Managing Expectations
Sarah Shalf and Renata Turner
Managing Expectations

(Yours and the Student’s)

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Georgia Association for Legal Externships – January 14, 2014

Agenda

- Job descriptions and application/interview process
- Setting goals
- Midterm re-evaluation
- Assessing final evaluations for expectation mismatches
Job Descriptions
Messaging about student roles

Job Descriptions: Exercise (10 mins)

- Trade job descriptions with your neighbor
- Based solely on the job description (imagining that you are a student):
  - Write down 3 tasks you imagine you would be spending most of your time on, and estimate the percentage of total work time you would spend on these tasks
  - Write down 3 skills you think you would be developing in this placement (if you can tell)
  - Write down up to 3 questions you would have about your role
- Trade back and discuss
Job Descriptions, Application and Interview Process

- Review and update your job descriptions on file with each school
  - Provide concrete examples of tasks past students have completed
  - Provide examples of skills you expect students can develop
- During the interview:
  - Consider providing an info sheet specifically for externs
  - Consider asking the student their goals for the externship

Setting goals
Getting on the same page from the start
Goals are key to managing expectations

- Students don't always know what experiences to expect
- Their expectations are not always realistic
- Discussing goals offer allows both supervisor and student to express expectations and understand what is and is not realistic
- Perfect time to clarify time commitments and schedules

Anatomy of a Goal Sheet

- Explicit
  - Lists specific goals or learning objectives
  - Lists expected assignments/tasks
  - Pairs goals with assignments/tasks
- Agreement
  - Signed by student and/or attorney
- Timely
  - The sooner the better
### Sample Goal Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEMINTER/DATE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLACEMENT EXTERNSHIP SITE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPERVISOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student's Goals/Learning Objective/Expectations</th>
<th>Supervisor's assignments/goals/expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supervisor's Comments/Schedule/Other requirements

Supervisor's Signature

Student's Signature/Certification

### Setting Goals: Role Playing Demo

- **Scenario 1**: Overly eager student who is hoping to be able to have a more significant role than possible
- **Scenario 2**: Student who has very vague/nonspecific goals
Setting Goals: The Goal-Setting Conversation

- Student should come prepared with their draft goals
- Your conversation should focus on
  - Reality checking
  - Making it concrete (examples of tasks)
  - Ensuring your goals for the student will also be met
- Tips
  - Ask for background first: career paths, reasons for doing an externship
  - Ask questions: why do you want to learn this?
  - Use specific examples to ensure you mean the same thing

Midterm Reevaluation

Correcting course
Midterm Reevaluation: Process

- Student is to review goals and assess:
  - Whether they are making progress toward meeting them
  - Whether they need to retool their goals
- Student should have a midterm discussion with you
  - Are they getting the sort of experience they hoped for?
    - If not, re-engage on goals discussion to retool
  - Are they meeting your expectations?
    - If not, set additional more specific goals to help them get there
      - Specific time deadlines
      - Working more narrowly on a specific skill

Midterm Reevaluation: How we can help

- At midterm, we check evaluations for concerns
  - We work with the student to teach them how to address their concerns constructively
  - We work with supervisors to assist them in communicating their concerns to the student and suggesting improvement
- We try to avoid direct intervention, except as a last resort
- If you have any concerns, please contact us!
Assessing Final Evaluations
Identifying problems that result from expectation mismatch

Interpreting Final Evaluations

Supervision concerns vs. expectation-based concerns:

- Supervisor contact:
  - Supervision: Not enough feedback
  - Expectation: Not enough face-to-face time with supervisor, due to work schedules, location of student's desk, etc.

- Work flow:
  - Supervision: Not enough work, or varied/unpredictable work flow with periods of having to search for work
  - Expectation: Not enough of a particular kind of work (courtroom work, client contact), too much of another (research/writing)
Contact us early with concerns!

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