I. INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides students with an overview of the policies and procedures relevant to Whittier Law School’s Externship Program. An externship is a law-related placement outside the Law School, where students perform and observe legal work under the guidance of a supervising attorney and earn academic credit. Externships provide practical training that complements classroom study in a wide range of practice settings, including government agencies, the courts and public interest law firms. Externs gain valuable “real world” experience and exposure to diverse legal environments.

The Law School Externship Program has several educational goals for students, including: 1) training students in lawyering skills; 2) acquiring insight into the workings of various aspects of the legal system and profession; 3) encouraging a sense of professional responsibility; 4) developing students’ abilities to reflect on and learn from their experience; and 5) facilitating students’ career planning.

II. EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM RULES AND REQUIREMENTS

Student Eligibility

Students who 1) have completed one academic year of study and at least nineteen (19) units; and 2) are in good academic standing, are eligible to enroll in an externship. Certain types of externship placements carry additional prerequisites (as set forth in the Law School’s Academic Rules and Regulations, this Handbook, and placements’ own requirements).

Externship Placement Requirements

• Students Find Placements. Students are responsible for securing their own externship placement (see infra Sec. IV - How to Find an Externship). Some externship opportunities require students to submit applications to the Law School, and not directly to the employer. Students arrange with the placement the appropriate schedule and number of hours to be worked during the semester.

• Externship Approval. All externships must be approved by the Externship Director prior to registration.

• Enrollment Limits. Enrollment in the Externship Program may be limited in order to ensure appropriate faculty supervision and a high-quality educational experience.

• Appropriate Placements. Students may seek externship placements with government offices, judicial chambers, and non-profit entities. The Law School typically does not approve externships in the private, for-profit sector. Limited exceptions to this restriction may be made for students pursuing the International and Comparative Law or the
Intellectual Property Law Certificates *(see infra Private Sector Placements)*.

- **Supervision.** All placements must be supervised by an attorney or bench officer.

- **Substantive Work.** Externship must involve legal or law-related work, such as legal services, advocacy, or public policy.

- **No Compensation.** Students cannot be paid for academic credit externships. However, students may receive reasonable reimbursement for work-related out-of-pocket expenses.

- **Semester Time-Frame.** The timing of externships must conform to Whittier’s academic semesters - Fall, Spring or Summer.

### Externship Units and Course Requirements

- **Externship Credit Calculation.** Students are required to spend sixty (60) hours at the externship site for each unit of externship credit earned. For example, a student engaged in externship work over the course of twelve (12) weeks during a semester must work approximately five (5) hours per week to earn one (1) unit of credit. The sixty (60) hours per unit ratio is a minimum. Externs may choose to work more hours without seeking additional units.

- **Maximum Externship Units.** A maximum of six (6) units of externship academic credit, in addition to the one (1) unit for the Lawyering skills course, may be applied toward graduation.

Students participating in a Full-Time Judicial Externship may earn up to a maximum of eight (8) units of externship credit toward graduation *(see infra Full-Time Judicial Externships)*. Eligible students who secure a qualifying Full-Time Judicial placement for a semester subsequent to having already earned one (1) or more regular externship units may use the remainder of the eight (8) units for the judicial placement. Eligible students who secure a qualifying judicial placement for fewer than eight (8) units may use the remainder of the eight (8) units during a subsequent semester’s externship.

- **Lawyering Skills Course.** Students must enroll in the one (1) unit Lawyering Skills classroom course concurrently with their first externship placement. If a student already has completed Lawyering Skills in conjunction with a Clinic, the course need not be repeated. Lawyering Skills provides students with the opportunity to discuss a variety of practice-related subjects including applied ethics, issues of bias in the justice system, workplace skills and client service issues.

- **Lawyering Skills and Externship Requirements and Grades.** Lawyering Skills and Externships are graded on a credit/no credit basis. In addition to required attendance, preparation, and participation in the class, all Lawyering Skills students are required to
maintain an hours log of their placement work, as well as submit reflective journals, memos and writing samples. At the conclusion of the externship, students complete an evaluation of their externship site and supervisor, and ensure that their supervisor submits an evaluation of the student’s work. Externs who are not required to enroll in Lawyering Skills complete a similar set of written assignments as part of the Advanced Externship course. All externship participants must complete the required hours at their placement and perform their field placement work in a satisfactory manner.

- **Center/Certificate Credit for Externships.** Each of the Law School’s specialization programs (international and comparative law; intellectual property; criminal law; and children’s rights) has its own limits on the number of externship units that may be applied toward the concentration. Please consult the relevant program’s rules for details.

In order to earn specialization credit, externship work must be primarily or exclusively in the applicable program’s substantive area. A student’s request for Certificate/Center credit may be re-evaluated at the conclusion of the externship.

### III. EXTERNSHIP PLACEMENT CATEGORIES

**Government Offices** – Many government placements are in the criminal justice system, with the District Attorney’s, Public Defender’s, or City Prosecutor’s Offices. A variety of other government agencies, at the federal, state and local levels, offer opportunities that focus on specific areas of law, such as immigration, tax, labor, or health law. Government placements may provide litigation, transactional and/or policy-making experiences.

**Not-For-Profit Agencies** – Many students choose to extern at a variety of general and specialized legal aid organizations that offer direct client services. Other public interest entities focus on impact litigation and/or public policy work on a range of issues from anti-discrimination to children’s rights.

**Judiciary** – Students may work for members of the bench or for court research attorneys in general trial courts, as well as in specialized tribunals, such as juvenile courts, the Immigration Court and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Judicial system externships primarily focus on research and writing.

**Full-Time Judicial Externships** – Students with a cumulative grade point average of 85 or above are eligible to apply for placements with the local California appellate or federal bench. Some Full-Time Judicial externships require special application procedures.

**Private Sector Placements** – *Only* students enrolled in the CICL or IP Certificate Programs are eligible to seek externships with a limited number of private, for-profit companies and law firms. The following additional restrictions apply:
• Students must have completed successfully at least one core Certificate course.

• The externship assignments at the private entity must relate to the applicable Certificate’s area of expertise.

• In the IP area, a pre-approved list of private sector IP externship sites (subject to appropriate openings) is available in the CCR Clinic, in the Career Services Office (CSO), and on the IP Society TWEN website. The entities on this list are the only private sector IP locations where students may extern.

• CICL Certificate students who are interested in a private sector externship must contact the Externship Director prior to securing a placement. Private practice immigration law placements will not be approved.

Non-Local Externships – During the summer, externships may be approved outside of the local Southern California area, depending on the uniqueness of the opportunity and available resources. Students seeking to extern outside the local area should contact the Externship Director well in advance of the summer so that the proposed placement can be adequately investigated. First-time externs who are required to enroll in Lawyering Skills must petition the Lawyering Skills course instructor to take the course as an Independent Study.

IV. HOW TO FIND AN EXTERNSHIP

Plan in Advance – Begin the process of researching and applying for externships at least one full semester before you plan to extern. Some government offices require many weeks to process security clearances. Many externship placements, particularly for the summer, have early application deadlines and fill their slots well in advance.

Define Objectives – The first step in externship research is to think about and prioritize individual goals: Do you want to explore a new area of law practice? Add to existing strengths or experience in a substantive area? Develop a particular set of lawyering skills? Pursue experience that may facilitate finding a job?

Specific Experiences – Next, consider what types of experiences you would like to have during the externship: Are you interested in research and writing? Client contact/interviewing? Courtroom experience? Policy analysis? Fact investigation? Negotiation? You should look for externship placements, or divisions within a particular entity, that will provide the kind of work you want to engage in.

Research Placements

• Externship Directory. The three-volume Externship Directory, available in the CCR Clinic and in Career Services, provides information on a wide range of
externship placements. The Directory also includes former externs’ evaluations of specific sites and supervisors. A student who recently externed at a particular placement can offer helpful insights.

Students are not limited to the listings in the Externship Directory, and may pursue other opportunities in the public and private non-profit sectors. However, if seeking an externship with an organization that is not listed in the Directory, you must provide contact information to the Externship Director well in advance so that the appropriateness of the placement can be evaluated.

**Career Services Office and CSO Webpage.** The CSO has numerous directories where potential externship sites may be found. The CSO’s webpage on the WLS website has weblinks to numerous government and public interest entities – go to [www.law.whittier.edu/career_services/weblinks.asp](http://www.law.whittier.edu/career_services/weblinks.asp). Externship opportunities may also appear on Lawmatch, CSO’s job search online program.

**Postings.** Current externship opportunities also may be posted outside the Clinic.

**Internet.** The Internet has a wealth of information on legal employers. Most organizations’ websites have weblinks that lead to other related entities.

**Externship Information Sessions** – These small-group sessions are scheduled periodically during the academic year and provide an opportunity to learn more about the Externship Program and answer specific questions. Sign-up in the CCR Clinic.

**Individual Appointments** – The Externship Director is available to discuss your particular externship objectives and provide guidance. In order to ensure a productive counseling session, you should first read this Handbook and the Registration Bulletin section on externships, attend a group externship information session, do research to develop ideas of placements that are of interest, and prepare a resume. Appointments may then be scheduled with the Externship Director or another appropriate individual. Mary James, the administrative assistant in the CCR Clinic, can schedule these meetings.

**Applying for Externships** – Applicants should fine-tune their resume and cover letters. The Career Services Office is available to help with resume preparation and mock interviews. Learn about the work of each externship site to which you are applying and tailor your application accordingly. Check each entity’s application procedures and requirements and follow them. If you do not know whether an entity accepts law student externs, or what materials to send, call and ask. If you have not heard back within a week or two of sending your materials, follow up with a phone call. Some agencies, such as the Orange County District Attorney’s and Public Defender’s Offices, conduct externship interviews on-campus and applications are submitted through the CSO. For further job search guidance, consult the CSO’s Career Services Manual, available on-line at [www.law.whittier.edu](http://www.law.whittier.edu) and in the CSO.
V. EXTERNSHIP APPROVAL AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Externship Application Forms – Once a student has discussed the proposed externship placement with the Externship Director and has secured an appropriate externship, s/he must complete the applicable Externship Application Form(s), which are available in the Student Services area:

➢ Initial Semester Externship Application Form (beige) - to be filled out by students applying for their *first* Law School externship. Students in this category must concurrently enroll in the Lawyering Skills course (unless the student already has completed Lawyering Skills in conjunction with a Clinic).

➢ Advanced Externship Application Form (salmon) – to be filled out by students who have completed at least one externship semester, but have not used all six (6) of their available externship units of credit. Such students need not repeat Lawyering Skills.

➢ Full-Time Externship Application Form (purple) – to be filled out by students enrolling in an externship with a local appellate or federal court. If this is the student’s *first* externship, Lawyering Skills is a requirement.

➢ Private Sector Externship Application Form (light blue) – to be filled out by CICL or IP students (initial semester and advanced) applying to extern in the for-profit sector.

Externship Approval and Registration – Fully completed Externship Application Forms should be submitted for approval to the Externship Director (either directly or through Mary James). **Application Forms must be submitted at least two (2) weeks prior to Registration Week to ensure approval in time for registration period.** If a student submits an Externship Application Form after Registration Week, s/he should attach a completed Add/Drop Form and allow up to two (2) weeks for approval.

Registering for an externship after the end of the Add/Drop period will be permitted only in exceptional circumstances (space permitting) and requires the approval of the Associate Dean of Students.

Students are required to check their Whittier poets email account at least twice per week both after submitting their Application Form and during the course of the Externship semester. Students will be contacted if there are questions or problems with their Application. Students will receive a copy of the approved Application Form in their student mailbox.

An approved Externship Application Form does not register a student for an Externship. **In order to register, students with approved externships must submit registration materials to the Registrar’s Office.**
Certified Student Status – Students who have completed, or are currently enrolled in, Civil Procedure and Evidence may apply to the California State Bar’s Practical Training of Law Students program, which certifies students to provide legal services, such as participating in hearing and trials, under the supervision of an attorney during their externship. Some externship placements require or recommend that students become Certified. Application materials for Certified Status are available in Student Services or on the State Bar’s website: www.calbar.ca.gov (click on “Attorney Resources”, then click on “Special Services”). The “Declaration by Dean of Law School Form” should be submitted to the Registrar’s Office. It takes up to three weeks for the State Bar to approve your application after receipt of a complete packet.

VI. EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

Scott Wylie,  (on leave 2005-06)  
Associate Dean of External Affairs and  
John FitzRandolph Director of Clinics

Julia Fayngold Covey,  
Externship Director  
714-444-4141 ext. 284  
jfayngold-covey@law.whittier.edu

Lydia Levin,  
Adjunct Professor of Law  
llevin@law.whittier.edu

Barbara Nichols,  
Adjunct Professor of Law  
Children’s Rights Clinic and Externship Program  
714-444-4141 ext. 307  
bnichols@law.whittier.edu

Mary James,  
Administrative Assistant  
714-444-4141 ext. 303  
mjames@law.whittier.edu