Southern Illinois University School of Law  
Public Interest Externship  
Spring 2014  
Course Syllabus LAW 675

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Course Objectives

1. The student will have opportunities at the placement site to study and learn about the functioning of one portion of the legal system and its capacities and limitations. The student will have the opportunity through “observation hours” to view and assimilate other aspects of the legal system and the roles and actions of its participants.

2. The student will observe and practice some of the basic skills lawyers use in carrying out their duties at the placement and will then be able to measure and compare his or her ability to perform the same or similar legal tasks in a professional and competent manner.

3. The student will learn the importance of providing access to the legal system for all persons and the importance of seeking justice for a client or for the public in a manner that protects client rights and serves the client’s needs while also ensuring the integrity of the legal system and the legal profession.

4. The student will improve his or her ability to learn from experience.

Minimum Course Requirements

1. Satisfactorily complete the requisite number of total work hours for the credit hours of enrollment (140 hours for 3 hours credit, 280 hours for 6 hours credit) (47 hours per credit hour).

2. Satisfactorily complete all course assignments and requirements.

3. Satisfactorily complete the requisite number of observation hours for the credit hours of enrollment (20% of the total hours a student is required to perform to earn the credit requested for the course). Observation hours are a part of and not in addition to the total work hours described above.
Other Course Requirements and Assignments:

1. In addition to the other course requirements and assignments set out in this document, students must (1) keep accurate and complete Bi-Weekly Hours Reports and turn them in to Professor Brittingham electronically at mabritt@siu.edu. A copy of this form is on the TWEN page. Reports may also be turned in as attachments to e-mail directed to Professor Brittingham at mabritt@siu.edu. If you have problems with e-mail, contact Professor Brittingham at 453-8744. Time spent completing these forms may be included on Hours Reports.

2. In addition to the Bi-Weekly Hours Reports, students must also participate in any discussions that are on-going on the course TWEN page. Students may be evaluated in relation to others in the class on the content and depth of their discussion submissions on the TWEN page. The purpose of any such TWEN discussion is to encourage students to reflect on the learning experiences they and their classmates are having and to allow students to learn from the observations and activities of all students in the class.

3. Students are responsible for completing a Mid-Term Performance Evaluation, Mid-Term Report, Final Student Performance Evaluation, and Final Report with their field supervisor and turning these in as directed by the schedule below. The forms can be found on the TWEN page under Course Forms.

4. Each student must complete a Placement Evaluation and turn it in by the day indicated on the schedule below. This forms can be found on the TWEN page under Course Forms.

5. All hours and paperwork should be completed and turned in no later than Friday, May 2, 2014.

Observation Hours

Each extern should spend 20% of his or her time observing an attorney or judge engaging in (or directly participating themselves in) the following activities:

- court or administrative hearings; client interviews or intake; conferences with other attorneys or judges; negotiation; arbitration, or mediation sessions; and/or depositions.
- Other activities may be approved upon consultation with the Extern Coordinator.

Individual class meetings, if any, do not count towards observation time regardless of their content.
Learning Plan

Please turn in your learning plan on or before January 17, 2014. You may e-mail it as an attachment to Professor Brittingham at mabritt@siu.edu or to Ms. Carol Manis, his assistant, at cmanis@siu.edu, or turn in to Professor Brittingham at his office in Room 211.

Mid-Term Report

Please turn in your Mid-Term Report on Learning Plan Progress on or before March 17, 2014. You may e-mail it as an attachment to Professor Brittingham at mabritt@siu.edu or to Ms. Carol Manis, his assistant, at cmanis@siu.edu, or turn in to Professor Brittingham at his office in Room 211.

Course Grade/Evaluation

This course is graded satisfactory /satisfactory- / satisfactory+ /unsatisfactory. I generally do not give pluses & minuses for this course.

For many students this class will be the first “real life” experience acting as an attorney. Students will have real clients, real work assignments, be appearing in court and drafting important legal documents, all of which may affect the lives of the individuals involved. Working at an extern site and taking other law school courses is not easy and students will have to learn to set priorities and use time wisely to get everything done. This is just like life as a practicing attorney. The assignments made in this course are carefully planned to help students get the best possible learning experience from the extern placement. The TWEN discussions are also a key component of the course and part of the evaluation of the student’s work for the semester. Students should pay as much attention to class requirements (paperwork, class meetings, assigned reading and exercises) as they do to the actual work at the extern site. Failure to complete all course requirements in a satisfactory and timely manner may result in you receiving an UNSATISFACTORY grade not receiving credit. Use this course to begin your professional career on a good note and create a positive professional image.

Emergency Procedures:
Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT’s website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Safety’s website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and in Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.