Hofstra Law’s Externship Program took me from the world of academia into the real world. This program prepared me for the transition and also ensured that I would reflect and learn from each step of the journey. My experience in the Externship Program gave me insight into the judicial system and has better prepared me for my legal career.” — Matthew M. McDonagh, Class of 2014
“Whether our graduates choose to provide legal counsel at a transnational level, run a business in the global marketplace, set policy, seek justice or offer legal services to local communities, Hofstra Law courses prepare them to meet any challenge and follow any path.”

— Dean Eric Lane

law.hofstra.edu/Externships
The Externship Program at the Maurice A. Deane School of Law offers our students the opportunity to gain direct experience in a variety of legal fields under the direct supervision of experienced practitioners. It is a critical component of the experiential education that we offer for all of our students at Hofstra Law. It also contributes to our overall mission to prepare, challenge and inspire our students to make a difference in the world.

In collaboration with our externship faculty, field placement supervisors play a fundamental role in our students’ educational experience. Field placement supervisors shape our students’ understanding of the professional responsibilities that come with the representation of clients, legislative and policy formation, and judicial decision-making. They provide critical feedback on written and oral work product and encourage students to reflect broadly on what it means to be an effective, ethical lawyer. In short, field placement supervisors bring to life what our students are learning in the classroom.

The role of professional mentor for our students can be a profoundly rewarding experience for the field placement supervisor, as it offers an opportunity to contribute to the development of the next generation of lawyers. In addition, it can bring new insights into one’s own practice and sense of professional responsibility.

Thank you for your involvement in our program!

Jennifer A. Gundlach
Senior Associate Dean for Experiential Education
and Clinical Professor of Law

Franca Sachs
Executive Director of Pro Bono, Externship and Fellowship Programs

“**The Hofstra Law Externship Program allows students to participate in a hands-on learning experience in a practice area of their choice. While working in the Criminal Division at the U.S. Attorney’s Office, I have become very comfortable strategically researching and creatively analyzing issues. Having the opportunity to receive feedback on my work product from an experienced practitioner has been an invaluable experience. Additionally, the collaborative academic component allows students to learn from one another by discussing various issues that may arise in the workplace.”**

— Tyler Margolis, Class of 2016
Eligible Field Placements

“Global Experiences not only placed me in a personally ideal legal internship position, but allowed me to embark on a truly life-changing experience. I have developed many practical legal skills and relationships, and have grown as an adult as well as an individual from this unique opportunity.”

— Christopher Muñiz, Class of 2014

Each field placement must be approved by Hofstra Law before the student can receive credit. Generally, field placements are limited to government agencies and public interest or nonprofit institutions. Students’ work must be supervised by licensed attorneys.

Potential field placements with law firms and corporate in-house law departments are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and are generally guided by the following criteria:

- the quality of the legal experience to be provided by the proposed placement;
- the nature and quality of the proposed supervision of students;
- the likelihood that the proposed placement will satisfy the educational goals of Hofstra Law;
- the contribution of the proposed placement to the intellectual and professional development of students;
- opportunities for students to engage in pro bono work; and
- confirmation by the law firm that it will not bill to any client any of the time worked by students during the course of the externship.

In addition to U.S.-based field placements, the Global Legal Practice Externship Program allows students to work over the summer in international field placements for academic credit.

law.hofstra.edu/Externships
Your direct supervision of Hofstra Law students is a critical part of their legal and professional education. Students receive academic credit for their work as externs, and for this reason, we want them to engage in meaningful and demanding work and receive regular, honest and comprehensive feedback and supervision by field placement supervisors and other experienced legal practitioners.

We expect that students participating in Hofstra Law’s Externship Program will take part primarily in the substantive legal work performed by your office, as opposed to focusing on ministerial or administrative work. We also expect that the work provided to our students will be that which might typically be handled by a lawyer, will be intellectually challenging and will aid in their growth and development as future attorneys.

An effective field placement provides students with the following educational experiences:

- opportunities to increase knowledge of substantive areas of the law;
- observation and reflection about legal practice, professionalism, professional goals and the lawyering role;
- exposure to the history, goals, structure, values, rules and responsibilities of the legal profession;
- opportunities to engage in legal analysis and research;
- development and practice of professional judgment in the context of solving legal problems;
- drafting predictive, persuasive and/or dispositional legal writing;
- development of other professional skills relevant to the field, such as factual investigation, client interviewing and counseling, negotiation, drafting, oral advocacy, organization and management, and recognizing and resolving ethical dilemmas; and
- building a professional network of lawyers, judges and non-lawyers for future professional development.

A survey of tri-state law firms conducted by the Hanover Research Council revealed that, compared with graduates from other law schools, Hofstra Law graduates received an overall higher rating in a majority of competencies, including business knowledge, communication skills, advocacy skills and general workplace skills.
“Interning for Judge Sullivan has benefited me exponentially. The internship has given me the opportunity to participate in criminal trials and apply information I learned in my first-year courses to a real-life setting. The greatest benefit of the internship is the personal relationships I have built with judges, defense attorneys and district attorneys that I will be able to use in my future career.” — Courtney DeCicco, Class of 2014
Faculty Supervision and Classroom Component

In addition to supervision by attorneys in the field placement, students who participate in the Externship Program must attend a weekly seminar taught by a Hofstra Law faculty member. In the classroom component, students report generally on the work that they are doing, consider issues relating to supervision, professional responsibility and the lawyering role, and gain further exposure to the substantive law and legal skills relevant to the field. As part of the seminar, students are required to keep a reflective journal about their work in the field placements. You can expect the supervising faculty member or the executive director of the Externship Program to be in contact with you during the semester to ensure the continued quality of the experience, and you should feel free to reach out to them as well. They may also schedule a site visit.

Externship Program Requirements

“Externship experiences give students that extra edge needed in today’s legal marketplace. At the Office of the Nassau County Attorney, externs work closely with our deputy county attorneys, who serve as both teachers and mentors. The experience provides students with the opportunity to develop their soft skills and hone their hard skills, both of which are essential to a successful legal career. In return, Nassau County benefits from the highly motivated and well-educated Hofstra Law students placed here. It’s a mutually beneficial relationship that leads to long-term professional collaboration.”

— Pablo A. Fernandez, Deputy Bureau Chief, Litigation Bureau, Office of the Nassau County Attorney

Minimum Hours of Work by Students in the Field Placement

- Fall/Spring Semesters: At least 12 hours per week over the 14-week semester.
- Summer Session: A total of 200 hours over eight weeks.

Writing Requirement

Students must produce a substantial amount of original writing involving legal research and analysis during their field placement:

- A minimum of 15 pages of written work based on legal research for government, public interest or nonprofit, and corporate in-house placements.
- A minimum of 25 pages of written work based on legal research for judicial placements.
- A minimum of 20 pages of written work based on legal research for the Global Legal Practice and summer externship placements.

The writing requirement can be satisfied by a single document or a series of smaller documents but cannot include the production of forms or pro forma/boilerplate motions. A student’s written work must be submitted to the supervising faculty member for review, with appropriate deletions and redactions to protect and preserve privileged or confidential information.

No Compensation

Students may not be compensated for work performed in connection with any for-credit field placement, other than reimbursement for travel expenses.

No Billing

Approved law firm placements cannot bill to any client any of the time worked by the student during the course of the externship.

Eligible Students

Only those students who have completed a full year of study in law school can participate in the Externship Program.
Establishing a Field Placement

Each field placement must be approved by Hofstra Law before the student can receive credit. The approval process might include individual discussions with Jennifer A. Gundlach or Franca Sachs to ensure that the educational objectives and requirements of the program can be met and that supervisors understand their responsibilities.

If you are interested in serving as a field placement supervisor, you should contact Franca Sachs to discuss the opportunity and begin the process. To ensure ample time, we recommend that you contact Franca Sachs in early May for a fall semester externship, in early October for a spring semester externship or in early January for a summer externship. Once you interview and select an extern, you must sign and return the Memorandum of Understanding to Franca Sachs.

We encourage you to participate in the Externship Fair, held each fall and spring at Hofstra Law. Please contact Franca Sachs for more information about the fair and to confirm your participation.

Contact Information

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“...My experience with Hofstra Law graduates at my firm and throughout the field of law is that their education and preparation are second to none. Hofstra Law prepares students to make their mark on the world.”

— Brad Eric Scheler ’77, Senior Partner and Chairman, Bankruptcy and Restructuring Department, Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP

Externship Program Faculty

Civil Externship
Jeffrey Silberfeld
Special Professor of Law

Criminal Externship and Clinical Prosecution Practicum
Fred Klein
Visiting Assistant Professor of Law

Domestic Violence Externship and Human Trafficking Externship
Barbara S. Barron
Professor of Skills and Director, Trial Techniques Program

Insurance Litigation and Corporate Practice Externship
Michael D. Jaffe
Special Professor of Law
Chairman, President and CEO, Country-Wide Insurance Company; Partner, Jaffe & Koumourdas, L.L.P.

Judicial Externship and Matrimonial Externship
The Honorable Edmund Dane
Special Professor of Law
Supervising Judge, Nassau County Family Court

LGBT Rights Externship
Lauris Wren
Clinical Professor of Law

Mediation Externship
Peter F. Miller
Special Professor of Law

Summer Externship and Advanced Externship
Jennifer A. Gundlach
Senior Associate Dean for Experiential Education and Clinical Professor of Law