

LEGAL STUDIES INTERNSHIP
LS 490

In support of the mission of the Legal Studies Program, Legal Studies majors and certificate students are required to complete an internship in a private, corporate, or government law office under individual faculty supervision to allow students to apply academic knowledge to professional experience. This internship provides students with a real-life on-the-job experience in the day-to-day routine and operation of a law office or other legal setting.

Key Information

Internship Coordinator: Diana Lamphiere
lamphied@gvsu.edu
616-331-7145

Prerequisites: LS 201, LS 324, and LS 426 (taken before or concurrently with LS 490)

Senior status and permission of Internship Coordinator

Credits/Grading: 3.000 – 6.000 credit hours, Graded credit/no credit

Frequency: Class offered every semester

Application Process

Meet the requirements, including the prerequisites.

Make an appointment to meet with the Internship Coordinator to discuss where you would like to complete your internship. If you need ideas where to look for an internship, she will be able to help you. If you have already located an internship it will need to be approved.

Once you have met the requirements, you will need to get formal permission to register for the class. This requires processing a registration override request form. This is usually done during your meeting with the Internship Coordinator.

You must meet with the Internship Coordinator before you will be given permission to register for the class. No permits will be issued if a student has not yet met with the Internship Coordinator.

You should plan to contact the Internship Coordinator well before the start of the semester in which you plan to take your internship.

The Internship Coordinator is also available to meet with Legal Studies students who are not yet ready to enroll in the internship class but who would like more specific information on the internship process and requirements.

How to Find an Internship

Neither the university nor the Legal Studies Department will place you in an internship. It is your responsibility to find an appropriate internship location. Examples of appropriate locations include law firms, legal assistance centers, courts, and the legal departments of private companies.

There are many ways to find internships; through friends or relatives, personal contacts, other students who have found placements, suggestions from instructors, and by contacting the Legal Studies Internship Coordinator for information on locations that have taken interns in the past.

Internship opportunities can also be found at Laker Jobs and the Legal Studies Facebook page.

Before you start looking for an internship be sure you have an updated resume that you can send to potential internship locations. It is highly recommended that you make an appointment with GVSU Career Center to have your resume reviewed before you begin your internship search. The Career Center can also provide you with tips for writing a cover letter and how to approach potential internship locations.

When to Start Looking for an Internship

You should begin looking for an internship location prior to the semester in which you plan to do your internship for several reasons:

- In most organizations the number of interns that can be accepted is limited.
- Some locations require a training session that is often scheduled prior to the start of the internship.
- Some offices or governmental agencies require a background check which can take some time.

Requirements for Completion of LS 490 (Legal Studies Internship)

- 200 hours of documented work at the internship location (approximately 15 hours per week over the course of the semester.)
- Time log documenting time and professional duties at the internship site.
- Internship agreement via the Career Center Internship Management System. This agreement must be approved by the supervisor at the internship location.
- During fall and winter semesters, class will meet four times (once a month) from 12 -1:15 on Wednesdays. See course schedule for exact dates. Attendance at class is mandatory.
- During the spring/summer semester class will be conducted entirely on-line.
- A resume that has been reviewed by the Career Center.
- Site visit between intern, the Internship Coordinator and site supervisor
- Intern and site supervisor evaluations near the end the semester.
- Presentation to the class regarding internship experience.
- A final paper.