

EXAMPLE ONLY

# Practicum Course Proposal (Example)

**Student:** Jennifer H. Doe  
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**Department/Course No.:** LGLS 425  
**Term/Year:** Fall 2008  
**Desired Credit Hours This Term:** 6

**Business:** Dinsdale & Cummings  
Attorneys at Law, PLLC  
P.O. Box 24598  
Charleston, WV 25302  
(304) 555-4LAW

**Site Supervisor:** Charles T. Timmons, III, Esq.  
**Faculty Mentor:** Priscilla Gay, Director of Legal Studies

## Introduction

**\*\* In your own words, provide background information of the business to demonstrate understanding of the industry in which the practicum will take place. Describe the location and environment of practicum site.**

In order to gain hands-on experience in my chosen field, and to apply the knowledge attained through my three years of formal education at Mountain State University, I wish to complete a six credit hour internship with Dinsdale & Cummings.

Dinsdale & Cummings is a six partner law firm located in Charleston, West Virginia. It was founded as a two-man firm in 1965 by the late Daniel R. Dinsdale and his cousin, Emmanuel Cummings. Since that time, the firm has grown to include four other partners, five associates, and twelve paralegals, assistants, and other clerical personnel.

Dinsdale & Cummings specializes in criminal defense law. The firm takes on a varied case load, with current cases running the gamut from traffic violations and DUI to bank robbery and even murder. I chose the firm of Dinsdale & Cummings because I plan to continue my education at West Virginia University School of Law, and become a criminal defense attorney upon graduation.

I will be working closely with Charles T. Timmons, III. Mr. Timmons has been with Dinsdale & Cummings for ten years. Prior to that, he spent five years with the Kanawha County Prosecutor's Office. He specializes in criminal defense law.

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### Goals and Objectives

**\*\* In your own words, tell us: What do you intend to do? Identify learning and performance objectives.**

I have several goals in mind for this internship. First and foremost, I wish to gain hands-on experience with the criminal defense litigation process. I will do this by helping Mr. Timmons and others prepare legal pleadings, assist with investigations into the circumstances of our clients' cases, assist with legal research, and sit in on the various meetings and hearings that occur prior to a trial. If I am fortunate, one of Mr. Timmons' cases will reach trial during my time at the firm, and I will be able to assist with the trial preparation process, and observe the trial from the defense table as it happens.

Additionally, I wish to see the day-to-day operations of running a law firm. While I will be spending most of my time assisting the attorneys with work on actual cases, I hope to get a general overview with how the business side of a law firm is run. For example, I would be interested to learn how client accounts and funds are kept separate from firm funds, how payroll is handled, and learn how attorneys select the best legal assistants, paralegals, and secretaries when they have to hire new support staff.

I am hopeful that, by doing this internship, I will affirm that criminal defense is indeed area of law I wish to pursue in my career as an attorney. Additionally, I hope to discover if I have the entrepreneurial skills it takes to start a law a small law firm, and grow it from the ground up into a multi-partner concern.

### Practicum Job Description

**\*\* In your own words, list the responsibilities and duties that you will perform on a regular basis in the job in which you will be working. These duties should be the "how" of learning the points listed in the Goals and Objectives. Also describe projects and other special assignments.**

As I start my internship, my main focus will be on assisting the attorneys with legal research, drafting, and editing documents, while observing the day-to-day activities of the attorneys and their staff. As time goes on, Mr. Timmons has suggested that I actively participate in client interviews, meetings, depositions, and hearings. We are hopeful at this time that one of his cases goes to trial during my internship, and, if so, I will be playing a major role in his trial preparation activities, in addition to assisting Mr. Timmons during trial and observing the proceedings from the defense table. Additionally, Mr. Timmons believes that one of the most important aspects of criminal defense is good investigation, and so he hopes to schedule me to assist the firm's investigator.

### Assignments

**\*\* Assignments are the same for each student.**

- Daily Journal and Hours Logs
- Practicum Term Paper (as assigned by my Faculty Mentor)
- Performance Appraisal (to be completed by my supervisor)
- Student Evaluation of the Site

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### Approximate Placement Duration

My internship is scheduled to begin on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008, and will continue until I have completed 240 work hours as required for a six credit hour practicum. At this time, it is projected that I will be able to work thirty hours per week.

### Compensation

***\*\*If internship is unpaid, please show as “N/A”***

\$6.00 per hour

### Evaluation

My practicum grade will be submitted based on the Performance Appraisal submitted by my site supervisor, on the content and quality of my practicum term paper, and on the content and completeness of my Daily Journal & Hours logs. My site supervisor will discuss my progress and provide feedback to me on a regular basis.

### Student Responsibilities

***\*\*It is VERY important that students read and understand their responsibilities in regard to the practicum course. Type this section into your Course Proposal, substituting the name of your supervisor, faculty mentor, and work hours where indicated.***

- I understand that, at the completion of my 240 work hours, it is my responsibility to make sure the Performance Appraisal is submitted to the Career Services Center at Mountain State University.
- I understand that if I encounter any problems during my placement, I am to contact Career Services IMMEDIATELY.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to keep track of all hours worked and turn in my Daily Journal and Hours Log, signed by my supervisor Mr. Timmons, to my Faculty Mentor Priscilla Gay.
- I understand that my Faculty Mentor, Priscilla Gay sets the standard for my Practicum Term paper, and that it is my responsibility to speak with her regarding length, format and content well ahead of my completion deadline.
- It is my responsibility to ensure that the term paper is submitted directly to her office when complete.
- I acknowledge that I have one year (365 days) from my date of registration to complete my hours and make sure all paperwork is turned in to my Faculty Mentor and that, if I fail to do so, I risk receiving an “F” grade.
- I acknowledge that, since students are given one year to complete their practicum, no extensions are granted.

### NOTE TO STUDENTS:

**The signature page provided for you at the end of this example is to be attached to and made part of your finished Course Proposal. By signing this sheet, your supervisor, faculty mentor, and dean are certifying that they have read and approved your proposed practicum experience.**

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# Practicum Course Proposal Signature Page

**\*For International Students:**

**You must contact Dwight Heaster, Coordinator of International Student Services before you begin your practicum. Mr. Heaster's approval signature is also required on your course proposal.**

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**Dwight Heaster, Coordinator of  
International Student Services**

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**Date**

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Faculty Mentor

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Date

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Site Supervisor

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Date

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Student

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Date

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Dean / Division Chair

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Date

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Career Services Center

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Date

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