COVID-19 Gonzaga Law Externship Program Policy

As you are well aware, the rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus is disrupting our normal way of being, especially our students’ ability to attend classes at the law school and continue externing at their externship field placement sites. On March 12, 2020, the President of Gonzaga send a message to students, outlining the steps we would be taking to prevent the spread of the disease. The details of that message can be found here. In short, the school will extend spring break by one week and school is set to resume remotely on Monday, March 23. Students will not have to return to campus although many may.

Our Externship Program is implementing the following policy to help students and site supervisors navigate this situation. The Director of Externships will distribute this policy to all current externship students and site supervisors.

1. **Shifting to Remote Work**: Each field placement is encouraged to implement contingency plans for each student extern, who is unable to continue working on-site. The preferred accommodation would allow the student to telecommute to complete work on ongoing matters. Because public health officials have already begun to encourage social distancing, we encourage field placements to consider implementing telework options as soon as possible for all students.
   a. Students are encouraged to work with field placement supervisors now to ensure that they have the technological capacity, authorizations, and information necessary to work remotely.
   b. All students have Zoom Basic accounts with their Gonzaga credentials. We encourage students and site supervisors to continue to have regular check-in meetings via teleconference to the extent possible to provide ongoing supervision and feedback. Zoom allows participants to share screens and information that cannot be shared on a telephone call.
   c. Students should log their work time into their timesheets and share them with their site supervisors so that their progress and activity may be appropriately supervised.
   d. If a site determines that a student may not work on ongoing matters outside of the office/chambers, accommodations should be made to assign the student research projects that can be completed off-site with the students’ personal computers. If such accommodations cannot be made, the site
supervisor and student should contact Inga Laurent, Director of Externships, Julie Claar or Abe Ritter: at laurent@gonzaga.edu or claar@gonzaga.edu or ritter@gonzaga.edu

2. **Illness, Quarantine or Travel:** If students are ill or quarantined due to exposure to an infected person or travel, they should not go to their externship site until they have recovered or have been cleared by a medical provider.
   a. Students should notify their site supervisor and faculty member, if they are ill, have tested positive for COVID-19, or are quarantined.
   b. Students who are travelling over the spring break, should communicate with their field placement supervisors about their travel plans.

3. **Seminar Attendance:** Beginning on March 23rd, Gonzaga will shift to online classroom instruction on ZOOM, most likely for the remainder of the semester. Students should await instructions from their individual faculty instructor on when and how class will be conducted.

4. **Students’ Online Responsibilities:**
   a. **Journals and Timesheets:** All journal assignments and timesheets should continue to be submitted online via TWEN. If a student has trouble obtaining a supervisor’s signatures by the due date, please e-mail Julie Claar.
   b. Students should regularly check their email and TWEN course sites for updates on the course.
   c. Any necessary individual conferences will be conducted, to the extent possible, online via Zoom.
   d. Students should take steps now to ensure that they have access to a reliable internet connection, webcam, and microphone.

5. **Field Placement Hour and Work Product Requirements:** If a student is unable to complete the requisite number of field placement hours by the end of the semester due to COVID-19 related illness, caretaking responsibilities, or travel restrictions, the Director of Externships will assess each situation on a case-by-case basis. If a student has substantially completed the requirements of the program, they may end their experience early. If a student has not substantially completed the requirements of the program, they may be given an incomplete and given additional time to complete the field placement and course requirements. Other options may become available as we gain more information.
a. Once a student has completed their externship work hour requirement, it is up to the student and the field placement to decide whether the student should continue working beyond the program requirement. Students may wish to utilize the spring break period to work additional hours if the site supervisor is in agreement. Students and field placement supervisors should mutually agree if the student is going to end their externship earlier than originally anticipated. If a mutual understanding cannot be reached, the student and field placement supervisor should contact Inga Laurent, Director of Externships.

6. **Continued communication:** The situation is fluid and is changing on a daily basis. Students and field placements should engage in continued communications that take into account individual circumstances and what accommodations are realistic and appropriate given the constraints of each particular placement. In all instances, we aim to implement flexible policies that maintain the integrity of the externship experience without compromising public health. Additional factors that will be considered include, but are not limited to, the following:
   a. Students may have pre-existing health conditions, caretaker responsibilities, or other circumstances that may affect their ability to continue working at their placements.
   b. Students who rely on public transportation to go to work may be especially vulnerable.
   c. Field placement supervisors may similarly not be able to carry out their supervisory responsibilities due to their personal circumstances. Please let the Director of Externships know if there is a change in supervision or if the field placement is no longer able to supervise the student’s placement.

Thank you to all of our field placement supervisors and partner agencies for your understanding, flexibility, and dedication to providing quality work experiences for our students. We hope that everyone stays safe, healthy and grounded during these extraordinary times.

Inga N. Laurent

Director, Externship Program

Gonzaga University School of Law

[laurent@gonzaga.edu](mailto:laurent@gonzaga.edu)

(509) 313-3747