing requirement)

Students may elect to write a substantive research paper on a topic closely related to the Externship and their individual field placement. In addition to providing graded or ungraded credits, papers may satisfy the JD Major Writing requirement. Students will be responsible for obtaining their own faculty supervisors to advise and to grade the work product. Externs may wish to develop their topics in consultation with their placement agencies.
The JD Rules regarding supervised research papers are applicable and should be consulted.

2. Optional Satisfaction of Mandatory Pro Bono Credit Hours

Students who extend their placements beyond the semester can use the additional time toward the 40-hour mandatory pro bono requirement or as voluntary pro bono. Students must file the appropriate pro bono forms with Social Justice Initiatives.

EXTERNSHIP PLACEMENTS

Students selected for the Externship will be counseled about their interests by Rachel Pauley and will apply to positions of interest to them through SJI. It is not expected that more than one extern will work in the same office.

Placement supervisors will be leaders in their field who are committed to ensuring a quality learning experience for students and who will collaborate with Columbia faculty to create a learning agenda that complements the seminar. Rachel Pauley will have primary responsibility for coordination with the field placements during the semester, meeting with students several times and conducting a site visit/meeting with each student and field supervisor.

A list of potential placements in offices that do substantive legal work and that will provide excellent supervision in the executive and legislative branch and independent agencies of the federal government will be distributed to the externs upon their acceptance to the Externship. It is expected that options will include, for example: several sections of the Department of Justice; the Departments of Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Labor and State; the Environmental Protection Agency; the Federal Communications Commission; the Federal Trade Commission; and the Securities and Exchange Commission. Students are not required to choose a placement from this list. There will be a guided placement process that takes into account each student’s interests and goals. Each student will meet individually with the course instructor and/or placement director during this placement process.

PREREQUISITES & OTHER PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

There are no pre-requisite courses for the Externship. However, preference will be given to students who have taken Administrative Law, Legislation and substantive courses related to their proposed placements.

Successful completion of the core components of the Externship will result in the receipt of twelve credits – four graded academic credits and eight ungraded clinical credits.
No more than 30 of the 83 law school credits required for graduation may represent either clinical courses or other courses related to legal training and at least 64 of the required 83 credits must represent regularly scheduled class sessions. Students who have taken clinics or other externships or have received academic credit for supervised research, law review, moot court or other nonresidential classroom activities, or who plan to do so following the Externship, should make sure that they will have the necessary credits to graduate if they take the Externship. It is strongly suggested that, before applying for this externship, students consult Rule 1.1 of the Columbia Law School Rules for the JD Degree and meet with Joel Kosman, Director of Academic Counseling and Student Organizations.

All government agencies perform a background check on their externs before the externs’ work begins. Some agencies also will perform more in-depth investigations required for security clearance. Many government agencies limit eligibility for volunteer positions, including externships, to U.S. citizens. A green card will not be sufficient for those positions and even in the rare situations when a green card is sufficient, the agency and the extern likely will have to go through many time-consuming bureaucratic steps for approval of the placement. This process may not be concluded before the spring semester begins. In addition, students who have spent a significant time abroad in the recent past may confront issues with timing of the clearance process. Students who anticipate that either the clearance procedure or the citizenship requirement will pose a problem to their placements should meet with Rachel Pauley before they apply to the Externship program.

HOUSING & SERVICES

Externs will be responsible for finding and funding their own housing. Previous externs report that both housing and transportation costs in DC are equal to or greater than those they experience in New York City.

Applicants should note that while every effort is made to provide services and support to externs, many on-campus services are not fully replicated for students in the program. Career counseling, judicial clerkship counseling, and other advice services are only available remotely. While Columbia student health insurance will cover care in the Washington, DC area, past participants in the program have reported substantial additional administrative work is required to obtain service. Library, printing, and other services may be available by courtesy arrangement with other schools, but service levels may not match those provided on campus.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE & SCHEDULE

Applications must be received via e-mail by the Social Justice Initiatives office no later than 3 pm on February 13, 2017. Applications must be emailed as a single PDF file to Rachel Pauley at rachel.pauley@law.columbia.edu.
The application consists of one PDF document containing, in this order:

1. A current resume
2. A personal statement (1-2 single spaced pages in 12-pt type with 1” borders maximum) that includes discussion of your:
   a. Reasons for wanting to take the Externship on the Federal Government in DC
   b. Preparation for the externship, with particular attention to work experience and classes taken
   c. Interest and future aspirations, if any, with respect to government and public law work
3. A list of 3-5 specific government agencies at which you may want to work if selected for the Externship. If the list includes the Department of Justice, please specify the division(s) of interest. (This list is solely for the purpose of getting a sense of where you may want to work. There are no “preferred” placements and the list will not be binding during the placement process.)
4. A copy of your Columbia Law School transcript (an unofficial transcript is sufficient).

**SELECTION**

Selection will be based upon candidates’:

- Demonstrated interest in public law and the role of lawyers in the U.S. federal government
- Preparation for the Externship through classes, employment or other activities, not restricted to those done while a student at Columbia Law School
- Prior substantive employment experience, not necessarily relevant to the subject matter of the Externship or to law
- Excellent legal research, analysis, and writing skills

**APPLICATION SCHEDULE**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 7 at 12:10 pm</td>
<td>DC Externship Information Session in JG 105</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 13 at 3 pm</td>
<td>Applications due by email to <a href="mailto:rachel.pauley@law.columbia.edu">rachel.pauley@law.columbia.edu</a></td>
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Please contact Rachel Pauley, Director for Government Programs, at rachel.pauley@law.columbia.edu.