

Journal Topics Spring 2012

NOTE: For either of the first two journals, you are free to write about a different topic if you wish, so long as the journal entry is thoughtful, relevant to your externship experience, and adheres to our length and formatting requirements. In addition to your own ideas for journal topics, a list of alternate ideas for journal topics is at the end of this document.

The final journal is a reflection on the overall experience of your externship.

Journal Number One (Due Feb. 7) – 2 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font

Why did you choose this externship placement? What do you hope to get out of your externship? How does working in this placement fit into your overall career path? What is your greatest worry about this externship placement, and what is the most important goal you wish to accomplish?

Journal Number Two (March 13) – 2 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font

Every placement gives students the opportunity to develop their lawyering abilities: interviewing, investigation, research, writing, analysis, problem solving, counseling, advocacy, negotiation, planning, judging, etc. How well are you doing what you're asked to do? What strengths do you notice? What weaknesses have you discovered? How can you develop the former and counteract the latter? In preparing this journal, sit down with your Supervising Attorney and talk with him/her about the strengths and weaknesses s/he has observed thus far. (This is also a great way to get feedback!) Include a summary of the conversation you had with your supervisor.

Journal Number Three (April 24) – 6 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font

Reflect on your externship this semester (and, if you wish, externships that you have taken in the past). In writing this journal, consider your own values and what is important to you in the practice of law and life: money, work/life balance, prestige, family, respect, personal growth and fulfillment.

Did your experience cause you to change any of your career goals? What will you look for in a future job? Did your experience in this externship match the personal values? If not, what will you do help determine the area and type of practice you desire? What additional courses do you hope to take in law school to ensure you are as prepared as possible for the type of practice you desire, or to help you determine the type of practice you would like?

Whether or not you wish to pursue a career in this area of the law, what have you noticed about how the lawyers you work with practice law? What behaviors and systems work, and what don't? What have you observed that you hope to incorporate into your own practice and what would you change?