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MEMORANDUM

TO: Students and others interested in Externship Program
FROM: Roy M. Sobelson, Associate Dean; Professors Andi Curcio and Kendall Kerew, Co-Directors, College of Law Externship Program
SUBJECT: Explanation of policies regarding credit for non-Externship work
DATE: May 18, 2010

Thank you for your inquiry about receiving academic credit for on-site work with a program that is not currently an approved College of Law Externship site. Unfortunately, you cannot receive Externship credit for this work experience. And since the only way to receive academic credit for on-site work is through the Externship program, this means that you cannot receive academic credit at all.

To learn more about our Externship program, go to the College of Law Externship website at <http://law.gsu.edu/externships> and examine the policies, forms, and FAQ's. All of your questions should be answered there. What follows is an explanation of how Externships work and why the answer is as stated above.

An Externship is a class for which students earn academic credit. As is true for all classes, students in Externships pay tuition, register in advance in accordance with registration rules and schedules, and agree to meet certain requirements. Like all classes, Externships must comply with ABA and other standards by which we are governed. In fact, ABA inspectors review the entire Externship program, separate and apart from reviews they do of everything else at law schools. And as is true of several other elective courses (most notably, clinics), the College of Law is charged with verifying that all potential registrants meet certain curricular and other requirements before they register and begin their work.

Just like all courses in the curriculum, every individual Externship placement must first be approved by the faculty before it can be offered to students. This process may take anywhere from a few weeks to many months.

In some ways, Externships are obviously different from other classes. They meet off campus and require that students work a certain number of hours per week. They require students to engage in written self-reflection, report to their faculty and Externship supervisors and periodically meet with faculty supervisors. Instead of regular on-campus class meetings, they have a mandatory Orientation class, so as to give the students and

placement lawyers more time to devote to the work to be done on-site.

Since the heart of the Externship experience is on-site legal work, the site supervisors serve as the teachers and mentors for the class. Accordingly, site supervisors are carefully screened to ensure they will provide students with meaningful legal work, mentor students, provide extensive feedback on student work, timely submit student evaluations and otherwise comply with program requirements. Site supervisors must also agree to abide by certain Externship program policies, one of which is that all students must be given equal opportunities to apply. Naturally, that means that all interested students must go through the application process in every semester in which they seek to work at an Externship site. Students who are chosen and offered positions must sign contracts covering their on-site work.

Another difference between Externships and other classes is how Externships gain faculty approval. Before Externship placements are presented to the faculty for final approval, they must first be vetted and approved by the several faculty members and staff who run the Externship program. These faculty members review proposed placements, meet with the applying supervisors, evaluate the nature of the work to be done off-site, and perform a host of other functions. Once they do that, they decide whether there is room for us to take on additional Externships, in light of the fact that our faculty supervisors and staff are already handling dozens of placements at a time. If approval of the placement seems appropriate, it goes to the faculty for a vote.

After a site is approved, students apply to work there. The placement supervisors make the final decisions as to which students are accepted. Once students begin work, students and supervisors alike must meet numerous filing, review and other requirements. As you can see, the Externship program is an extensive one requiring a huge amount of administrative work from the faculty and staff of both the College of Law and the approved sites.

Finally, the College of Law Externship program is limited to government agencies or not-for-profit organizations within the metro Atlanta area. Interested judges and lawyers in such agencies or organizations are encouraged to apply to participate in the program. The Externship website provides all the important information about the application process, as well as the application form. If our faculty supervisors are in a position to take on new placements, they will consider any such application. And if they are in a position to recommend establishment of a new placement site, their recommendation will work its way to the faculty and perhaps into the College of Law program, just as more than fifty other placements have already done.

We hope this explanation is adequate. If not, feel free to contact the Externship staff or faculty or Associate Dean for Academic Affairs with any questions.