

Resolution to Bifurcate Advanced Course-Related Experience (D/N 803) and Update the Course Catalogue Description

Thereby establishing two distinct courses
Supervised Externship Placement (SEP)
Advanced Course-Related Experience (ACRE)

Background

Advanced Course-Related Experience was created several years ago to allow students to earn academic credit for experiential projects related to a course in which they were enrolled or had completed.

Experience with the course vehicle showed that it could and was being used for a variety of educational alternatives that did not quite fit the same mold – or the course as described. The course was used for three rather distinct purposes:

1. For student placement in externships where the Law School has no established externship relationship and where creating a new permanent relationship warranted further study or was unlikely to be repeated – in essence a “700” course for externships.
2. For students working with faculty in conjunction with a classroom course – either at the same time as the course or immediately following a course.
3. For students working with faculty on supervised field research advancing educational goals beyond the offerings of the current curriculum and leading to a work product of a different nature than the traditional scholarly paper associated with supervised research.

A new course was approved for the third purpose with the creation of Advanced Field Research (AFR) by the faculty in 2012. The ACE/ACRE mechanism continued to be used for the first two purposes while data was gathered on how to best disaggregate relevant approaches and frame a new course mechanism.¹

Now that we have had sufficient experience with the aggregated ACE/ACRE, it is clear that valuable educational projects falling into the first two categories are being pursued that should have distinct and recognizable course mechanisms. The externship placements, in particular, need a separate supervisory and curricular mechanism because of pedagogical demands of such programs as well as ABA standards regarding field placement programs that require unique oversight. In light of the foregoing, the following is proposed:

Resolved:

¹ The catalogue title and description for the course, at present, is:
“Advanced Course-related Experience Connected to a Classroom (ACE) (1 or 2 cr.) D/N 803. Advanced Course-Related Experience (ACE) (1 or 2 cr.) D/N 803 This option provides a mechanism for students to earn academic credit for experiential learning done in conjunction with a classroom course. Students design and execute proposals for learning how the law and theory learned in the classroom applies and operates outside the classroom. The experiential learning project must be approved by the faculty member teaching the classroom course to which the experiential learning opportunity is related and the Director of Clinical Programs and Externships. Non-graded (S/F) credit is awarded upon completion of assigned project.”

To bifurcate what is now called “Advanced Course-related Experience Connected to a Classroom (ACE) (1 or 2 cr.) D/N 803. Advanced Course-Related Experience (ACE)” into two distinct courses, with titles and catalogue descriptions as follows:

Supervised Externship Placement (SEP) (1 - 3 cr.)* D/N XXX. This course provides a mechanism for students to earn academic credit for experiential learning done in conjunction with a field placement that functions as an externship with an entity for which there is no relevant existing externship or for which there is no relevant existing program with the Law School. Students may identify placements on their own or in conjunction with a full-time faculty member. The placement must be approved by a full-time faculty member who commits to supervise the placement in the same manner that externships are supervised, and accepted by the SEP Administrator. The field placement entity must commit to having a licensed attorney act as a direct field supervisor for the placed student, and must recognize the pedagogical emphasis of the placement. The placement must be described at the time of registration on a form approved by the SEP Administrator in consultation with the Academic Affairs Committee (“SEP Placement Form”). The field placement entity must also complete a standard placement contract in a form approved by the SEP Administrator in consultation with the Academic Affairs Committee. Credits are awarded commensurate with hours worked (60 per credit hour). Non-graded (S/F) credit is awarded upon satisfactory completion of placement.

Advanced Course-Related Experience (ACRE) (1 - 3 cr.)* D/N XXX. This course provides a mechanism for students to earn academic credit for experiential learning done in conjunction with a classroom course that they have taken, or are taking, for credit. Students work in conjunction with full-time faculty members to design and execute proposals for learning how law and theory learned in the classroom operates outside the classroom. Some projects may present opportunities for collaboration between faculty teaching clinical and classroom courses. ACRE also may be used to provide opportunities for students to assist faculty with *pro bono* representation of community groups or clients. The ACRE proposal must be approved by the faculty member teaching the classroom course to which the experiential learning opportunity relates, and accepted by the ACRE Administrator.² The project must be described at the time of registration on a form approved by the ACRE Administrator in consultation with the Academic Affairs Committee (“ACRE Registration Form”). Credits are awarded commensurate with hours worked (60 per credit hour) unless a different basis is established beforehand by the supervising faculty member and accepted by the ACRE Administrator. Non-graded (S/F) credit is awarded by the supervising faculty member upon satisfactory completion of assigned project.

These changes will clarify for students what this mechanism is and how it functions, and assure integrity in the management of both types of learning mechanisms.

It is understood that the SEP mechanism (similar to a 700 course) is meant to be used only once for a given placement, so a new externship proposal should be submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee for approval with respect to entities that will continue to place externs in future semesters. Any SEP placement with the same entity within a three-year period should be treated as a new externship proposal

² If the professor who taught the course to the student proposing the experience is not available to supervise the proposal another faculty member teaching that course may approve and supervise the project. The faculty member approving the project is responsible for supervising and monitoring the student’s learning, completion of the project and awarding of credit.

*Three (3) credits will be available only in summer term when there is sufficient time to meet applicable work commitments.

and submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee for approval. Compliance with these expectations will be monitored by the SEP Administrator.

The SEP and ACRE courses commence in Fall 2013. The existing ACE course will be available for one to three credits in summer 2013.

Annex
ABA standards relevant to field placements

Standard 305. STUDY OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

(e) A **field placement program** shall include:

- (1) a clear statement of the goals and methods, and a demonstrated relationship between those goals and methods to the program in operation;
- (2) adequate instructional resources, including faculty teaching in and supervising the program who devote the requisite time and attention to satisfy program goals and are sufficiently available to students;
- (3) a clearly articulated method of evaluating each student's academic performance involving both a faculty member and the field placement supervisor;
- (4) a method for selecting, training, evaluating, and communicating with field placement supervisors;
- (5) periodic on-site visits or their equivalent by a faculty member if the field placement program awards four or more academic credits (or equivalent) for field work in any academic term or if on-site visits or their equivalent are otherwise necessary and appropriate;
- (6) a requirement that students have successfully completed one academic year of study prior to participation in the field placement program;
- (7) opportunities for student reflection on their field placement experience, through a seminar, regularly scheduled tutorials, or other means of guided reflection. Where a student can earn four or more academic credits (or equivalent) in the program for fieldwork, the seminar, tutorial, or other means of guided reflection must be provided contemporaneously.