INTRODUCTION

The Externship on the Federal Government in Washington, D.C., is a full-semester offering for second- and third-year law students. It provides a hands-on complement to the Law School’s more conventional courses in public law, affording students the opportunity to support and engage in first-hand study of federal government lawyering at the highest levels.

Admission is by application only. Up to fifteen students will be selected. Ellen Chapnick, Dean for Social Justice Initiatives, and Matt Gewolb, Director of Government Programs, will oversee externship placements, including the application process and term-time counseling. Michael Shenkman, Fellow of the Center for Law and Politics and Lecturer-in-Law, will teach the seminar components of the program in Washington, D.C.

Please note that offering of this Externship in spring 2013 is contingent on sufficient student demand. A final determination on whether the externship will be offered in spring 2013 will be based on the number of qualified applicants and will be made by the Dean for Social Justice Initiatives shortly after the application deadline. Applicants will be notified of this decision via email. Please plan accordingly.

Following admission to the program, externs will apply to participating federal government law offices on a guided basis.

This document describes the externship, including the application, selection and placement process. Please read it carefully.

There will be an informational session about this Externship on September 25, 2012 from 12:10-1:10 p.m. in Room 105 of Jerome Greene Hall. The deadline for applications is Monday, October 1, 2012 at 3 p.m.
MANDATORY PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The Externship will be coterminous with the upperclass spring 2013 semester. The Externship will include three core components for a total of 12 credits (please see the “prerequisites and other program considerations” section of this notice for important information regarding credit requirements and Law School rules):

Intensive Seminar on Ethics in the Federal Government (1 graded academic credit)
This one-week intensive seminar will invite students to explore the unique challenges and responsibilities of ethical law practice in the Federal Government. Anticipated topics include providing legal advice, identifying attorney-client relationships and working with political clients, statutory and other sources of ethical rules for federal employees, transition between government and related private work, and opportunities for reform. The course will consider in-depth several key case studies and may include presentations from one or more guests. Students will receive one graded academic credit for successful completion of the course.

Although it covers important ethics topics, this seminar is meant to supplement and not replace 2 or 3-credit courses offered on campus that satisfy the Law School’s professional responsibility requirement. This course will not satisfy the Law School’s professional responsibility requirement.

Seminar on Federal Government Lawyering (3 graded academic credits)
This substantive weekly seminar will engage students in a critical examination of the multiple roles of lawyers in federal government offices in Washington, D.C. The course features frequent guest speakers and class discussion draws significantly on the students’ own field placement experiences. Substantive and reflective writing will be required. Class attendance is mandatory and class participation will be a substantial part of the grade for the seminar. Students will receive three graded academic credits for successful completion of the course, and the required written work will be eligible to satisfy the JD Minor Writing requirement.

The seminar will have weekly evening meetings, usually on Mondays. Session topics in prior terms have included: mechanisms for congressional control of the Executive branch, the Justice Department and legal policymaking, agency general counsels, the White House Counsel’s Office, the President’s relationship to independent agencies, judicial nominations, national security lawyering, and congressional hearing preparation. In addition, students will have three small-group breakout sessions during the term to focus directly on experiences in the field placements.

Field Placements (8 ungraded clinical credits)
Students will work full time (a minimum of 40 hours per week) at their field placements for the duration of the spring semester. They will receive eight ungraded clinical credits for successful completion of the field work.
OPTIONAL PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Optional Supervised Research Paper (1-3 credits + eligibility for Major Writing requirement)
Students may elect to write a substantive research paper on a topic closely related to the externship and his or her individual field placement. In addition to graded or ungraded credits, such papers may be used to satisfy the JD Major Writing requirement. Students will be responsible for obtaining their own faculty supervisors for the paper, who will advise and grade the work product. Externs choosing this option may wish to develop their topics in consultation with the government agency for which they are working. The JD Rules regarding supervised research papers are applicable and should be consulted.

Optional Satisfaction of Mandatory Pro Bono Credit Hours
Students who extend their externship placements beyond the spring semester can use the additional time toward the 40 hour mandatory pro bono requirement or use it as voluntary pro bono. The appropriate pro bono forms must be filed with Social Justice Initiatives.

EXTERNSHIP PLACEMENTS

Students selected for the externship will be counseled about their interests by Matt Gewolb and Professor Shenkman and will apply through SJI to positions of interest to them in the Executive Branch (including at Independent Agencies) and in the Legislative Branch. Consistent with the nature of an externship program, the placement process involves a determination by the Law School that a particular field placement is committed to giving students substantive legal work and that attorney supervisors are committed to providing excellent supervision. It is not expected that more than one extern will work in the same office.

Placement supervisors will be leaders in their field who are committed to ensuring a quality learning experience for students and who will collaborate with Columbia faculty to create a learning agenda that complements the seminar. Matt Gewolb will have primary responsibility for coordination with the field placements during the semester, meeting with students several times and conducting a site visit/meeting with each student and field supervisor.

While SJI can offer suggested placements based on prior successful externship experiences, students in the program are not required to select a placement from a set list. Instead, SJI will manage a guided placement process that takes into account each student’s interests and goals. Each student will meet individually with the course instructor and/or placement director during this placement process.

PREREQUISITES & OTHER PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

There are no prerequisite courses for the externship. Admission preference will be given to students who have taken Administrative Law, Legislation and substantive courses related to their proposed placements.

Successful completion of the core components of the externship will result in the receipt of twelve credits – four graded academic credits and eight ungraded clinical credits.
No more than 23 of the 83 law school credits required for graduation may represent either clinical courses or other courses related to legal training and at least 65 of the required 83 credits must represent regularly scheduled class sessions. The 8 credits for the field placement and any credits for the optional supervised research paper will count against the 18 credit cap. Students who have taken clinics or other externships, received academic credit for supervised research, law review, moot court or other nonresidential classroom activities (or plan to do so following the Externship) should make sure that they will have the necessary credits to graduate if they take this Externship. It is strongly suggested that, before applying for this Externship, students consult Rule 1.1 of the Columbia Law School Rules for the JD Degree (http://www.law.columbia.edu/academics/rules/jd-rules/course-of-studies) and meet with Joel Kosman, Director of Academic Counseling and Student Organizations.

Most government offices perform a background check on their externs, before the externs’ work begins. Some agencies also require more in-depth investigations required for security clearance. In addition, many government agencies limit eligibility for volunteer positions, including externships, to U.S. citizens. A Green Card will not be sufficient for those positions and even in the rare situations when a Green Card is sufficient, the agency and the extern likely will have to go through many time-consuming bureaucratic steps for approval of the placement. This process may not be concluded before the spring semester begins. In addition, students who have spent a significant amount of time abroad in the recent past may confront special issues with timing of the clearance process. Students who anticipate that either the clearance procedure or the citizenship requirement could pose a problem with approval to work in a government office should meet with Matt Gewolb before they apply to the Externship program.

LOCATION AND HOUSING
The seminar and most meetings will be held at the University of California Washington Center near Dupont Circle. Externs will be responsible for finding and funding their own housing. Previous externs report that both housing and transportation costs in D.C. are greater than those they experience in New York City.

Applicants should note that every effort is made to provide services and support to students participating in the extern, however, many on-campus services are not fully replicated for students in the externship program. Career counseling, judicial clerkship counseling, and other advice services are available only remotely. While Columbia student health insurance will cover care in the Washington, D.C. area, past participants in the program have reported substantial additional administrative work is required to obtain service. Library, printing, and other services may be available by courtesy arrangement with other schools, but service levels may not match those provided on campus.
APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND SCHEDULE

Applications must be received via e-mail by the Social Justice Initiatives office no later than 3 p.m. on October 1, 2012. Applications must be e-mailed as a single PDF file to Matt Gewolb at matthew.gewolb@law.columbia.edu. Each application will be acknowledged upon receipt. If your application has not been acknowledged, you may call Matt Gewolb at 212-854-7486 to verify receipt.

APPLICATIONS
The application consists of one PDF document containing, in this order:

1. A current resume.

2. A personal statement (1-2 single spaced pages in 12 pt type with 1” borders maximum) that includes discussion of:
   • the applicant’s reasons for wanting to take the Externship on the Federal Government in D.C.;
   • the applicant’s preparation for the externship, with particular attention to work experience and classes taken; and
   • interest and future aspirations, if any, in government and public law work.

3. A list of 3-5 specific government agencies at which the applicant might want to work if he or she were selected for this externship. If the list includes the Department of Justice, please specify the division(s) of interest. (This list is solely for the purpose of getting a sense of where applicant might want to work. There are no “preferred” placements and the list will not be binding during the placement process.)

4. A copy of the applicant’s law school transcript(s) (an unofficial transcript from Lawnet is acceptable).

SELECTION
Selection for the Externship will be based upon:

- Demonstrated interest in public law and the role of lawyers in the U.S. federal government;
- Preparation for the Externship through classes, employment or other activities, not restricted to those done while a student at Columbia Law School;
- Prior substantive employment experience, not necessarily relevant to the subject matter of the Externship or to law;
- Excellence in legal research, analysis, and writing.

It is not expected that interviews will be conducted but we reserve the right to do so.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION SCHEDULE

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<td>October 1 at 3 p.m.</td>
<td>Applications Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 5</td>
<td>Applicants informed of status (accepted / wait list / not accepted)</td>
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For more information, contact Matt Gewolb, Director of Government Programs, Social Justice Initiatives, at <matthew.gewolb@law.columbia.edu> or 212-854-7486.