**ALEXANDER BLEWETT III SCHOOL OF LAW**

**CLINIC PROGRAM**

**INDEPENDENT FIELD PLACEMENT APPLICATION**

An Independent Field Placement (IFP) is a placement independently proposed by a student and approved by the clinic faculty and the Curriculum Committee. An IFP must meet all clinic program criteria, requirements, and guidelines.

To apply for an IFP, the student must secure a commitment from the placement and find a faculty member willing to sponsor it. Such sponsorship shall include co-supervising and assessing the student’s performance, teaching its classroom instructional component (e.g., seminar, tutorial), engaging the student in contemporaneous, guided self-reflection, conducting or arranging at least one site visit to the placement during the student’s tenure, and ensuring that the placement adheres to the clinic program criteria, requirements, and guidelines.

Please review the following documents before applying for an independent field placement: Criteria for Evaluation of Clinics, Anticipated Student and Institutional Outcomes, and Supervising Attorney Guidelines.

1. Name of applicant and date of application:

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2. Number of law credits earned by end of Spring Semester 20\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Term in which clinic credits would be completed:

Summer 20\_\_

Fall 20\_\_

Fall 20\_\_ and Spring 20\_\_

Spring 20\_\_

4. Number of anticipated credits to be completed: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Name and address of proposed Independent Field Placement:

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6. What is the nature of the work of the proposed placement? How is it different from those currently offered?

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7. Please provide the name and mailing address of the proposed Supervising Attorney. How does this attorney intend to meet the Supervising Attorney Guidelines, particularly in regards to meetings and evaluations?

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8. Please explain on a separate sheet of paper how the proposed placement meets the Student and Institutional Outcomes listed in the Criteria for Evaluating Clinics. Please evaluate each of the major bulleted points, including a description of how the placement meets the Anticipated Student Outcomes.

9. Please provide the name and dated signature of the faculty member who will sponsor the placement.

By signing, the faculty supervisor agrees to co-supervise and assess the student’s performance, teach its classroom instructional component (e.g., seminar, tutorial), engage the student in contemporaneous, guided self-reflection, conduct or arrange at least one site visit to the placement during the student’s tenure, and ensure that the placement adheres to the clinic program criteria, requirements, and guidelines.

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Faculty Sponsor Date:

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Applicant Date:

Revised: 03/07/2019

**MISSION STATEMENT**

**ALEXANDER BLEWETT III SCHOOL OF LAW**

**AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA**

**CLINIC PROGRAM**

Believing that clinical education is an integral component of a competency-based curriculum and should be required of all students, the Alexander Blewett III School of Law at The University of Montana adopts the following mission statement:

The mission of the Alexander Blewett III School of Law at The University of Montana clinic program is to provide students the opportunity to develop lawyering skills and promote professionalism while serving the public interest. To accomplish this mission:

* Students will work on actual legal issues in projects that include their significant involvement in project management, strategy planning, lawyering, problem solving, and research.
* Lawyers and faculty will supervise and mentor students, and facilitate the development of perspective through guided reflection.

**CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING CLINICS/FIELD PLACEMENTS**

The clinic program offers the following experiences:

* + - * In-House Clinics: Faculty members directly supervise students in a clinic located at the law school.
      * Field Placements: Faculty members oversee field placements in selected legal offices where students are supervised by placement staff attorneys. External clinics shall enter into agreements with the law school that provide for faculty access to the placement program, cooperation between supervising attorneys and the School of Law, and direct supervision and mentoring by the attorneys in the clinic.
      * Independent Field Placements: An independent field placement is a field placement not otherwise offered by the law school and proposed by a student and approved by the faculty. Independent field placements must meet all clinical program criteria, requirements, and guidelines. In an independent field placement, the student is responsible for meeting program criteria, requirements, and guidelines, and securing a faculty member and placement attorney who will supervise the placement.

In addition to the criteria set out in the Mission Statement and those required for accreditation, all clinics/field placements shall:

* + - * meet the stated Student Learning and Institutional Outcomes.
      * provide service in the public interest to:
      * Government Agencies or Tribal Communities,
      * 26 U.S.C. §501(c)(3) organizations,[[1]](#footnote-1)
      * establishments that promote access to justice,
      * persons of limited means through an in-house Law School Clinic, or
      * Montana small business people through an in-house law school clinic approved by the faculty
      * be in close proximity[[2]](#footnote-2) to the School of Law to facilitate student participation in the placement and to ensure appropriate faculty supervision and oversight.
      * be of sufficient interest to students in the area of practice.
* make no inappropriate demands on Law School resources.

**ANTICIPATED STUDENT LEARNING**

**AND INSTITUTIONAL OUTCOMES**

**ALEXANDER BLEWETT III SCHOOL OF LAW**

**AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA**

**CLINIC PROGRAM**

The Alexander Blewett III School of Law at The University of Montana expects clinical legal education to result in certain measurable outcomes for students and for the law school.

**Anticipated Student Learning Outcomes**

Within the variety of clinic experiences available, the faculty expects every student to receive the following benefits from a clinic experience, as measured by supervisor and faculty assessment:

1. Each student will acquire and deepen knowledge of specific areas of law.

2. Each student will develop skills in:

1. Identifying legal issues;
2. Legal research;
3. Legal analysis;
4. Fact investigation and development;
5. Problem-solving;
6. Predictive and persuasive oral and written communication;
7. Interviewing and counseling;
8. Case planning;
9. Negotiation, plea bargaining, mediation, and informal dispute resolution;
10. Litigation;
11. Document-drafting;
12. Planning and implementing legal projects;
13. Using legal technology;
14. Organizing and managing legal work, including case management, scheduling, and time- and record-keeping;
15. Recognizing and resolving ethical issues;
16. Developing professional relationships;
17. Cross-cultural legal practice; and
18. Professional self-reflection.
19. Each student will recognize the character, values, and professionalism necessary to serve society as lawyers, including:
20. Excellence in their role as a representative of clients, an officer of the court, and a public citizen responsible for the quality and availability of justice;
21. Diversity and equality of opportunity in the practice of law;
22. The importance of *pro bono* work, service, and access to justice for underserved communities;
23. Collaboration with clients and other professionals; and
24. The capacity for self-reflection as key to continuous learning, self-improvement, and self-development.

**Anticipated Institutional Outcomes**

The School of Law also anticipates that student participation in faculty-supervised in-house and external field placements will benefit the students, the School of Law, the University, and the community. These benefits include:

1. Evaluating students' abilities to integrate substantive knowledge and professional skills and values;

2. Refining the law school curriculum through assessment of clinic/field placement performance;

3. Strengthening the school's reputation as an innovator in legal education;

4. Equipping students with the professional skills and values needed to succeed in their chosen careers.

1. Advancing the reputation of the school within the legal profession and community at large;

6. Promoting the importance of pro bono work to the profession;

7. Providing legal services in the public interest;

8. Improving access to justice; and

9. Providing law faculty with the opportunity to engage with students and the legal community.

**GUIDELINES FOR CLINICS, FIELD PLACEMENTS, AND**

**SUPERVISING ATTORNEYS**

The clinic program of the Alexander Blewett III School of Law at The University of Montana, with the support of the Clinic Board of Visitors (the Board”) and the program’s supervising attorneys, adopts these guidelines for clinics and field placements and supervising attorneys. By adopting these guidelines, the clinic program intends to:

* Uphold and improve the highest standards of clinical training received by student interns;
* Recognize that the quality of the clinic program depends upon the partnership, cooperation, and volunteer efforts of supervising attorneys in training, mentoring, and guiding interns;
* Acknowledge that interns, the Law School faculty, and external accrediting agencies require and expect that the clinic program ensure that supervising attorneys have sufficient experience and teaching skills to provide students with a satisfactory clinic or field placement experience; and
* Ensure that the growth of the clinic program does not reduce its quality.

I. **DEFINITIONS**

A. Applicant means an attorney seeking approval as a supervising attorney.

B. Other relevant experience means experience that does not constitute active practice of law in the subject area in which a Sites attorney practices but which, in the judgment of the Associate Dean for Clinical and Experiential Education, indicates a substantial likelihood of success as a supervising attorney. Such experience may include teaching or other experience working with or supervising students or law practice in a different but related field.

C. Site means the law firm, law office or organization designated by the clinic program to provide clinical training to law students for credit.

D. Supervise means to provide those elements of training, oversight, guidance, support, and evaluation described as constituting the role of supervising attorney in the Memorandum of Agreement between the Law School and the clinic site. The term does not include informal, occasional, or casual collegial contact between a law student and site attorney not designated as a supervising attorney.

E. Supervising Attorney means an attorney who has been approved by the Law School as the primary provider of clinic training for law students at a site.

**II. APPLICABILITY OF GUIDELINES**

A. The clinic program shall apply these Guidelines in approving supervising attorneys pursuant to other relevant procedures adopted by the Law School.

B. These Guidelines are to be applied by the clinic program to guide its approval of supervising attorneys. The clinic program retains the discretion to approve supervising attorneys who do not meet one or more of the qualifications for approval if, in the judgment of the Associate Dean for Clinical and Experiential Education, deviating from the Guidelines will not detract materially from the educational quality of the clinic or field placement experience. Similarly, the clinic program retains the discretion not to approve as supervising attorneys those who may meet these qualifications if the Associate Dean for Clinical and Experiential Education believes approval would not result in a satisfactory educational experience.

**III. FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Applicants for supervising attorney should meet the following requirements:

A. Be a graduate of a law school accredited by the American Bar Association;

B. Be licensed to practice law in state, tribal, or federal court in Montana or other state or court(s) in which the placement is based; and

C. Have three years’ experience in the active practice of law, with substantial experience in the area of law practiced by attorneys at the site, or a combination of practical experience and other relevant experience satisfactory to the Associate Dean for Clinical and Experiential Education.

**IV. APPLICATION INFORMATION**

An applicant should provide the following information in the form of a letter to the Associate Dean for Clinical and Experiential Education:

A. *Prior Experience*. A statement of the applicants prior experience supervising attorneys, law students, or legal assistants, or other experience demonstrating the ability to excel as a supervising attorney.

B. *Practice Description*.

1. A description of the applicants experience in the practice or teaching of law; and

2. A description of how that practice coincides with the goals and the purpose of the clinic program.

C. *Professional Organizations*.

1. The name of all professional organizations with which the applicant has been affiliated and all significant offices or positions that the applicant has held within such organizations; and

2. A description of any awards or recognition of service the applicant has received from these and like organizations.

D. *Honors and Awards*. A description of all other honors and awards that the applicant has received during his or her career.

E. *Disciplinary Proceedings*.

1. A description of all formal disciplinary proceedings brought against the applicant under any state’s laws governing the professional responsibility of attorneys, with an explanation of the circumstances surrounding the complaint and the outcome of the proceeding, unless the subject matter of the disciplinary proceeding is confidential under the rules of the governing disciplinary body.

2. A description of all citations for contempt of court and all sanctions awarded against the applicant personally under Rule 11 or any similar statute or rule if the citations or sanctions have been incorporated in a final judgment or order. The applicant should provide an explanation of the circumstances and copies of all written orders relating to the sanction or citation.

F. *Pro Bono Service*. A statement of the applicants philosophy regarding pro bono service indicating any specific cases or civic projects where he or she has contributed a significant amount of pro bono hours.

G. *Interest /Commitment to the Clinic Program*.

1. A written explanation of why the applicant is interested in becoming a supervising attorney.

2. A short description of the best professional trait a student would learn from working with the applicant.

3. A statement agreeing that the applicant will exercise primary supervision over the students, and will not regularly delegate supervision to attorneys at the site who have not been approved as supervising attorneys, except as authorized by the Associate Dean for Clinical and Experiential Education or as provided in the Memorandum of Agreement between the site and the Law School.

H. *Office and Administrative Support*. A description of the physical space, research materials, computer and secretarial assistance, and other tools that will be provided for the students.

I. *Recommendations*. At least three written recommendations from other attorneys, only one of whom may practice at the site, supporting the applicants ability to provide law students with a satisfactory educational experience.

**V. APPROVAL**

A. The Associate Dean for Clinical and Experiential Education shall review the application and shall, in consultation with the clinic faculty, submit the application to the Curriculum Committee, to approve or disapprove the application.

B. Upon approval, the applicant, field placement, and Law School shall execute a Memorandum of Agreement. The Memorandum will include, at a minimum:

1. A statement describing the educational objectives of the site;

2. A statement describing the role of the supervising Attorney;

3. A statement describing the role of the faculty supervisor.

**VI. SUPERVISING ATTORNEY ROLE**

In accordance with the mission statement for the clinic program, a student intern must be engaged in work involving actual legal issues and be adequately supervised by an attorney who will mentor and monitor the student’s legal work and provide guided reflection on the process.

A field placement shall provide experiences that allows each student to:

1. Acquire and deepen knowledge of specific areas of law.

2. Develop skills in:

1. Identifying legal issues;
2. Legal research;
3. Legal analysis;
4. Fact investigation and development;
5. Problem-solving;
6. Predictive and persuasive oral and written communication;
7. Interviewing and counseling;
8. Case planning;
9. Negotiation, plea bargaining, mediation, and informal dispute resolution;
10. Litigation;
11. Document-drafting;
12. Planning and implementing legal projects;
13. Using legal technology;
14. Organizing and managing legal work, including case management, scheduling, and time- and record-keeping;
15. Recognizing and resolving ethical issues;
16. Developing professional relationships;
17. Cross-cultural legal practice; and
18. Professional self-reflection; and
19. Recognize the character, values, and professionalism necessary to serve society as lawyers, including:
20. Excellence in their role as a representative of clients, an officer of the court, and a public citizen responsible for the quality and availability of justice;
21. Diversity and equality of opportunity in the practice of law;
22. The importance of *pro bono* work, service, and access to justice for underserved communities;
23. Collaboration with clients and other professionals; and
24. The capacity for self-reflection as key to continuous learning, self-improvement, and self-development.

The attorney supervising the work of a student must be able to:

1. evaluate the students abilities to integrate substantive knowledge and professional skills and values;
2. assist students in refining their professional skills;
3. provide effective feedback on the quality and quantity of the students work;
4. monitor the work of the student to ensure compliance with all applicable professional responsibility standards; and
5. demonstrate that all applicable licensing requirements for the involved jurisdiction have been met and that the attorney has at least three-years-experience in the active practice of law.

Approved by faculty,

Summer Institute, May 2000

1. Includes those intending to seek 501(c)(3) status [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. An exception may be made for an Independent External Field Placement. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)