

**MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF LAW**

Veronica Valentine McNally
Director of Trial Advocacy & Director of Externships
valent29@msu.edu
(517) 432-6969

2023-24 Academic Year

Dear Potential Externship Site:

You are receiving this letter because a Michigan State University College of Law student is interested in pursuing an externship with your organization. The Michigan State University College of Law Externship Program provides law students with a stimulating and practical educational experience. Externship Sites offer hands-on opportunities to observe the legal and judicial systems and engage in relevant legal work supervised by practicing attorneys or judges.

Students receive academic credit for their semester-long experience. The general educational objectives of the program include: (a) developing professional skills, values, judgment, and identity; (b) learning about professionalism, the practice of law, and the legal system; and (c) becoming reflective practitioners with the capacity for self-directed professional identity formation.



Law College Building
648 N. Shaw Lane
East Lansing, MI 48824

www.law.msu.edu

MSU Law's Externship Program is governed by (1) [the American Bar Association Standards and Rules of Procedure for Approval of Law Schools Standard 304](#) and (2) [MSU Law's Externship Handbook](#). A copy of the handbook as well as a sample externship agreement are attached here for your review.

To receive externship course credit, students must work approximately 10 hours per week over the 14-week fall/spring semester and approximately 20 hours per week over 7 weeks in the summer term. Generally, students cannot receive externship credit even if they complete the hours in fewer weeks. Students must continue working until they satisfy the 14-week or 7-week requirement. A 3-credit externship requires 135 hours of work, a 6-credit externship requires 270 hours, and a 9-credit externship requires 405 hours. This summer, we are offering a 1-credit externship for GOF fellowships. The 1-credit externship requires 45 hours of work.

An externship site must provide students with substantial lawyering experience primarily to benefit the student. A substantial lawyering experience offers students intentional opportunities to learn what advising or representing a client entails. The students should complete planned

activities that develop lawyering skills, legal judgment, identity, and professionalism in the context of cases and clients.

A supervising attorney must provide the student with direct supervision and timely, specific feedback. The feedback should constructively assess the student's lawyering skills and the supervising attorney should advise the student on their strengths and areas of improvement. Supervisors will be asked to provide a mid-semester and final evaluation of the student.

We are happy to answer any questions you may have and look forward to the possibility of a partnership to strengthen the practice of law.

Sincerely,

Veronica Valentine McNally

Veronica Valentine McNally

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF LAW

EXTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

2023-24 Academic Year

For Site Supervisors, Supervising Attorneys, and Student Externs



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I. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF THE EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Michigan State University College of Law Externship Program provides law students with a stimulating and practical educational experience. Externship Sites offer hands-on opportunities to observe the legal and judicial systems and engage in relevant legal work supervised by practicing attorneys or judges. The general educational outcomes of the program include: (a) developing professional skills, values, judgment, and identity; (b) learning about professionalism, the practice of law, and the legal system; and (c) becoming reflective practitioners with the capacity for self-directed professional identity formation.

II. GOVERNING RULES

MSU Law's Externship Program is governed by (1) [the American Bar Association Standards and Rules of Procedure for Approval of Law Schools Standard 304](#) and (2) [MSU Law's Externship Handbook](#).

Please direct any questions to the Externship Director at law.extern@law.msu.edu.

III. EXTERNSHIP ELIGIBILITY & CREDIT ALLOCATION

A. Externship Site Eligibility:

1. MSU Law permits externships with the judiciary, non-profit organizations, governmental entities, corporations, and select law firms. Externships at for-profit locations may be limited to 3-credit placements.
2. An externship site must comply with all MSU Law Externship Program requirements detailed in the MSU Law Externship Handbook, and a site supervisor must sign the Externship Agreement before an externship site will be approved.
3. A supervising attorney must provide the student with direct supervision and timely, specific feedback. The feedback should constructively assess the student's lawyering skills, and the supervising attorney should advise the student on their strengths and areas of improvement.
4. If appropriate, an externship site must provide the student with the resources needed to complete assignments, including access to system networks. If the placement includes in-person activities over a sustained period, an externship site must secure a designated workspace for the student.
5. An externship site is responsible for ensuring that its labor and employment practices comply with state, local, and federal laws related to the externship, including all health and safety guidelines.
6. An externship may be paid or unpaid. Paid externships may be limited to 3 credits. MSU Law is not responsible for monitoring any compensation provided, and any issue regarding compensation is solely between the externship site and the student.
7. Students may not receive academic credit at an externship site where a relative or close family friend would serve as the supervising attorney or have authority over the supervising attorney.

B. Student Eligibility:

1. Students must have completed first-year courses and be in good academic standing (minimum GPA 2.0) to participate in an externship.
2. Students must comply with all MSU Law Externship Program requirements detailed in the MSU Law Externship Handbook and Externship Seminar syllabus.
3. Students must meet all Externship Program deadlines detailed in CASE. Requests for extensions must be made in writing before the deadline. Students should email extension requests to law.extern@law.msu.edu.
4. Students must also comply with the application deadlines of the proposed externship locations.
5. Students must meet all deadlines detailed in the Externship Seminar course syllabus.
6. Students completing an externship for the first time must complete an Externship Orientation session.
7. Students considering a Talsky Center Externship must satisfy additional criteria set by the Director of the Talsky Center for Human Rights of Women and Children.

C. Credit Allocation:

1. To receive externship course credit, students must work approximately 10 hours per week over the 14-week fall/spring semester and approximately 20 hours per week over 7 weeks in the summer term. Generally, students cannot receive externship credit even if they complete the hours in fewer weeks. Students must continue working until they satisfy the 14-week or 7-week requirement.
2. Credit is allocated based on the number of hours a student works during the semester. A 3-credit externship requires 135 hours of work, a 6-credit externship requires 270 hours, and a 9-credit externship requires 405 hours. Externships are graded pass/fail. Students may not complete 9-credit externships during the summer term. Summer externships are billed at a per credit hour rate. Students may not complete more than 9 externship credits.
3. Talsky Center Externships are generally 9-credit externships. Requests for all other 9-credit placements will only be approved for exceptional circumstances. Students requesting a 9-credit placement must complete the 9-credit Request Approval Form located in CASE. Students should email the form to law.extern@law.msu.edu before the externship application deadline. The request must be approved in writing by the Externship Director.
4. For the 2023-24 academic year, students may complete fully remote externships only with the advance approval of the Externship Director.
5. The externship hours requirement does not include travel time to the externship site for in-person externship activities and time spent in the Externship Seminar. Training programs with the externship site are included in the externship hours requirement.
6. Students may not receive credit for work completed at an externship site where the student previously worked unless the proposed externship experience is substantially different than the work performed before. Even when this criterion is demonstrated, repeat work experiences may still not be permitted. Students are encouraged to use externships to pursue different lawyering experiences.

7. Students pursuing a study abroad program and an externship in the same semester must receive written permission from the Externship Director. Students should email requests to law.extern@law.msu.edu in advance of the externship application deadline. The request must be approved in writing by the Externship Director.

8. Students may not participate in a clinic and an externship in the same semester.

The Externship Director will determine if these criteria are met and approve placements.

IV. PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

Externship placements provide students with substantial lawyering experience. A substantial lawyering experience offers students intentional opportunities to learn what advising or representing a client entails. Students must perform legal tasks such as research, analysis, investigation, counseling, or legal writing. Students may not receive academic credit for positions that consist primarily of clerical activities. Non-legal clerical or other tasks should be kept to a minimum.

The opportunity to discuss legal issues of concern in the externship with attorneys or judges at the placement and an opportunity to observe the inner workings of the legal system meaningfully is a critical component of the externship experience. Observing court proceedings or other legal functions is appropriate but should not form the basis for the externship.

V. EXTERNSHIP SUPERVISION

The experience must include direct supervision by a supervising attorney and timely, specific feedback on the student's performance. Students should be introduced to the work and role of the externship office, the working environment, available support resources, and the attorney's or judge's staff with whom the student will work.

A meaningful academic experience requires adequate and appropriate direction in work assignments, including a sufficiently detailed description of the problem assigned, the timeframe in which the student should complete the work, access to the necessary resources, and contact with the supervising attorney or judge for further guidance.

VI. EVALUATION OF EXTERNSHIP AND PLACEMENT

A. Supervising Attorney: During the semester, students should receive a periodic review of their performance in the program. Supervising attorneys will be expected to complete a mid-semester evaluation. After the externship period, supervising attorneys are responsible for providing a final evaluation of the student's work to the Law School. Supervising attorneys are encouraged to share and discuss the evaluations with the student.

B. Student Extern: Students must complete a mid-semester report of the placement for submission to the Law School and share the report with the supervising attorney and seminar professor. After the externship concludes, students are responsible for providing a final evaluation of the externship site to the Law School.

VII. EXTERNSHIP SEMINAR

All externships include a seminar component or other faculty-guided reflection. This component assists students in identifying future employment goals, plans, and opportunities. Students must complete all course requirements, which may include reflective writing assignments and discussions with other students in the Externship Program and timely hour tracking in CASE. The requirements are detailed in the course syllabus. The seminar will appear on a student's transcript. These seminars provide a foundation upon which students can begin their engagement with legal practice and promote a baseline skill level to build upon during their externship. They focus on professional identity formation. Additionally, through a final evaluation submitted to the Externship Director and Seminar Professor, the site supervisor evaluates the student's acquisition of MSU Law's learning outcomes:

- a. Knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law;
- b. Competence in legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem-solving, and written and oral communication in the legal context;
- c. Exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system; and
- d. Other professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession.

VIII. STUDENT-PROPOSED EXTERNSHIPS

In addition to opportunities posted in CASE under Recent Externship Placements, students may propose a new externship placement. After submission of the New Opportunity Form in CASE, provided that the proposed site location meets with the preliminary approval of the Externship Director, students will be directed to submit an executed Externship Agreement to the Director for review for final approval. Students are responsible for sending the Externship Agreement to the proposed externship site for execution and submission to the Career Services Office. Submission deadlines are posted in CASE. Students must also comply with the application deadlines of the proposed externship locations. If the Student-Proposed Externship is approved, the student must comply with all Externship Program requirements.

**MICHIGAN STATE
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EXTERNSHIP AGREEMENT

2023-24 Academic Year

Student Extern: _____ Semester/Year: _____

Student Extern Email Address: _____ Credits Requested: _____

Externship Site (Name of Organization): _____

Externship Site Type: Business/Industry Education Law Firm Gov't
 Public Interest Judicial Internship Other _____

Externship Site Website: _____

Externship Site Supervisor (Person in Authority at Externship Site): _____

Externship Site Supervisor Email Address: _____

Externship Site Supervisor Phone Number: _____

Supervising Attorney: _____

(If different from Site Supervisor above)

Supervising Attorney Email Address: _____

Supervising Attorney Phone Number: _____

SAMPLE

Michigan State University College of Law's Externship Program relies on an ongoing collaboration between the Externship Site Supervisor, Supervising Attorney, Student Extern, and the Externship Director. Questions regarding this Agreement may be emailed to law.extern@law.msu.edu.

The Externship Program is governed by (1) [the American Bar Association Standards and Rules of Procedure for Approval of Law Schools Standard 304](#) and (2) [MSU Law's Externship Handbook](#).

To maintain integrity and ensure the standards of the Externship Program, all participants in the Program shall adhere, at a minimum, to the standards as outlined below. This Agreement will be reviewed for approval by the Externship Director.

Externship requests are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If the Agreement is approved, a copy of the executed Agreement will be emailed to the Externship Site. Student Externs can access the executed Agreement in CASE.

A. EXTERNSHIP SITE SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

As the Externship Site Supervisor, I agree to:

1. I have reviewed the [MSU Law's Externship Handbook](#) and agree to abide by the Program requirements.

2. The Externship Site Description below describes the work performed by our office. Please attach additional pages if you need more space for your response. **[Completion of this section is required]:**

3. The Student Extern will be exposed to these areas of law (select all that apply):

Administrative

Arbitration/Mediation

Bankruptcy

Business

Civil Rights

Commercial

Contracts

Criminal

Domestic Relations/Family Law

Education

Elder

Employment/Labor

Entertainment

Estates/Trusts/Wills

Health Care

Immigration

IP

Juvenile

Real Estate

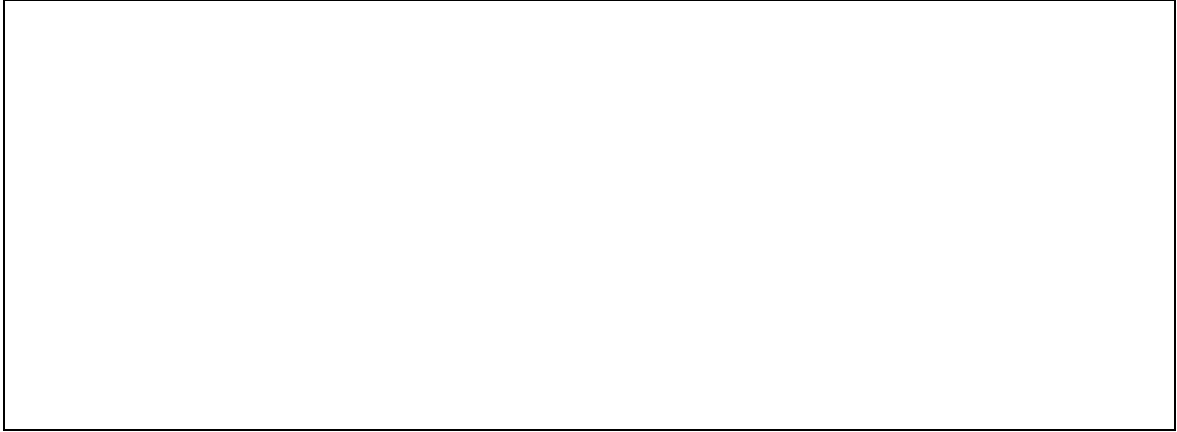
Social Security

Taxation

Workers Compensation

Other (please fill in) _____

4. The Externship Site Description below describes the substantial lawyering experience and opportunities for performance available to the Student Extern. A substantial lawyering experience offers students intentional opportunities to learn what advising or representing a client entails. The students should complete planned activities that develop lawyering skills, legal judgment, identity, and professionalism in the context of cases and clients. Please attach additional pages if you need more space for your response. **[Completion of this section is required]**:



5. I have the authority or have been delegated authority to enter into an agreement with MSU Law to be an Externship Site.
6. I will ensure that each Extern has a Supervising Attorney primarily responsible for the supervision of the Student Extern at the Externship Site, as outlined below in Section B. If I am serving as the Supervising Attorney and the Site Supervisor, I agree to the responsibilities outlined below in Section B.
7. I will ensure that the Externship Site facilitates a method of orientation, which shall include a discussion of the rules, policies, procedures, methods, and operation of the Externship Site, confidentiality rules, and an overview of the work and expectations of the Student Extern.
8. If the placement involves remote work, I will provide the Student Extern with the resources to complete assignments, including access to system networks, if appropriate. If the placement includes in-person activities over a sustained period, I will secure a designated workspace for the Student Extern.
9. MSU is committed to an inclusive atmosphere where students, faculty, staff, and guests may participate in university life without concerns of discrimination. Diversity is one of MSU's principal strengths and the university takes its responsibility under federal civil rights laws to prohibit discrimination very seriously. The Anti-Discrimination Policy, or ADP, outlines the types of prohibited discrimination and harassment at MSU. Under the ADP, university community members are prohibited from engaging in acts which discriminate against or harass any university community member on the basis of age, color, gender, gender identity, disability status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status or weight. <https://civilrights.msu.edu/policies/index.html>

The MSU College of Law prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of age, race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, military status, veteran status, age, disability status, marital status, height, political persuasion, and weight. <https://www.law.msu.edu/disclaimer.html>

10. MSU has established the Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct and Title IX Policy in keeping with the university's commitment to fostering a safe and inclusive campus community. The policy, administered by MSU's Office for Civil Rights (MSU OCR) prohibits sexual harassment, including gender-based harassment, sexual assault/misconduct, relationship violence and stalking. For complete information, including definitions contained in the policy, read the Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct and Title IX Policy. <https://civilrights.msu.edu/policies/index.html>
11. I will observe the MSU and MSU Law policies detailed above in Paragraphs 9 and 10 while supervising the Student Extern.
12. I will maintain communication with the Externship Director regarding any issues related to the Student Extern, Supervising Attorney, and/or the Externship Site. I understand the Externship Director may require a training session for the Supervising Attorney and schedule a virtual site visit before or during the Externship.
13. Upon request, I will provide to the Externship Director, or the Supervising Attorney, the Student Extern's workspace and work-product to the extent that it does not violate attorney/client privileges, and any other information reasonably requested by the Externship Director.
14. My organization is responsible for ensuring that our labor and employment practices complies with local, state, and federal laws as it relates to the Externship.

SAMPLE

B. SUPERVISING ATTORNEY'S RESPONSIBILITIES

As the Supervising Attorney, I agree to the following:

1. I have reviewed the [MSU Law's Externship Handbook](#) and agree to abide by the Program requirements.
2. I have the authority or have been delegated authority to supervise the Student Extern and designate a portion of my work time to supervise the Student Extern. I understand the student is receiving academic credit for this work. I understand that the Externship Director may require a syllabus that details the learning objectives for the Externship and my participation in a training session.

3. I am either: (1) a licensed attorney admitted to practice for at least three years, (2) a judge serving on the bench, or (3) otherwise qualified to supervise the Student Extern. If I am not a licensed attorney or judge, my role at the Externship Site is described below.

4. I accept primary responsibility for the supervision of the Student Extern at the Externship Site.
5. I will supervise and mentor the Student Extern throughout the semester.
6. I will observe the Nondiscrimination, Anti-Harassment and Non-Retaliation policies of MSU and MSU Law detailed above in Section A in Paragraphs 9 and 10, while supervising the Student Extern. To review the full notice, please visit:
<https://civilrights.msu.edu/policies/index.html> & <https://www.law.msu.edu/disclaimer.html>

7. The Student Extern has **not** worked at this Externship Site. **If they have worked at this location,** I have described below how the work will be substantially different in the semester in which the Student Extern will receive credit than the work performed before. This explanation includes (a) the scope and nature of the previous work or volunteer relationship, (b) the dates of the previous work or volunteer experience, (c) the names of the lawyers(s) or judge(s) who directly supervised the previous work or volunteer experience and the names of the lawyer or judge who will directly supervise the proposed externship work, and (d) the proposed work planned for the Externship with an explanation of how it differs substantially from the previous work or volunteer experience.

8. If the placement involves remote work, I will provide the Student Extern with the resources to complete assignments, including access to system networks, if appropriate. If the placement includes in-person activities over a sustained period, I will secure a designated workspace for the Student Extern.
9. I will maintain communication with the Externship Director regarding any issues related to the Student Extern, Supervising Attorney, and/or the Externship Site.
10. I will meet with the Student Extern at the start of the semester to review the Student Extern's goals/expectations for the Externship. I will also indicate any additional goals/expectations I have for the Student Extern.
11. I will complete the Mid-Semester Evaluation and meet with the Student Extern to review his/her performance and discuss whether the Student Extern is meeting all identified goals/expectations.
12. I will complete the Final Evaluation of the Student Extern at the end of the semester. I will meet with the Student Extern to discuss his/her performance and provide specific, individualized feedback regarding the Student Extern's overall performance.
13. In assigning work, I will clearly describe the task to be completed, set forth my objectives for the assignment, and discuss the relationship of the work to the larger substantive, procedural, and/or practical issues about the matter assigned.
14. As appropriate, I will include the Student Extern in discussions of strategy and implementation which arise out of matters handled by the Externship Site.
15. In general, I will not assign the Student Extern clerical tasks other than those regularly undertaken by attorneys in the office (e.g., filing, photocopying, errands, etc.).
16. In supervising the Student Extern, I will keep in mind the objectives of the Externship: to explore the Student Extern's developing professional identity as a lawyer; to develop practices necessary to self-directed professional learning, including goal-setting and reflective skills for future law practice; to develop strategies to help initiate and sustain professional relationships; to develop strategies to facilitate working with others toward a common goal; to develop a deeper understanding of key communication skills; to develop strategies to interact effectively with people across cultural differences; to develop a sense of professional responsibility; to develop time management techniques including timekeeping, meeting deadlines and managing multiple assignments; and to observe and critique a specific practice area and how the legal system works.

SAMPLE

17. I will be available to meet with the Student Extern as needed to provide support and feedback on assignments. I will consistently provide timely, specific feedback to the Student Extern on his/her work. The feedback will constructively assess his/her lawyering skills and advise the Student Extern on his/her strengths and areas of improvement. I have described *in detail* below how I will provide feedback (i.e., oral/written). Please attach additional pages if you need more space.

18. I understand that a Student Extern may receive compensation for the work they perform while receiving academic credit. However, compensated externships may be limited to 3-credit externships. *For-profit placement locations should review the U.S. Department of Labor's [Fact Sheet #71: Internship Programs Under The Fair Labor Standards Act](#) to determine whether students working for "for-profit" employers are entitled to minimum wages and overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).* The Law College is not responsible for monitoring any compensation provided, and any issue regarding money exchanged is solely between the Externship Site and the Student Extern. Please check one. **Completion of this section is required.**

The Student Extern will be compensated for this Externship.

The Student Extern WILL NOT be compensated for this Externship.

SAMPLE

C. STUDENT EXTERN RESPONSIBILITIES

As a Student Extern, I agree to the following:

1. I have reviewed the MSU Law Externship Handbook and agree to abide by the Program requirements.
2. I understand that fully remote externships require the approval of the Externship Director.
3. I understand that if I work at a for-profit placement location (i.e., law firm or corporation) or receive compensation for my Externship, I may be limited to a 3-credit externship.

4. I will perform the assigned work at my Externship Site over 14 weeks in the fall/spring semester and 7 weeks during the summer term. I will track my Externship hours in CASE. I elect the following number of credits. **[Completion of this section is required]:**

3 credits - 135 hours

6 credits - 270 hours

9 credits – 405 hours (Other than Talsky Center Externships, 9-credit placements require permission from the Externship Director).

5. I understand that the purpose of the Externship Program is to grant me the opportunity to receive hands-on lawyering experience and, in doing so, I must be familiar with and abide by the appropriate jurisdiction's Rules of Professional Conduct and other rules, guidelines, or policies applicable to my Externship Site.
6. I understand that any familial relationship may be grounds for the Externship not being approved.

No one at this site is related to me.

Yes, I am related to someone at this site.

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

7. I will follow directions, seek clarification and advice promptly, and comport myself with professionalism and integrity at my Externship Site, including maintaining compliance with the jurisdiction's Rules of Professional Conduct and other rules, guidelines, or policies applicable to my Externship Site, and protecting all confidential and privileged information.
8. I will articulate specific measurable goals and discuss both my goals and strategies for achieving them with my Supervising Attorney and Seminar Professor at the beginning of the semester. I will assess my progress in meeting my articulated goals throughout the semester.
9. I will complete the Externship Program's academic component, which includes participating in the Externship Seminar and the timely submission of all evaluations, reflection papers, timesheets, and/or other assignments required by my Seminar Professor, and the Externship Director.
10. I understand that I must complete my Externship during the dates outlined in CASE.
11. I will reflect on and self-assess my lawyering competencies throughout the Externship experience through my reflection papers.
12. I will promptly bring any issues related to my Externship Site to the attention of the Externship Director. I understand that action may be required to address concerns. I understand that the Associate Dean for Experiential Education has the sole discretion to determine the appropriate action.

D. EXTERNSHIP DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

As the Externship Director, I agree to the following:

1. I will review all forms submitted by the Student Extern to ensure that they are adhering to the requirements of the Externship Program and that the Student Extern is receiving substantial lawyering experience.
2. I will provide training materials to the Site Supervisor and/or Supervising Attorney.
3. I will communicate with the Site Supervisor and/or Supervising Attorney about the Student Extern and the Externship Site to ensure the quality of the educational experience.
4. I will communicate with the Seminar Professor in evaluating the Student Extern's goals and academic performance during the Externship. The assessment will be based on the Student Extern and Supervising Attorney Evaluations, timely compliance with requirements of both the Seminar and the Externship Site, the quality of the self-reflection, and professionalism. Based on this evaluation, I will determine whether credit should be granted to the Student Extern.
5. I will be available throughout the semester should any concerns or issues arise.

SIGNATURES: We have reviewed this document and agree to act in accordance with these expectations:

Externship Site Supervisor

Date

Supervising Attorney

Date

Student Extern

Date

Externship Director

Date

Externship Site Supervisor or Supervising Attorney: Please email the completed form to law.extern@law.msu.edu. A typewritten signature will suffice.