APPELLATE JUDICIAL EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Hans P. Sinha
Clinical Professor of Law
Director Appellate Judicial Externship Program

hsinha@olemiss.edu
(662) 915-6884
Room 523

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Introduction
The University of Mississippi School of Law and the National Center for Justice and the Rule of Law are proud to sponsor the Appellate Judicial Externship Program. This latest addition to our clinical program is a component of the National Center for Justice and the Rule of Law and is designed to enable exceptional students interested in the inner workings of appellate courts to obtain practical experience through placements as judicial externs with the Mississippi Court of Appeals and/or the Mississippi Supreme Court. Students interested in this opportunity should review the parameters of the program below, and complete the attached application process.

Overview of Program
The Appellate Judicial Externship Program is designed to place exceptional students interested in the workings of appellate courts. One student will be selected to be placed as a judicial extern with the Court of Appeals for the spring 2010 semester. A similar placement is possible with the Mississippi Supreme Court for the 2010 spring semester. The student will be assigned to the Court’s central staff division. The student will work on various legal topics of pending appellate matters. This part of the student’s externship experience will involve a large amount of legal research, analysis and writing. Students will also have an opportunity to attend oral arguments and related court conferences. In addition, the student will be exposed to the entire operation of the court, including intake, the judicial administrator’s office, the library, and individual judges’ chambers. Although the student will be directly supervised by a member of the Court’s central staff, the student should expect to work closely with several of the judges or justices on the Court.
At the conclusion of a student’s placement as a judicial extern, the student will have obtained a thorough and complete understanding of the over-all procedure of the Mississippi Court of Appeals and/or Supreme Court. It is expected that this combination of work on actual appellate cases in a clinical setting together with an exposure to the internal operations of a state appellate
court will provide a competitive advantage to students seeking employment as judicial clerks or with firms and governmental agencies focusing on appellate practice.

**Course Registration**

A student applying for the Appellate Judicial Externship Program should sign up for a regular course load for the semester in question. Upon acceptance into the program, the student will be allowed to drop the appropriate number of credit hours and register for Law 733 (twelve credit hours). Because of the full-time nature of the Appellate Judicial Externship Program (see below), a student participating in the program should not expect to be able to take additional courses during his or her placement semester.

**Externship Requirements**

In order to participate in the Appellate Judicial Externship Program, a student must:

1. Be a third year law student. This is defined as having successfully completed two-thirds (sixty credit hours) of his or her course requirement for graduation.
2. Be in academic good standing.
3. Maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average.
4. Have taken Evidence.
5. Have taken or participated in at least one of the following courses / programs:
   a. Appellate Practice
   b. Criminal Appeals Clinic
   c. Prosecution Externship Program
6. Complete the attached application packet, participate in an interview before the Appellate Judicial Externship Committee, and be selected for the placement by such committee.

Please note that in order to encourage applications from a wide range of the student body, should a student not meet requirements #3, #4 or #5, the student may still apply for participation in the Program. The student must state in the application why a waiver for one or more of the above requirements is being requested and why the student is otherwise qualified for participation in the program.
**Academic Credit**
A student selected to participate in the Appellate Judicial Externship Program will earn twelve (12) credit hours upon successful completion of the program as determined and approved by the Appellate Judicial Externship Committee. These academic hours are Z graded.

**Supervision**
The student will be supervised by an on-site supervisor while he or she is at the Court. The on-site supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the student has a well-rounded and worthwhile experience. The student will also be supervised by Professor Sinha, the program’s academic supervisor. Professor Sinha will ensure that the educational goals of the placement program are fulfilled.

**Semester Requirement**
Appellate Judicial Externs will complete fourteen weeks of full-time work with the Mississippi Court of Appeals or Supreme Court in Jackson, Mississippi.

**Expenses**
In addition to the regular tuition for the credit hours, the student is responsible for room and board while in Jackson. This is not a paid placement position.

**Academic Externship Requirements**
The Judicial Appellate Externship Program is an academic program. As such it is more than a mere judicial clerkship. In light of this there are certain academic requirements a student placed as an extern through this program must complete prior to academic credit being granted. These requirements include:

1. Text. The Appellate Judicial Externship Program is an academic program as opposed to a clerkship. As such it is important that the student placed as an extern obtain both a practical and a theoretical understanding of the role of appellate courts in our legal system.
The practical understanding will come from the day-to-day work and observation of the student at the Court. The theoretical understanding will come from the student reading and reflecting upon a text designed especially for Judicial Externship placements. The text the program will use for this purpose is *Judicial Externships: The Clinic Inside the Courthouse*, by Rebecca A. Cochran. The student is to read this text while at his or her judicial placement. Every two weeks the student is to submit a 2-3 page discussion of each topic discussed in the text, to wit: (1) The Role of the Judicial Clerk or Intern, (2) Crowded Courts: Limiting and Delegating Judicial Tasks, (3) Judicial Opinions: Decision Making and Opinion Drafting, (4) The Judge as Administrator in an Adversarial System, (5) Judicial Qualifications, Selection, and Training, (6) Judicial Ethics, and (7) Jurisprudence: Legal Philosophy in Action. These seven short papers are to be submitted to Professor Sinha and to the on-site supervisor.

2. Journal. An appellate judicial extern is also to maintain a contemporaneous journal of his or her experience at the Court. However, in light of the very sensitive and confidential nature of some of the workings of an appellate court, these journal submissions are to be non-descript in terms of any discussions with judges or central staff as to any pending cases. Rather the content of the journals are to be limited to a student’s reflection on either the general nature of an assignment or work he or she has done, or public matters such as observations of oral arguments, etc. The parameters of the journal entries will be further discussed with Professor Sinha and the on-site supervisor at the beginning of a student’s placement. The journal entries are expected to be approximately 2 pages of length for every two-week period. They are to be submitted to both the on-site supervisor and to Professor Sinha. The journals are viewed by both Professor Sinha and the on-site supervisor and may be viewed by the judges or justices on the Court. They may not be shared with anyone outside of this program in any way or fashion.

3. Time sheets. A student placed as an extern must maintain daily time sheets generally describing what he or she did for each day. These time sheets provide both a record of actual time the student has spent at his or her placement, as well as a means for the on-site
supervisor and the academic supervisor to ensure that the student is getting a substantial and well-rounded experience. Copies of the time sheets are to be emailed to Professor Sinha every other week. Copies are also to be submitted to the on-site supervisor. At the end of the placement the student must turn in hard copies of all time sheets signed by both the student and his or her on-site supervisor to Professor Sinha.

**Confidentiality**

A student placed as an Appellate Judicial Extern must adhere to the proper discretion expected of any lawyer or layperson working in a court and or judicial chamber. Each extern will be required to sign and adhere to the Appellate Judicial Externship Program Oath and Agreement of Confidentiality. The importance and requirement of discretion and confidentiality will be discussed with the student by both Professor Sinha and the on-site supervisor at the beginning of each placement.
**Application and Selection Process**

A student interested in the Appellate Judicial Externship Program must submit the following:

1. An appropriate cover letter.
2. A statement describing why the student is seeking to participate in the Appellate Judicial Externship Program.
3. A statement describing why the student is qualified to participate in the Appellate Judicial Externship Program.
4. Two letters of recommendation.
5. A copy of the student’s law school academic record.
6. A copy of the student’s resume.
7. One writing sample.

Applications should be submitted to Professor Sinha by Friday, October 30, 2009. Student selected for interviews by the Appellate Judicial Externship Program will be notified via email. Interviews will take place during the month of November, 2009, or at some other appropriate time. Announcements of the Committee’s decision will be made in a timely manner.