Summer Judicial Clerkship and Lawyering Practice Externships

What are the Summer Judicial Clerkship and Lawyering Practice Externships?
The Summer Judicial Clerkship Externship is an opportunity for students to gain experience working as unpaid law clerks for judges over the summer. The Summer Lawyering Practice Externship is an opportunity for students to gain lawyering experience and course credit through unpaid summer internships.

Where will I work?
Judicial Clerkship students can work for state, federal, or tribal judges at the trial level (including district, magistrate, and bankruptcy) or appellate level in Missouri, Illinois, or elsewhere in the United States. The summer Judicial Externship course primarily utilizes a cadre of participating judges in the St. Louis metropolitan area, in both Missouri and Illinois, who supervise Judicial Clerkship students during the regular academic year. Students who wish to do summer clerkships with judges outside the St. Louis metropolitan area may do so, but must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the faculty instructors that the proposed placement is comparable in rigor to the local placements.

Lawyering Practice Externship students may seek placements in any office that is utilized by the Clinical Education Program during the regular academic year, including Legal Services of Eastern Missouri; the Missouri Public Defender’s Office; the criminal and civil divisions of the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Missouri in downtown St. Louis, and the Southern District of Illinois across the river; or in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission district office in St. Louis. Alternatively, a student may work in a similar office in another location within the United States if he or she demonstrates to the satisfaction of the instructor that the proposed placement is comparable in rigor to previously-approved placements.

What will I learn in the Summer Judicial Clerkship and Lawyering Practice Externships?
Students in the Judicial Externship summer course learn litigation and appellate advocacy skills working as law clerks for judges. Students develop advanced legal research and writing skills through the research and drafting of legal memoranda on cases pending before the courts. Students also enhance their understanding of civil and criminal practice and procedure, and gain insights into judicial perspectives through the clerkship and through required observation of civil and criminal litigation.

Students in the Lawyering Practice Externship summer course learn advocacy and litigation skills working under the supervision of clinical field supervisors in government law offices or legal departments of approved tax-exempt charitable organizations. Students may handle cases in civil or criminal matters. Students engage in various phases of lawyering practice, including interviewing, counseling, investigation, drafting, negotiation, litigation and settlement. Students who are Missouri Rule 13 certified (or certified under the student practice rule of another state) may participate in legal hearings, motions, trials, and appeals. Rule 13 applications can be picked up in the Student Forms and Information area near the student mailboxes. To be eligible for Rule 13 certification, students must have completed at least 42 credits.

Who supervises students in the Summer Judicial Clerkship and Lawyering Practice Externships?
Judicial Clerkship students working with local judges meet with Professor Charles Bobinette or Professor Michael Koby on a weekly basis. Students working in out-of-town judicial placements will be supervised by Professor Koby, who will meet with students at the beginning and end of their out-of-town placements, and communicate with them weekly by phone and e-mail journals. Students’ written work is reviewed under the same standards whether the placement is local or out-of-town.
Lawyering Practice Students working with local attorneys meet with Professor Koby on a weekly basis. For out-of-town placements, Professor Koby will meet with students at the beginning and end of their externship experience and communicate with them weekly by phone and e-mail journal. Students’ written work is reviewed under the same standards whether the placement is local or out-of-town.

What are the requirements of the courses?
The Judicial Clerkship Externship course will be graded on a pass/fail basis. To earn 3 credits students in this course must work in their placements a minimum of 168 hours and produce a minimum of 30 pages of polished research and writing, including outlines and first drafts over a period of approximately six to ten weeks. Students seeking 4 credit hours (which requires permission of the instructor) must work in their placements a minimum of 224 hours and produce a corresponding amount of research and writing. Students are strongly encouraged to spread the work out over a ten-week period in order to develop a solid working relationship with the judge and law clerks. Students may begin work before the beginning of regular summer school courses through arrangement with the instructor.

The Lawyering Practice Externship course also will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Students in this course must work in their placements a minimum of 168 hours and complete designated assignments to earn 3 credit hours. Students seeking 4 credit hours (which requires permission of the instructor) must work in their placements a minimum of 224 hours and complete designated assignments. Students are strongly encouraged to spread the work out over a minimum ten-week period in order to develop a solid working relationship with the attorneys. Students may begin work before the beginning of regular summer school courses through arrangement with the instructor.

How do I register for the Summer Judicial Clerkship or Lawyering Practice Externship?
Students who wish to take either of these courses should pre-register by submitting a “Summer Judicial Clerkship and Lawyering Practice Externship Pre-Registration” form as soon as possible in order to secure priority in placement. These forms are available by the student mailboxes and on the web at http://law.wustl.edu/Registrar/index.asp?id=2131.

Withdrawal Policy: In the interest of maintaining excellent relationships with our placement sites, once a student has accepted her/his placement, s/he may not drop this course, and will receive a grade of pass or fail.

About Professor Charles W. Bobinette
Professor Bobinette has served as an adjunct professor for the Judicial Clerkship course for over twenty-five years; prior to that time he was a full-time clinical instructor at the School of Law. After serving as a judge in the St. Louis City Court from 1977-1981, Professor Bobinette joined the law firm Uthoff, Graeber, Boninette & Blanke as a partner. His work is focused on the areas of personal injury, workers' compensation, and business and employment litigation. His publications include "Specialized Losses: Visual Disabilities, Loss of Teeth and Hearing Disabilities," Missouri Workers' Compensation Law. He has been a board member of the Crusade Against Crime since 1988 and is currently the president.

About Professor Michael Koby
Professor Koby joined Washington University School of Law in 2001 after teaching for seven years at Catholic University’s law school in Washington, D.C. While at Catholic University, he served as Director of the Lawyering Skills Program and taught in the Advocacy for the Elderly Clinic. He previously served as legislative counsel for both the National Coalition Against Insurance Fraud and the National Capital Planning Commission. In 1998, Professor Koby was appointed by Congress as Special Counsel for Religious Liberty for the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission). At the Commission, he analyzed international legislative trends regarding religious liberty and advised Congress on taking appropriate action in response to human rights violations. His recent articles include "Constitutional Conversations and New Religious Movements: A Comparative Case Study" 38 Vand. J. Transnat'l L. 615 (2005) (with Leigh Greenhaw).