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## **FIELD PLACEMENT SUPERVISOR HANDBOOK**

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## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Chase College of Law's Field Placement Program consists of two types of courses: 1) a field placement, where students earn academic credit for working in real-world legal settings under the supervision of an attorney or other approved legal professional; and 2) a classroom component, where students reflect upon their field placement experiences and professional development under the supervision of the Field Placement Director or other law professor. Chase's Field Placement Program includes three types of placement courses:

- The Field Placement Clinic, an introductory externship experience in which students work for the first time in a designated placement setting for 150 hours or fewer during the semester;
- The Advanced Field Placement Clinic, in which students work in a second or subsequent field placement for 150 hours or fewer during the semester; and
- Semester in Practice, a more intensive externship in which students work between 200 and 600 hours at their placement during the semester.

Chase also offers a Field Placement Seminar classroom course, as well as an Advanced Field Placement Seminar course, both of which operate online to allow students to work at remote field placement locations. All students enrolled in a field placement course must also be concomitantly enrolled in a seminar.

As legal externs, students are literally professionals in training. They deal with issues and work on assignments that affect the lives of real people. This is an opportunity for students to begin their legal careers in the most positive, professional way. The Field Placement Program also helps students to develop their own learning goals, reflect on their experience, and regulate their own learning. They are encouraged to embrace the opportunities and struggles that will come to them over the course of the semester and to take the time to analyze them.

Students earn field placement credits based upon a ratio of 50 work hours equaling 1 academic credit. Students also receive an additional 1 credit hour for completion of the required seminar.

## **COURSE GOALS/LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- To understand what the day-to-day work of a legal professional entails and to develop an appreciation for the challenges of practice and/or a technical work experience.
- To develop useful and practical skills, both legal and non-legal, that will translate to real-world legal practice and/or technical work that mirror the practice of law.
- To integrate subject-specific legal doctrine appropriate to and implicated by each field placement into the real-world practice of law.

- To increase understanding of professionalism and professional responsibility and to work towards an individual professional identity.
- To develop the habits of a reflective practitioner and lifelong learner.
- To interface with legal professionals in a variety of settings and to observe and reflect upon how the conduct of lawyers impacts clients, lay persons, and social and political structures.
- To identify and adopt the behaviors of successful legal professionals and to distinguish and reject behaviors, work practices, and analytical skills that are not successful.
- To enable thoughtful choices about what kind of lawyer or professional students want to become and what kind of work they desire and/or reject.

### **THE ROLE OF THE FIELD PLACEMENT SUPERVISOR**

In any field placement program, the ability of the student to achieve the goals of the program and her or his own educational goals depends on the quality of the student's relationship to the supervising attorney or judge and the advisor's methods of supervision. The success of field placement programs depends on the willingness and ability of supervising attorneys to serve as role models and educators. A good attorney's skills are not necessarily those of a good supervisor. Good supervision requires certain skills, techniques, and attitudes which can be learned and applied effectively. The field supervisor should meet regularly with the student to discuss the student's goals and whether the student is meeting those goals in the field placement experience.

An essential component of effective supervision is a reasonable supervisor-to-student ratio. One attorney or judge may not supervise more than four law students at any time. The law school recommends a one-to-one ratio between students and field supervisors. Further, the supervisor must be a licensed practicing attorney for three years prior to undertaking supervision of a law student, have no recent disciplinary action, and may not be an immediate family member of the law student.

The Field Placement Clinic Director or other law school faculty appointed by the Director to act on her behalf may conduct at least one in-person site visit or conference call during the semester. This site visit enables the Director and the Field Supervisor to discuss the student's goals, performance, successes, opportunities for improvement, and general work plan.

The Field Placement Supervisor also participates with the Field Placement Clinic Director in determining an appropriate grade for the student in the field work component of the student's externship. Field Placement Supervisors make a recommendation to the Field Placement Clinic Director as to grading, which will be accepted and followed by the Director in all but the most extraordinary of circumstances. Field Placement Supervisors may select between fail, pass, or high pass for a student's grade. Failing grades should be reserved for those students who do not meet the minimum hours required for their credits and/or who do not meet the barest minimum levels of competence in their performance. High pass grades should be reserved for those students who

demonstrate extraordinary performance at their placements, functioning at or above the levels of competence expected of practicing attorneys in the organization.

## **PRINCIPLES OF SUPERVISION**

- 1. Provide a variety of well-defined legal tasks that encourage the learning of a range of legal skills and that meet the student's educational goals. The student and supervisor should discuss the student's goals at the outset of the field placement and throughout the semester.**

Students should be exposed to and given an opportunity to participate in the legal work of the placement. For a student to work and learn effectively, the supervisor should clearly explain the assigned task and should describe the purpose of the task within the context of the entire case or issue on which the supervisor is working. Narrow research projects may help the supervisor and be appropriate student projects, but the student will learn more if she or he understands how a project or issue affects legal decision making or the tactics of a case. Many students arrive at a placement with little or no academic or practical experience in the field of law undertaken by their placement site. Therefore, the supervisor should explain carefully the scope of the project, the work necessary to complete it, and expected timelines. Even if the written work is less expedient, students need experience and practice in synthesizing their research into a coherent written product.

The best field placements offer a variety of experiences, in addition to the traditional tasks of conducting legal research and drafting legal memoranda. Good field placements may include observation of courts, judges, and lawyers; meetings; conferences; negotiations; and telephone communications; as well as discussions of the supervisor's interactions when completed. Whenever possible, students should be allowed to participate in the work they have observed. Students should not be used as runners, file clerks, secretaries, or personal assistants, but should be given work appropriate for lawyers within the organization.

- 2. Provide the student with insight into the workings of the legal system and profession.**

A student benefits greatly when she or he can be immersed in a particular aspect of the law or of a legal office. In order to achieve this, the supervisor should expose the student to a variety of situations in the supervisor's practice, and the supervisor should take the time to discuss what the student observes. In some field placements, students spend large amounts of time in relative isolation in the library. These students will not have a significantly better idea of the functioning of the legal system as a result of this experience. Even a student engaged in substantial research should contribute to the analysis and application of that research. Therefore, a supervisor should explain the context in which an assignment arises, and whenever possible, allow the student to see the application of the work product.

- 3. Develop professional responsibility skills through observation and application in the workplace.**

Professional Responsibility is a required course in the law school curriculum. The field placement can supplement classroom learning by providing opportunities to see or be involved with actual ethical decisions that confront practicing attorneys daily in court, in boardrooms, with clients,

with jurors, and in conflict situations. All of these situations should generate valuable lessons in professional responsibility. The field placement is an excellent opportunity to learn more about obligations to the client or the court, to explore the limits of client confidentiality, to learn to meet deadlines, and to learn basic work habits and skills. The supervisor should be appropriately critical when a student has failed to meet professional responsibility goals and encouraging when a student successfully navigates an ethical issue. Supervisors should be alert to professional responsibility issues and raise them with externs as such issues present themselves.

#### **4. Develop the student's ability to learn from experience, including critical professional feedback on performance.**

Feedback on written work, oral communication, legal strategy, legal judgment, and other tasks is essential in field placements. Meaningful feedback requires very specific information. It involves careful observation of student performance or work product and tactful honesty in communicating the supervisor's views. A student learns nothing constructive from comments such as "good job" or "you'll do better next time." The supervisor should provide specific examples of what the student said, did, or wrote with a clear and detailed explanation as to why the work was sufficient or inadequate. Good feedback assures that the student fully understands the strengths and weaknesses of her or his performance in order to improve upon it in future assignments.

Supervisors should strive to give students an opportunity to learn self-evaluation skills. The supervisor and student should engage in constructive dialogue to encourage the student to recognize mistakes and successes in judgment, performance, and legal analysis. Consider scheduling regular meetings regarding these skills.

Generally, students learn more effectively when supervision is non-directive and student centered. Rather than telling a student exactly what to do and where to find the answer, a supervisor should explain the context of an issue and the nature of the assigned task, discuss the student's reaction to the problem, help the student form problem-solving strategies, and agree upon a schedule for the project and the form of the student's final work product. Supervisors are encouraged to hold regular meetings with the extern to discuss progress, to avoid misdirection, and to assess the nature of the issues in light of the student's work to date.

The law school encourages all field supervisors to discuss their views of the legal system candidly and openly with students. Even the most insightful students will learn more by hearing the opinions of their supervisors about the range of issues concerning law practice and roles of lawyers in the institutions in which they are involved.

### **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

Consistent with the principles of supervision, field placement supervisors must:

1. Commit to provide students with tasks and assignments that are lawyer-level within the organization and commit to provide students with multiple opportunities for performance of law-related skills;

2. Commit to provide students with substantive, meaningful feedback on the student's performance throughout the semester and to closely supervise the student's work and work product;
3. Regularly communicate with the Field Placement Director regarding the student's progress and performance. This contact will at a minimum include an initial introductory phone call or site visit, a mid-semester phone call, and a final evaluation at the conclusion of the semester; and
4. Execute a confidentiality agreement and a work contract specifying the student's anticipated schedule, types of work, and opportunities for performance and review and sign off on the student's specified educational goals for the placement and action plan for achieving those goals. Copies of these forms are attached at the back of this Handbook.

### **COMPENSATED FIELD PLACEMENTS**

Chase permits students to simultaneously be compensated for their field placement work, either by the placement itself or through grants, scholarships, or other outside funding, and to earn academic credit. All compensated field placements must comply with the following policy:

1. The student must meet in advance with the Field Placement Director prior to enrolling in a field placement course and must disclose the fact that the student intends to receive compensation for the placement;
2. Prior to the commencement of the field placement, the Field Placement Director will communicate with the field placement supervisor regarding the nature of the field placement, the student's educational goals and objectives, and the requirement that the placement exist primarily for the student's education and not the supervisor's organizational needs;
3. The student and the field placement supervisor must execute a written work contract indicating that the primary purpose of the placement is the student's education and indicating the skills and substantive performance opportunities the student will obtain at the placement;
4. The student may not receive academic credit for work that is non-legal in nature or that is not attorney-level work within the field placement organization (i.e. copying files with no educational purpose, making coffee). In other words, if the student is asked to undertake a non-legal activity for compensation, the student may be paid for the activity but may not report the work on his or her weekly timesheet for the field placement program.; and
5. In the event the student is terminated from employment prior to completing his or her field placement hours, the student will locate a substitute placement, which may or may not provide compensation to the student.

### **FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT POLICIES**

Chase believes there are times when a student can get an unmatched educational experience in a for-profit, private sector setting and therefore allows some students to be placed in field placements in such settings. However, when these placements are approved, it is all the more essential that the

organization understand the field placement is an educational experience undertaken for the benefit of the student. In order to fully comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act, the following six criteria, approved by the Department of Labor, must be met:

1. The field placement is similar to training which would be given in an educational environment;
2. The field placement experience is for the benefit of the student;
3. The student does not displace regular employees, but works under close supervision of existing staff;
4. The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the student, and on occasion its operations may actually be impeded;
5. The student is not necessarily entitled to a job at the conclusion of the field placement; and
6. The employer and the student understand that the student is not entitled to wages for the time spent in the field placement.

### **HOW STUDENTS ARE PLACED**

Chase maintains an online database of preapproved field placement locations, but students are also welcome to create their own field placement experience, subject to the approval of the Field Placement Director, by connecting with lawyers, law firms, judges, nonprofits, government agencies, or other legal placements of their choosing. Students directly apply to field placement locations, and supervisors are free to accept or reject individual students based on whether the student appears to be a good fit for the organization. Supervisors are also free to set minimum criteria for student applicants, including requiring certain coursework, GPA levels, or work experience. Chase never forces a field placement location to accept students, and Chase also never forces students to work at a particular field placement location.

### **HOW TO ENROLL AS A PREAPPROVED FIELD PLACEMENT LOCATION**

To be listed in Chase's online database of preapproved field placements, supervisors should contact the Field Placement Director with a description of the office and the type of work the student would be undertaking. Supervisors should then complete the New Field Placement Information Form (found on the Chase website) and return it to Prof. Jennifer Kinsley at [kinsleyj1@nku.edu](mailto:kinsleyj1@nku.edu). Once a placement is listed in the database, it will continue to appear to students until the supervisor requests for the listing to be withdrawn.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have any questions regarding the Field Placement Program, please contact Professor Jennifer Kinsley, Field Placement Program Director, at [kinsleyj1@nku.edu](mailto:kinsleyj1@nku.edu) or 859.572.7998.





**FIELD PLACEMENT CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

As a student enrolled in the Field Placement Clinic, the Advanced Field Placement Clinic, and/or the Semester in Practice program at the Northern Kentucky Salmon P. Chase College of Law, I understand that I may be exposed to information in my field placement that is subject to the attorney-client privilege, work-product privilege, and/or other legal, ethical, or privacy protections. By signing this agreement, I certify that I have reviewed Rule 1.6 of the Ohio Rules of Professional Conduct (Confidentiality of Information) and Rule 3.130 of the Kentucky Supreme Court Rules (Confidentiality of information). I understand that I am bound by the confidentiality rules applicable to the state in which my placement occurs, and I agree to abide by the applicable confidentiality rules during externship. I also understand that attorney-client privilege and other confidentiality rules continue to apply to confidential client information I received in my placement after my externship has concluded.

I understand and agree that failure to adhere to the appropriate confidentiality rules may result in, but is not limited to, the following sanctions: 1) receiving a failing grade in the Field Placement Clinic, 2) termination from the Field Placement Clinic and loss of academic credit, 3) other university disciplinary sanctions, and 4) report to the applicable Bar Association and/or Character and Fitness review committee.

I further understand that I may discuss any questions, issues, or concerns relating to client confidentiality with my field placement supervisor and/or with the Director of the Field Placement Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Location of Field Placement

\_\_\_\_\_  
Semester/Year

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, Field Placement Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, Director of Field Placements

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



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**FIELD PLACEMENT WORK CONTRACT**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Semester (circle one): Spring Fall Summer Year: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Credits: \_\_\_\_\_

Field Placement Firm/Agency/ Court: \_\_\_\_\_

Field Placement Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

**I. SCOPE OF PLACEMENT**

This work contract shall serve as the written understanding required by ABA Standard 304(c)(iii) and shall outline the understanding of the student, the site supervisor, and the faculty director as to the nature, substance, and scope of the student’s field placement experience.

It is the parties’ mutual understanding that the placement is for the educational benefit of the student. While participating in the placement, all parties agree that the student shall have a substantial lawyering experience. More specifically, the student shall have the opportunity to participate in one or more of the following lawyering tasks (check all that apply):

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drafting legal documents      | <input type="checkbox"/> Client interaction                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Client counseling/management  | <input type="checkbox"/> Fact investigation                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewing                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal research                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Negotiation                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Business development/marketing      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Issue-spotting/legal analysis | <input type="checkbox"/> Courtroom observation/participation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading skills                | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative analysis                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Law practice management       | <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory compliance               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal strategizing            | <input type="checkbox"/> Oral communication                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professionalism/Ethics        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                        |

The student shall be given multiple opportunities to perform the indicated tasks, and feedback will be given by the site supervisor on the work product submitted by the student on site, as well as through a formal evaluation process at the conclusion of the semester. In addition, the student will participate in self-evaluation exercises as part of the Field Placement Seminar that will deepen the student’s understanding of his/her strengths and areas for improvement. The student’s performance on

site shall be evaluated by the site supervisor, while the student's performance in the Field Placement Seminar shall be evaluated by the Field Placement Director. The Field Placement Director shall assign a pass/fail grade to the student for his/her field work based upon input from the site supervisor.

## II. STUDENT OBLIGATIONS

By signing this contract, I agree to work a total of \_\_\_\_\_ hours at my field placement during the semester. My work schedule is (include days of the week and hours):

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I will notify my supervisor at least 24 hours in advance of any planned absences and will provide notice if I will be more than 5 minutes late to any schedule work day or meeting.

I will conduct myself in a professional and ethical manner at all times during my placement. I have reviewed the applicable Code of Professional Responsibility and am aware of my professional obligations.

I will complete all work assignments in a timely fashion to the best of my ability and will provide advanced notice to my supervisor if I will be unable to complete an assignment by the deadline given to me.

## III. SUPERVISOR OBLIGATIONS

I agree to supervise the student for \_\_\_\_\_ hours of work during the semester at my legal organization. I agree to provide the student a workspace and/or computer or library resources as needed to complete the externship.

I agree to provide the student meaningful opportunities to observe and to participate in the day-to-day operations of my legal organization.

I agree to provide feedback and constructive commentary on the student's performance throughout the semester to both the student and the Field Placement Director and to submit the required student evaluation form to the Director at the conclusion of the semester.

By signing this agreement, I warrant that I am a person with sufficient authority in my organization to bind the organization to this educational plan.

## IV. SCHOOL OBLIGATIONS

As Director of the Field Placement Program, I agree to provide classroom instruction on ethics, professionalism, substantive legal doctrine, and reflective learning to the student. I also agree to provide educational support and supervision to the student during his/her externship.

I agree to discuss the student's performance and experience at the field placement regularly during the semester with the student and the site supervisor, including at least one in-person site visit or conference call at which both the student and the supervisor are present. These discussions will

focus on the opportunities the student has had to participate in the substantial lawyering tasks identified above.

I agree to submit a student evaluation form to the supervisor at the conclusion of the semester and to provide feedback where appropriate to the student on his/her performance in the Field Placement Seminar.

I agree to serve as a resource for both the student and the supervisor in the event of any placement-related difficulties or conflicts.

Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director, Field Placement Clinic

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



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### **FIELD PLACEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

What are your goals and objectives for your field placement this semester? Contemplate your goals in terms of who, what, when, where, why, and how. What do you want to learn this semester? What types of cases, clients, or situations would you like to observe? Who do you want to meet or get to know? What skills would you like to develop or improve? When and how will you accomplish these goals? Why are you pursuing this externship?

Once you have answered these questions, carefully select 2-5 concrete and specific goals for your placement this semester and articulate how you plan to go about accomplishing your goals. Be as specific as possible in your goals statements (i.e. observe one court proceeding per week, draft a business contract). Be purposeful in your action plan.

After you have completed the chart, use this document to initiate a conversation with your supervisor about your goals. Have your supervisor initial the document and then return it to Prof. Kinsley via email at [kinsleyj1@nku.edu](mailto:kinsleyj1@nku.edu).

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

<b>GOAL/OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>ACTION PLAN</b>