

University of Kansas School of Law Field Placement Program

Course Description and Summary of Requirements

Contact

Jennifer Schmidt, Field Placement Program Director
schmidtj@ku.edu

Program Description

The Field Placement Program allows students to earn credit for performing legal work under the supervision of a practicing attorney at approved placements. Students will work a specified number of hours per week under the direct supervision of a practicing attorney, do primarily legal work, complete a goals memo, maintain weekly journals of their experience, write a reflective paper, and actively participate in the field placement class.

Course Goals

Students will develop lawyering skills and practice readiness in three ways:

- Observing lawyers and other legal professionals at their daily work
- Performing legal work under close supervision and receiving meaningful feedback on that performance
- Reflecting on their observations, experiences and impressions

The Field Placement Program is part of a progression of practice readiness from first-year Lawyering Skills. Participation in a field placement should allow students to build on skills they have begun learning in classroom simulations, clinics, other field placements, and other legal work experiences.

Academic Considerations and Requirements

To participate in the Program, students must have completed the equivalent of two semesters of law school and be in academic good standing.

Students may earn three or six credit hours during each of the fall and spring semesters. During the summer, students may choose to earn either three or six credit hours.

A student may earn a maximum of six credit hours of Field Placement Program credit toward graduation.

Each credit hour requires 42.5 hours of work or coursework. All work must be completed during the academic semester term in which the student is enrolled in the Field Placement Program. The particular work schedule is up to each student and his or her supervising attorney, and should be set before beginning work at the placement. The Program is graded on a credit/no credit basis.

If approved, a Field Placement will consist of two components:

- (1) A work experience in the approved field placement (a “job” at the organization), which consists of working a specified number of hours of work per week at the approved field placement.

AND

- (2) An academic component, which consists of:
 - Completion of significant assigned coursework;
 - Discussions with the Program Director;
 - Completion of a goals memo during the first week of the field placement;
 - Submission of weekly journal entries to the Program Director; and
 - Completion of a reflective paper.

Jobs that qualify for Field Placement Program credit

A student may receive academic credit for legal positions with approved government agencies, non-profit legal services organizations, non-profit international organizations, and others on a case-by-case basis. All placements must be approved by the Program Director.

Placements appropriate for credit are those that involve work assisting attorneys or clients with legal matters. Such placements should include the opportunity to practice lawyering skills such as legal research, analysis, and writing; advocacy; and other work that attorneys typically complete. Placements should also afford students the opportunity to observe at least one lawyer in his or her daily work.

Positions with private, for-profit law firms or most other for-profit entities do not qualify for Field Placement Program credit.

A student may not gain academic credit for work in which he receives monetary compensation of any kind, including scholarship assistance contingent on the placement. Reimbursement for expenses such as mileage may be permitted. Except with special permission from the Director, students may not receive Field Placement Program credit at placements where they have previously been employed for pay, or where they have received an offer of paid employment.

Students may not receive Field Placement Program credit in a placement for which there is an existing specialized KU Law clinic or field placement without prior permission from both the director of the affected specialized clinic or field placement and the director of the Field Placement Program. As a general rule, students with prosecution placements should participate in the Prosecution Field Placement Program; students with judicial placements should participate in the Judicial Field Placement; and so forth.

Obtaining a Field Placement

The Field Placement Program is self-placing, meaning that students find their own placements and apply to receive credit through the program. Some, but not all, field placement opportunities are posted on Symplicity, which is an online database used by the Career Services Office. Students may, of course, seek assistance and guidance from the Program Director and the Career Services Office.

Applying for the Field Placement Program

An application for participation in the Field Placement Program must be submitted for each academic term (fall, spring, or summer) in which the student wishes to participate in the Program. Applications should be submitted to the Program Director by the deadline prescribed by the Program Director.

For a Field Placement Program application to be processed, three requirements must be met:

- ***1 - The student must obtain a placement with a qualified employer.***
- ***2 - The student must complete and submit an application, which can be found and downloaded from the KU Law website (go to Academics/Experiential Learning/Programs, click Field Placement Program).***
- ***3 - The supervisor at the placement must be a licensed lawyer. He or she must submit a letter of interest, specifying what the student will do for the organization and addressing how the organization will ensure an excellent legal learning experience for the student. The letter of interest can be included with the application packet or can be submitted separately to the Program Director.***
- ***Please submit the above application and supporting documentation to Nikki Meyer, Faculty Support Professional, in the Law School Office.***