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Stetson University - College of Law

Why Stetson: Clinical and Experiential Education at Stetson Law

Wednesday

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[Captioner standing by]

[Recording in progress]

>> DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Good afternoon, everyone!

Welcome to today's Student Open House. We're going to pause a little bit and let everyone get in the room as we'll be starting momentarily.

Thank you, again, for joining us, taking some time out of your day to be with us. We are really excited to talk with you today about our Clinical and Experiential Education at Stetson Law.

Again, we're just waiting for everyone to get in the room, so thanks for your patience.

Okay, we're going to go ahead and begin. I think we can go ahead and start.

Again, good afternoon! My name is Karla Davis-Jamison and I'm the Assistant Dean of Enrollment here at Stetson University - College of Law.

My co-host this afternoon is Darren Kettles, Director of Admissions. And on behalf of the entire Admissions and Student Financial Planning Team, I just want to thank you for joining us for today's event.

Our topic for today's webinar is Why Stetson: A Look at Clinics and Externships at Stetson Law of Law.

We, as you may know, are one of a few law schools across the country that guarantees every student can participate in a Clinic or Externship during their Law School experience.

Our Office of Clinical and Experiential Education assists students in gaining practical skills, training, through over 350 Clinics and Externship opportunities.

We know that having opportunities to gain practical skills training is very important as you make your Law School decision, so we hope that from today's webinar you are able to gather some information that will help you further with that decision. We hope that it's helpful and informative.

Before I introduce our panelists, I want to give you three quick housekeeping notes.

First, I think you probably see in the chat there that closed captioning is available for this webinar and the link to view the captioning can be seen there in the chat. I hope you see that there.

And, secondly, if you have questions for our panelists as you listen to

the discussion, we want to encourage you to go ahead and post your questions. You don't have to hold them until the end, feel free to post your questions during the conversation.

We will take questions, we have reserved a good chunk of time at the end of the discussion to facilitate a Q&A session so we can answer all of your questions.

And, finally, this webinar is being recorded and so we are going to make the recording link available to all attendees following the webinar. So you'll have an opportunity to go back and listen or hear or see something if you missed it. Okay?

So now I'm just going to briefly introduce our panelists, our wonderful panel.

First off, Professor Christine Cerniglia. Professor Cerniglia is an Associate Professor of Law, as well as the Director of Clinical and Experiential Education here at Stetson University - College of Law. She graduated from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law. After Law School, she practiced Maritime Law in New Orleans. She also served as a Staff Attorney as the 6th Judicial Circuit Court in Florida.

Her teaching experience includes teaching at Atlanta's John Marshall Law School, Loyola New Orleans Law School, and now Stetson College of Law.

In her role as Director of Clinical and Experiential Education, she is dedicated to building upon the long history of Clinical training here at Stetson.

We also have Katia Barone with us. Katia has just joined Stetson about

a month and a half ago, so she is new to the Stetson community, but she is a native of New Jersey, a native New Jerseyan, if that's how you say it [laughter] and earned her law degree at Seton Hall Law School. We're happy to have Katia with us at Stetson. And Katia is Assistant Director of Clinical and Experiential Education, so she works very closely with Professor Cerniglia in that role.

And then Mackenzie Vojtko is a 3L student. I learned this morning that Mackenzie has 43 days until graduation, [laughter] but she is not counting the days. [Laughter]

Mackenzie is a native -- a Tampa native. She went to the University of South Florida, and she will talk to you about this a little later, but she participated in the Prosecution Clinic. She has direct experience with Externships and Clinics and she will talk to you about that later.

With that, I'll stop and let our panelists begin. And they are encouraged to share additional information about their background and experience.

Professor Cerniglia.

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: Hi, everybody! Always good to join, even in the virtual space, although we would love to have you on our campus.

So let me just say I like to load up my PowerPoint slides to show you our beautiful campus. If you were here with us, we would definitely make sure to showcase this gorgeous day we ordered up for you. It's a beautiful day outside, perfect spring weather. Our campus creates such a great sense of community. We do a lot of events. I'm still pulling for our crawfish boil later this spring.

My job is to give you a sense of how our Clinical and Experiential come together. We try hard to create a great sense of community even though many of our students are out in the field moving and shaking and learning.

So our department is the Department of Clinical and Experiential Education. That's a long academic term and title and I'm going to explain to you why it's very relevant in this modern context.

Not only do we have a lot going on globally, but equally, legal education is changing as well, so there's many kind of initiative that is have happened since 2015 to really elevate Experiential Education and now require it. And many schools across the country have basically had to reshuffle their curriculums. We didn't because we've had so many Experiential opportunities with real world experience and practical training, we just have kind of built on our base of what we already have.

So hopefully in this power hour we will be able to showcase many of these opportunities and take questions and answers at the end so that we can specifically address your interests.

So we've already done somewhat of a welcome here, but I always like to use this time to connect, so you can kind of understand our personalities and I always say mantras.

So my mantra is really one, and I don't want to get on a soap box, but I really believe in legal education and reform, to be quite honest. I like to integrate practical training and create pipeways and pipelines and thread them back into community.

Many times my job is to meet with community partners and figure out what is out in community, what is relevant and what is needed to train our

lawyers on campus and figure out ways to integrate our curriculum with real world experiences.

So the highlight of my career and my life's passion is truly Experiential Education. And I'm really grateful to be on this particular campus to pursue that passion. Stetson embodies training and curriculum when it comes to practical skills training and really experiences that out in the field. So welcome!

And equally, I'm so excited to introduce Katia, who is new to our department, but not new to Experiential Education, so we are really excited to introduce her. And she will share her kind of philosophy as well.

>> KATIA BARONE: Yes, thank you, Professor Cerniglia. I'm so excited to be at Stetson. Thank you to Karla for the wonderful introduction previously.

To give you some more of my background, I recently came to Florida to join Stetson. I have experience in Family Law, and prior to going to Law School, I worked in education for many years as a teacher, a Guidance Counselor, and most recently an International Program Director, where I built and ran many Experiential Educational programs for students at the High School level.

I'm very excited to be here. If you come to Stetson and do a Clinical or Externship, you will get to know me very well. Part of our philosophy in our department is to work very, very closely individually with each student. So we take the time to meet with you before you even apply for an experience to understand what you want your future legal work to look like and to help you find the right fit together.

So we absolutely take the time with each student and put a lot of focus on what is best for you professionally and in building your education.

So thank you and I look forward to potentially meeting you in the future.

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: So we are actually -- literally, a wall separates us right now. We are in a little house on campus and it truly is a little house.

Mackenzie, I want you to introduce yourself as well so you can share in that space. Mackenzie is our Clinic Fellow who is in this house also, not all the time, but part-time, as a current student who has participated in Clinical Education.

>> MACKENZIE VOJTKO: Thank you, Professor Cerniglia. My name is Mackenzie Vojtko. I assist with pretty much whatever the Clinic Office needs. Like she said, I participated in the Clinic my 2L summer. I was in the Judicial Circuit at the State Attorney's Office and I graduate this May. So if you have any questions about Stetson and what life is like here, please feel free to ask.

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: Awesome. Thanks, Mackenzie.

So this space, I'm going to get serious now, this is all nice and fun, but let's get serious. So our little space we have created here is essentially a really organic space that students when they are out in the field can come back and just sit and really chat about their experience.

The learning looks different in Clinical Education and I'll just tell you why. Because what happens is you are out in the field having an experience, we want you to act and gain that real world experience and then we want you

to stop, really actually stop and think about what just happened.

And this is a cycle that kind of happens here. That reflection process is something we don't want you to do fast or speedy. We want you to sit in a dining room format, have a cup of tea, sit back, maybe have some lunch, and just be organic in the way you interact with each other to talk about, I just saw this, right? This just happened. And then we want an Advisor or a Supervisor or a Clinic Professor to oversee that organic discussion or guided reflections to really help you re-conceptualize the way you're going to go back out and act again.

So part of this is setting up kind of processes, courses, curriculums, organic spaces for you to have this experience in a somewhat structured and unstructured environment because we do think that's where deep learning happens.

That re-conceptualization now allows you to be a better practitioner, so when you go back out into the field, you will apply what you learned.

Just yesterday we had a Judge stop by our little house and sat and told us all kinds of story, famous war stories, and we think that kind of environment and learning experience allows this organic mentoring to happen and we love fostering it, to be quite honest.

We have quite a few Alums in the area who love to stop by. They sit and have a cup of coffee with us sometimes or literally stop in to say hello. It's just a great place to be.

So I'm going to go through each of the structures of Experiential Education. In 2015, the American Bar Association, who regulates law schools, basically now requires six credits of Experiential Education. I'm going to talk

to you about each that are offered.

Each one of these experiences is very meaningful.

So we have Clinical Education and what that means is you are truly a student practitioner. You are licensed for the most part by the Florida Bar as a student who is able to practice before you actually obtain your license.

And so we send your name off to the Florida Supreme Court and say, this person is on the Bar roll for this semester and is able to actively participate in our law practice program where they are out in the field representing clients.

So what's great about that is we have a history, we're one of the first Clinics in the State of Florida and very historic in the country. From the very early 60s we've had Clinical Education, which means most of the Judges in our area who are overseeing Clinic students who are performing and literally running a docket have participated in the Clinic.

We will see Judges who will stop and mentor students really in the field, in the moment, to say, hey, I saw you just did this, you might be able to do this little bit of heavy thought about that, right?

So having a Judge and this community of people who have gone through Clinical Education is very unique and so that's something we do.

Most of our Clinics are field Clinics. They are literally out in the offices. The students -- our Adjunct Professors are practicing Attorneys. Many times for 20-30 years they have been overseeing student and overseeing our Clinics for decades or they were a Clinic student themselves.

So you should feel the full immersion in the Clinic opportunity. You are representing clients, appearing in Court, many times running the docket, you

are getting trial skills. I'll talk more about the prerequisites and how we think that experience is. Again, a really important experience.

We put C.L.I. because the Florida Supreme Court regulates our students and what they can and cannot do as far as Clinic students and they title it Certified Legal Interns. And so we consider those Certified Legal Interns, our Clinic students, part of our law practice program.

Okay, then you have Externships. The best way to think of Externships are an elbow to elbow experience. You are out in the field, you are next to a field placement Supervisor, you are in a Law Office, and you have both field Supervisor oversight, as well as Faculty oversight. You are learning a specific area of law, but you don't have the full weight and responsibility of really client representation. And so great way to try on coats, is what I like to say, you literally are trying on an experience to say, hey, does this work for me? Does it not work for me?

I just met with a student yesterday who said, yeah, I don't think I'm going to go in that direction. What a great way to learn in a short three months rather than an investment, you know, for three years post-graduation. So many of our students pursue several Externships over the course of their career.

We also have started developing in the past four years Practicum Courses and those Practicum Courses are integrating a real life case into the classroom and they are designed in a way that engages you in real life work with a Field Office. There's Faculty oversight, but you are learning a substantive area of law while you are working on real cases.

We have about two or three of these Practicums and we are very

excited because we think they address a need we see in the community, as well as building a pipeline for practitioners to practice in this particular field.

And then we are historic, I'm going to be honest, we're at the top of the list for Trial Advocacy. We have a ton of Simulation Courses which are called Skills Courses here. I teach one this semester, Client Interviewing and Counseling. It is all simulation-based. Every time you go in the classroom, you are responsible for running the simulation. And there's so much that can be learned from Simulation Course design.

We have been doing it for, I mean, decades, and so this is just kind of a cultural norm on our campus that have Trial Advocacy simulations, client interviewing simulations, all kinds of skills classes to be offered here at Stetson.

All of this is an umbrella of Experiential Education and all very kind of innovative at many schools, but something we have historically done.

We have a Facebook page, we always encourage you to join and check us out. We are probably not as great at updating it because we are busy out in the field meeting with people, but we do try to create a sense of community online. Again, you can see what's going on and we really encourage you to do that.

We equally take a really diligent mindset to operate with students and meet with them on a very individual level. To be quite honest, we could push out general information to our student body and that isn't as meaningful as really having an Open Door Policy for you to reach out, meet with me, meet with Katia, meet with Clinic Fellows, come by, meet with our Clinic Professors and really plan what you prefer to do long-term.

Some of you may not know and that's okay, too. So those discussions become really important to kind of talk about.

So let's just take a moment to kind of describe to you the historic nature of our Clinics. Again, I'm giving you two visions here. One of which is the historic picture of Stetson, but it comes from an article on the history of Clinical Education at Stetson.

We have a long history. Again, the 1960s, we had one Professor and two Clinic students who won an on appeal post-conviction release and allowed the Defendant to take a lesser sentence. It was a historic moment in Florida. It really allowed students to lean in and take real classes.

From that grew our Public Defender Clinic. This is the Hall of Fame in the PD's Office. Everyone who is a Clinic student receives a badge -- and they have been doing this for decades -- when they finish the Clinic, they hang the badges.

So a lot of people are like, oh, that's Judge so and so, oh, that's the Speaker of the House, all who were once Clinic students.

I can't give all of the insight in one hour, just to be quite honest, so I really encourage you to go on our webpage. We have tons of webpages and links to videos to give insight into all kinds of experiences. And so, again, the best thing to do is go to our Clinics and Externships website, look at Course Opportunities, click on that, and you can browse our course list and each one of those pages has a video either from the Professor or from law students describing kind of the day in the life of what you will experience.

Lots of options. And so the best thing to do is to browse or to reach out to us.

So here's a sample just to showcase some of what -- and this isn't even all of them, y'all. [Laughter] Just to show you how many Clinics we have. We have Child Advocacy, Civil Legal, Local Government, we have two Prosecution Clinics and to different philosophies on prosecution. So some students who know they want to be career Prosecutors will actually switch from one to the other each semester.

All of our Clinics run one semester. We have some advanced Clinics, so we have a Veterans Clinic and we also have an advanced Veterans Advocacy Clinic. So if you know your passion about Veterans' rights, you are able to now take an Appellate case in advanced Clinic and argue it up to the DC Circuit Court. Again, a great experience.

I'm going to stop for a second because I know I have been talking a lot and engage Mackenzie a little bit to give you insight into the student perspective on pursuing a Clinic.

Mackenzie participated in the Prosecution Clinic and will soon be hired, literally a full-time employee, mostly because of that experience.

So I'll stop there, and, Mackenzie, any insight you can shed to everybody on how meaningful that experience was to you.

>> MACKENZIE VOJTKO: So when I talk about my Clinic experience at the 13th, the first thing I always say is it's the best experience I've had in my Law School career.

I've had a little bit of an untraditional path because, as I'm sure you all know, COVID. So the first half of my first year and my second year was pretty interrupted by that. But being able to actually get into an office and really feel what it's going to be like to be an Assistant State Attorney, I think that's an

invaluable experience. And the same can be said for any of the other Externships or other Clinics that we offer. You really get a chance to, like, feel out what it's going to be like.

I've had friends that do things and are like, you know what? This is not what I want to do when I graduate. Like Professor Cerniglia said, it's better to figure that out in a semester rather than three years into practice.

Also, it's a great networking opportunity. You meet a lot of people out in the field. And like Professor Cerniglia said, I have accepted a position at the 13th, which I largely credit to the Clinic experience I had. If I didn't have that experience, I wouldn't have those contacts and I wouldn't have this job.

So it's invaluable to your education and your professional career.

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: Thanks, Mackenzie.

So, again, a lot of students will ask, how does this work with their class schedule, right? I say this all the time, you have a lot to accomplish when you are in Law School and not a lot of time. Every other professional career has close to seven years of the formation process. Law School only provides a short three years to you.

So you will feel a lot of pressure when you come here to pursue everything you possibly can. And, again, working this out and planning for it is a really important kind of opportunity to do from day one.

Again, what we do is we allow students to choose how many credits they want to pursue. Many will allow variable credits. If you wanted to pursue it for three credits, you can do it that way and it breaks down to hours per week.

We stay out of, you have to go in on Monday or Friday, we allow you to

choose that, but we do want to give you as much information about when the most activity is out in the field. Again, that's how it works.

And we teach you kind of how to bill, how to keep track of your billable hours, and we are training you how to do that in the structured environment of keeping your time in an Externship and Clinic.

I already explained what a Certified Legal Intern is. Our formal process of becoming a Clinic student and it's sometimes somewhat confusing because every Law School in Florida does it a little bit different.

We tend to be a little more rigid, to be honest, and we are proud of our rigid prerequisites. So I always like to stop and highlight this.

We have several prerequisites in place that other law schools may not have. So the Florida Supreme Court requires before you participate in a Clinic that you have ethics or otherwise called professional responsibility, but there's no other requirement other than 48 credits, so that is usually by your second semester -- I mean second year, second semester that you can start pursuing Clinics.

We require a little bit more. We require Advanced Crim Pro, Evidence, and Trial Advocacy and that is because before you are handling real life cases, we want to make sure you are prepared and not missing a substantive legal issue or you are engaging in the experience at a more depthful level rather than just have a superficial experience over your head.

We do think that our students, and we get a lot of feedback from Judges, your students stand out, they just do. Many of our students will say, oh, we have to do all of these prerequisites, but I think there's a culture on our campus that they understand it's important and a prerequisite.

Defense Clinics, our Child Advocacy Clinic is actually housed inside of the Public Defender's Office, so if you are interested in representing children and delinquency and dependency hearings, that's one great placement and has really dedicated Clinical Professors.

Our PD Clinics, our students are handling misdemeanor cases. During the pandemic, all of our Clinics still operated. It's incredible. Our Court System is really inundated right now and our students play a critical part in understanding the Constitutional legal issues that are happening and unfolding because of the pandemic.

Our Prosecution Clinic is another extremely historic Clinic and we have two, right here in the 6th Circuit and 13th Circuit. The State Attorney's Office directly hires from our Clinic students, showcasing what skills you have. And we have a class on campus at night. So many of these dedicated practitioners and Adjunct Professors will mentor during the day and at night literally teach a substantive subject around prosecution. You will hear from the Coroner's office and hear substantive analysis around DUI cases because that's what many of you will be handling when you are in the Clinic.

Our only live client at the moment, although I think we will be opening up a new Clinic yet, but our Veterans Law Institute and Veterans Advocacy Clinic, nationally known. Really collecting data on exposure for Veterans out in the field.

And then equally, our students, this is on campus, we have Veterans on campus coming to our Clinic seeking legal services on their disability appeals.

Many times the Veterans Administration will deny claims that rightfully

should not be denied, so our Clinic Professor, Professor Simcox, who is a Veteran herself, everyone who runs that Clinic is a Veteran. So they speak the acronyms and the language. We take great pride in the service we provide to our Veterans on campus and nationally.

So incredible wins and victories for Veterans who may not otherwise have advocated for themselves because they are so stoic.

Local Government Clinic, probably one of the most fascinating Clinics legally. As you can imagine, the pandemic has brought out all kinds of Municipal mandate issues and Constitutional issues. So we actually like to refer to this Clinic as our Constitutional Law Clinic because there's so much going on at the local level, especially here in Florida.

So our Local Government Professor has been doing this for over two decades and she really is in the field mentoring. The class is actually taught off campus in their office.

And so, again, great opportunity to study the issues and literally perform for code enforcement violations. So you are representing the Government, the City of St. Pete in code enforcement and those code enforcement issues are vast, a variety of issues. Noise ordinances and everything else.

Our Civil Legal Clinic is really a Family Law Clinic. I call it the trench. You are in the trench representing people who are seeking legal advice who otherwise may not be able to afford it, addressing the access to justice issues across the country. You are learning how to interview clients. You are hearing really tragic stories. And you are providing a stories.

Again our Clinic Professor Jena Blair has been doing this decades. It's

an incredible opportunity in a Roundtable format and every semester that is offered.

I'll switch briefly to our Externships, although I will tell you we are very unique in how we structure our Externships. I call it unique collaboration because not every Law School does this. But our Professors, who have either taught or are scholars on the subject, oversee that substantive Externship.

So, for example, Professor or Dean Bent, he is the Dean right now, is our scholar on employment and labor issues. He studies this, teaches it, and oversees the Externship. That means when you are out in the field, and we have three places now, one at the EEOC, one at NLRB, and one at OSHA, all incredible placements where you are into a deeper dive into employment and labor issues. You now have direct access to Dean Bent to talk about the substantive nature of what you are learning in the field.

And so, again, a unique collaboration.

I also think it's important to highlight for perspective students that our geographic location is incredible for opportunities. Many of our students are so vast that we actually don't have enough applicants to place them.

So I just want you to take a look at this and hopefully this visual kind of depicts what I'm trying to convey, but that we have access to several different Court systems, not only at the Federal level, but at the State level. I just want to walk you through this.

At the Federal level, we literally have a Court House in Tampa. That is our Federal Court House. That means you can pursue both Bankruptcy Court, Immigration, right, as well as, you know, just the regular Federal Court.

And so if you are able to pursue the Federal Court and we have a

Federal Judicial Externship, you are now in chambers with a Judge at the Federal level.

Or at the State System, we have two Court Houses, possibly three or four depending how far you want to drive or where you live, but you have access to Judicial chambers from Manatee, so the 6th Circuit, as well as the Appellate Court House.

The second DCA is right on our campus, that's where they actually are.

So, again, students can pursue that.

We equally have the Florida Supreme Court in Tallahassee and we have an opportunity there.

I wanted to talk to you about business, we have several Fortune 500 companies and Fortune 1000 companies. We have two innovative hubs right here in our Bay Area, one in Tampa and one in St. Pete. We are noticing a growth of nonprofits and, of course, the tech industry is penetrating our market. So our In-house Counsel and Externship are both vibrant places, again more opportunities than we potentially have students to apply for them.

I have to highlight the geographic location in order to give context of how many opportunities are out there.

I also highlight some of our specialty areas. Elder Law, we are internationally known for. Professor Flowers and Professor Morgan are two scholars that are really well-known. Lots of opportunities to oversee that.

I could talk about this forever [laughter], I never run out of things to say because I'm so passion not about it, but I always think the student voice is important for those who pursue it, so I always end with quotes from students.

It is not uncommon for us to hear this is one of the most important

experiences students have in their Law School career. Mackenzie shed some light on that. We hear it every semester.

And so the fact that we have so many opportunities, we hope kind of will make you consider us.

I will stop there and take questions and feel free to e-mail us directly. We are always happy to reach out. We really pride ourselves in that Open Door Individual Policy.

We hope to see y'all in the fall and that's all I'm going to say.

I'm going to stop sharing.

Questions?

>> DARREN KETTLES: Excellent, excellent. Thank you, Professor Cerniglia, Katia, and Mackenzie.

>> DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Always such a wonderful presentation for Professor Cerniglia! I always look forward to your presentations. Thank you for the wonderful presentation. Thank you, Katia and Mackenzie, for sharing your insight and experiences as well.

Like Professor Cerniglia said, we want to hear from you now. We want to engage you and answer your questions, so if you have questions, please feel free to drop them in the Q&A at the bottom of the screen. We've got plenty of time, we're going to take questions.

I think we did have one question in there. Darren, do you want to go ahead and start with that one?

>> DARREN KETTLES: Yeah, sure. So as admitted students, I mean, this is an integral part of your legal education at Stetson. This is what Stetson is really known for, being the first Law School in Florida to really start, you

know, Clinical Education. So as Professor Cerniglia talked about, it's just sort given us a wide breadth of student.

Sierra asked: When helping students line up a company to do the In-house Counsel Externship, do we at Stetson have a running list of companies willing to take on students or are students task with searching for a company?

And if it's a company not currently offered, can students work to make connections for potential Externship opportunities?

Which I think is really great question.

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: Yeah, agreed. So I will just tell you this, Professor Radwan oversees this. She is our Business Scholar. She has taught many of the people in our jurisdiction who is In-house Counsel. We have a long-standing respected relationship with In-house Counsel at these Fortune 500 companies.

Many times they reach out to her, hey, we would like to mentor an extern. She will say, what kinds of issues do you have? We have a long list of those who want to mentor, but they have to meet our standards. She rigorously vets the opportunities, so sometimes we will say no, there's not enough feedback for the student or there's not enough substantive issues, or, you are just really seeking a student for a labor intensive purpose and we would rather you pay them. Right?

So part of them is vetting them properly. We do have a long-standing list. It tends to be one of our most popular placements. So if you don't get it the first semester and apply, we always say apply again, you are likely to get it the second semester.

We also have, and she likes to say this, we have companies of all ranges. So a lot of students are like, oh, I want to go to this big company, and she says, you know, sometimes you really should think about the smaller company because you will actually see more substantive issues, from employment issues to compliance, contract, where when you are at the larger company, you might just be in one department.

So she meets individually with each applicant to see what they are interested in particular because when we talk about In-house Counsel, you are talking about a ton of different areas of law. So she knows you are interested in a particular employment and labor issue or Contract Law or International issues, she will literally kind of match make and pair you to those positions.

At the same time, if there is an opportunity, we always believe sometimes student can engage and find opportunities that we didn't know about and so we always are willing to dialogue through that as well.

Hopefully that helps answer. Great question, Sierra.

>> DARREN KETTLES: Yes, thank you, Professor Cerniglia, that is helpful.

Dean Davis-Jamison, would you like to take the next one?

>> DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Our next question is, I'm going to ask this to you, Professor Cerniglia, can you walk us through the timeline of the 1L to 3L year and the typical learning activities, including summer activities, given the prerequisite requirements?

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: So 1L year, I will just tell you, is really dedicated to understanding the foundation that you will need for the

rest of your life.

Part of what we say is your 1L year we want you to focus on the foundation of studying these core courses. We want you to be nerdy. [Laughter] We want you to just immerse yourself in understanding how the academics work and how the testing and the rigor, all of that works. So we don't want to bother you, to be quite honest, especially that first semester.

We'll come tap and give you some information around the Spring semester so you can start thinking about possibly pursuing some Externships in that first 1L summer, but you'll start growing your prerequisites and understanding your pathways probably around Spring semester of your second year -- your first year. So Spring semester of your 1L year, we want you to start learning and browsing and understanding the students.

Some of you will start applying for the summer. Some will start applying by the fall. And by your 2L year you will really start grooming Externships. And by 3L year, we really want you to pursue Clinics.

Throughout your 2L and 3L year, you may take courses which are equally Experiential, or a Trial Advocacy course and that is integral learning.

One thing you can do is go on our website and Google, I say Google, but you can put in the search Bar the Curriculum Navigator. It's a great tool to understand, oh, I'm interested in this area of law and here are all of the courses that fall under that area. I think it just gives a great, bright visual of understanding your different pathways.

>> DARREN KETTLES: Thank you.

>> DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Love it, love it!

>> DARREN KETTLES: Okay, I'll sort of continue the flow here. It's going just swimmingly here. I love all these questions, so keep them coming because this is a great way to enter Law School and if figure out how you are going to navigate. And we'll all be here when you get here to support you through it, but it's nice coming in with some ideas.

It looks like Nicholas is asking, maybe you addressed this today a little bit, but he is asking: How many Clinics or Externships would a student be able to take per semester? I know that they count as credits for the semester, but if a particular Clinic or Externship only gives you, say, four credit-hours, would you be able to take another one that semester as well or would you only be able to take one for that?

So I guess he is just looking for, like, you know, how do people actually frame this for themselves? And could that be an overload in terms of too much to take on? So it's a good question for that.

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: Nicholas, I'm going to assume that you're ready. [Laughter] You are ready to get in and take more. Let's take two, three a semester. We are actually not going to recommend that because it can actually impede your reputation in the field. You really want to be immersed in the experience and focused in that office.

The other potential issue is a conflict, right? I'll explain this to you, you don't know this yet, but ethically, it could be a potential conflict of interest. If you are externing for a Judge and at the same time In-house Counsel and that company is appearing before the Judge, you can't be in both offices at the same time sharing confidential information.

So we don't require it, we just don't encourage students to do more

than one a semester.

What you are feeling is the tension of you might want to do several of these and you are not going to be able to do as many as you want. So really planning out in a way that makes sense for you.

Mackenzie, may have some insight here. You may not. But the planning is critical and really understanding that you can't do them all, so you want to kind of highlight each one each semester.

>> MACKENZIE VOJTKO: Yeah, so I fell into that, I was like, oh, my God, I want to do everything, I want to have a job and I want to socialize.

So your 1L year, you want to start checking things out, but I seriously would not recommend doing more than one Clinic or Externship at a time. It's one credit and each credit-hour is equal to 42.5 actual hours, so you have to put in 42.5 hours for one credit. In between school, your other classes, and the Externship or the Clinic, your social life, going to the gym, grocery store, eating, sleeping, there's just not time.

As Professor Cerniglia said, with the Curriculum Navigator that will help you plan out your years. So check out the Externships and kind of like, I don't want to say pick your favorites, but pick your favorites, what you think you will be most interested in. Of course, that can change, but as you are looking at what you are interested in, it will help you plan your classes once you can start picking your classes 2 and 3L years.

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: This is where meeting with Katia or myself, this is where we come in to help narrow your interests and kind of match you to plan your semesters.

You may have more questions. Great questions, y'all.

>> DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Mackenzie, you sort of touched on this, but if you are able to expand at all, we do have a question related to what students can do during their 1L year to prepare them for future Clinical and Experiential opportunities. How to have success in those areas? Can you give any comment to that?

>> MACKENZIE VOJTKO: So I know that it seems like you can't do much your 1L year, but like Professor Cerniglia said, that lays the foundation. I came into Stetson not wanting to do Criminal Law at all. I was adamant I did not want to do it. But you take Criminal Law your first year at Stetson and I fell in love with it. So I tailored my prerequisites to allow me to do the Clinics as soon as possible.

I noticed in one of your questions you asked about doing Externships, you are not eligible to do Externships until your second year. That's not true. You can do it as early as your 1L summer typically. It's the Clinics that you need a certain amount of credit-hours before because of the state, like, Supreme Court certification that you need to be able to, like, speak on the record.

So when I was a Clinic student at the 13th Judicial Circuit, I had my own cases, I was speaking on the record, like, going to trial for the State essentially. And you need your prerequisites for that, like Trial Advocacy and the 48 credit hours.

Other courses, the Externships don't require the C.L.I. So that's something you can still do, like I said, as early as your 1L summer.

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: Mary asked a good question, I want to make sure we caught her question as well. If I'm reading it correctly,

she asks specifically about the summer and I think Mackenzie is touching on this, too. Are you able to pursue during the summer?

So the answer to that is yes. Many students will pursue it during the summer because they want that focused experience on the Clinic or Externship, which is great. I will also warn you that that's a separate tuition model. We always tell students, you want to think about that.

But what is great about that is you can take a lesser course load in the fall. And Financial Aid is available over the summer, so that's not a big deal either.

But students are really strategic about saying, I want to focus on this course over the summer and you have to take a heavy loads in the 2L fall year and it will have knocked out some of the credits over the summer, so that's a great balance.

Many students will pursue pro bono opportunities over the summer or the career development has a bunch of paid opportunities at Law Offices. Again, you will feel this tension of, I want to do all of this and you will not be able to do all of it.

I always encourage students to think that your formation process happens even after graduation, but anything you can do strategically with all of these opportunities, we are here to help you.

I hope that answers your question, Mary. That was probably a long explanation.

>> DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Professor Cerniglia, thank you for catching Mary's question. I actually missed it.

I wanted to make sure we didn't miss any others in that scroll.

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: I'll tell you, I've been on Zoom for, like, two years now, I feel like -- we've had to switch over, right, to teaching online, many of you have probably experienced this in Undergrad, and I will tell you, there's some great benefits to Zoom. We are connecting with practitioners out in the field who might otherwise have time available to come to campus, so the Zoom function is allowing us a lot of things curricularly.

And the other thing I love about it is you can engage students in the chat who might not otherwise want to engage. I love the chat function and that level of engagement.

And the whole law practice is changing, so training students in Zoom, I think, is very important for training what is now a reality in our law practice.

>> DARREN KETTLES: So I just wanted to sort of throw this out there, just in case, because in talking with incoming students and their interests and where they lie, you know, students, I kind of talk about the level of access we have here and going to spend time with your office.

So when people come in with certain ideas, if we don't have something on the record for them to do some type of Experiential or Clinical, how readily -- can you give an example of somebody that maybe you worked with that had a certain idea of something and they really had -- it was maybe a little more focused or tailored to maybe what we have on the books right now?

I mean, is there something maybe you can illustrate to show the breadth of the work that you do there to help our students who might have something sort of slightly non-mainstream.

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: I'm going to answer that in

two ways, Darren, if that's a possibility.

Some of you may not want to say in this geographic area. You may want to go to New York or I have a student who is going to Virginia. He found a phenomenal placement in Virginia. And so we foster that and make sure we pursue that educational opportunity, specifically over the summer because many of you might want to use the summers to network and equally do course work in that same way.

So absolutely, we really work with students. Again, if there's anything to take away from this, we work with you individually at that level creating the pathway you want to go down.

There was a student who knew she was going back to New York. I had two students who knew they wanted to go back to New York. One wanted to pursue Sports and Entertainment and the other Immigration. They both, during their 2L summers, we found placements for them in New York and one of them ended up being hired by a placement. It was a very prestigious placement. We're excited about that for her and also for us because it's a great way to showcase the breadth of what we do.

This is a perfect example. I had a student interested in human trafficking. We have great courses on human trafficking, but it's hard to find specialized places like that. There is a nonprofit in our area dedicated to human trafficking and she found it and said, I would really love to work with them. It ended up being an incredible placement that we now have on the books and it's available for people interested in human trafficking and victims of human trafficking, that one-on-one interviewing.

Again, I will tell you, lots of opportunities and not enough students to

pursue them, to be quite honest, which is a great place to be in.

>> DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Just piggybacking, you gave a great example of the students interested in Sports Law, Immigration Law, going to New York and pursuing the Clinics there and then being offered a job.

How often does that happen that their Clinic or Externship experience becomes a job offer after graduation?

Sierra asks if there are any statistics on that. Any information you can share?

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: So I will answer this, again, in two ways.

The first thing is my office, we don't oversee hiring, right? That's Career Development. We know anecdotally it happens. The Career Development Office will tell you, like anecdotally, we know this happens. This is a real cultural norm for students to pursue opportunity and then end up getting hired.

What I tell students, I don't want you to think about employment when you are learning. When you are learning, I want you to focus on the skills and the knowledge that you can obtain while you are learning. And guess what happens? You are going to become more knowledgeable because you are more focused on the learning than you on the end metrics of getting hired.

Part of it is immersing yourself in that process we talked about, that cycle of acting, reflecting, re-conceptualizing and what happens is you become a better student, you become a better practitioner, and people are like, wow, this person stands out.

So my job as a Professor is not one to ensure that you are going to be hired, but one to make sure that you are trained to be a really great lawyer.

And so part of that is -- we really divide the mission of our offices in that way.

Now with that being said, I will just tell you, we were talking about this yesterday, we would love to really start collecting the data and the stats on really seeing how many Clinic students are hired from, you know, are hired by the office or how many Externships.

We have started somewhat collecting that data, but I have to refer to Career Development, I don't keep track of the statistics, but I know it happens.

>> DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Well, it happened with Mackenzie. It really happened with Mackenzie right here.

Okay, so oh, this is a great question. Thanks, Shelby. Are there Clinics and Externships for people who may want to one day use their law degree for a non-law-related job?

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: I mean, yes. So, yes and no -- I mean, the answer to that is yes, it just depends on the non-law. If I can get more insight into what that non-law-related job is.

And while we are getting more information, I'll give you some examples. So we have a Higher Education Institute, Professor Lake oversees that. Some people would say that these are non-law jobs. I actually see these as very compliance heavy and a lawyer is needed in these compliance Higher Ed jobs. So I think it is law-related, to be quite honest.

But it may not be classified formally or statistically as a law-related job.

Lots of compliance and Government work out there that a lot of lawyers pursue that are not classified as non-lawyer jobs.

The FBI comes on our campus all the time, that's equally a placement. And they, you know, they are looking for lawyers because we have great analytical minds, right? That legal training absolutely helps in investigation, it helps in HR management and compliance, so you become more marketable, to be quite honest, because you have the analytical training. Again, you may not be practicing law in the traditional sense, but definitely, I think, legally-related, just to be quite honest.

So the answer to that is yes, but, again, it's specific on what direction are we talking about?

Hopefully that helps answer it.

>> DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Sure. So a final question then and this is for all three of you, what advice would you give to admitted students as they are preparing to, you know, start Law School in the fall and they are thinking ahead to their Clinics and Externship possibilities, what advice would you give to them as to what they could be doing now or doing at, you know, closer to the time of starting Law School to, you know, prepare themselves for that big decision?

You said it was a decision that will change the rest of their life, right? What should they be doing now in order to prepare for that?

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: I'm going to refer to Katia and Mackenzie first and then I'll see if I can close it for you.

>> DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Perfect.

>> KATIA BARONE: Sure. That's a great question. So like Professor

Cerniglia mentioned earlier, really the main focus of your 1L year is getting a grasp on Law School, understanding how to master the classes.

So with that in mind, of course, if you are interested in Clinics and Externships, what you could also do, I would say, is start to really think about what you want your legal career to look like. What are things you may be interested in? Maybe make a list of things you want to try so that way when you do eventually apply for maybe an Externship your 1L summer you know what specific areas you want to target.

And then planning ahead, so if you maybe might be interested in being a Prosecutor, but then you also might be interested in Family Law, this way you can kind of see what opportunities you can have to feel out both.

I personally would also say if it's an opportunity to you to maybe try to meet some lawyers who work in those specific fields. So your 1L year, you wouldn't be able to participate, but we do have a lot of events, we have Roundtables and we will invite certain lawyers to come and talk to students and 1Ls are always welcome to come and attend those and that can spark your interest to make you see maybe what you want to participate in the future.

So always keep your eyes out, we post things. We have something called a Campus Docket where we post events. So if you are always looking at that, you can come to events and learn more so you can start planning.

>> MACKENZIE VOJTKO: Going off of what Katia said, Stetson has a ton of Student Organizations that can also help foster your interest. During your 1L year, maybe you can't be so involved with our office, but you can be really involved with the Student Organizations who also bring in local

speakers in the area to see what you are interested in.

For example, in non-legal, we have an organization that focuses on nonprofits in the area, in philanthropy and things like that, so that's a JD preferred kind of thing, but not something you need. So that's something you can look at.

Also, with networking, we have a ton of networking events. There is almost always a networking event going on, so keep an eye out for those and those will help steer you in the area you are interested in as well.

And then just generally, my biggest piece of advice for incoming students, whether it's here, which we hope you do, or at another Law School, is do not overwhelm yourself. I know it's so exciting and you want to do everything, take it from me, do not. [Laughter] It's very easy to get overwhelmed and you are not going to do your best work in your classes, your job, your Externship, your Clinic, and it's not going to look good for you, so it's just easier and better for your career to maybe take a half step back from everything you want to do.

>> PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA: I'll make this quick, go pursue a hobby! I don't care what it is. It might be camping, it might be swimming, it might be fishing. Right now figure out what your hobbies are and make sure you integrate them in when you are in Law School. We really believe in a lifelong sustainable happy practice and happy lawyers.

You will feel that on campus. We believe in it. We have a pool in the middle of our campus, right? Part of lawyering means taking care of yourself and being well and that's a really important mantra we try to teach and lay as a foundation.

>> DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Go find your happy! I love it!

[Laughter]

Happy lawyers, they are happening here at Stetson.

Thank you so much Professor Cerniglia, Katia, and to Mackenzie.

Thank you for all of your valuable and insight and advice on Clinics, Externships, wellness, and all of the above. We greatly appreciate it.

And big thanks to our attendees. Thank you for participating, for your questions, for engaging with us.

If you think of a question later or you want to follow-up on a question, please feel free to send it to us. You can send it to lawadmit@law.stetson.edu and we will take care of it. The conversation doesn't have to end now. We definitely encourage you to stay in touch with us with your questions.

We hope that you enjoyed today's event and that you found it helpful, informative, that you learned a bit more about Stetson, about our Clinics, about our Externship opportunities.

We want to remind you that we did record the session today and we are going to make that link available to you in the next few days so you can review it again if you want.

And then a last reminder or plug that our next event that's scheduled is April 9th, that's Saturday April 9th. We're hosting our first in-person Admitted Student Open House in two years, so we are very excited. We haven't had one on campus since February of 2020. So we are super-excited to once again bring admitted students to campus for an Admitted Student Open House on Saturday, April 9th, from 9:00 to 12:30.

You should be receiving correspondence about it, invitation, e-mails, but just in case you missed it, I wanted to put that word out there.

We hope you will join us for that event. We will have a wonderful program lined up for you that will include a current student panel where they will talk about the 1L experience in great detail. We will have a Faculty presentation highlighting how to get the most out of Law School. We will have a Vendor Fair so you can meet different Departments and Student Organizations on campus. You can take tours, mingle with Faculty. It will be a great event.

Hopefully we have a nice, pleasant, sunny day, we will be outdoors in the Banyan Courtyard. We look forward to hopefully seeing you there, we hope you will join us.

But for now, we're going to bid you farewell. Thank you, again, for joining us today.

Thank you, Professor Cerniglia, Katia Barone, Mackenzie Vojtoko for joining us today.

And big thanks to Darren and Isaac for assisting and hosting and moderating.

Thank you so much, everyone. Have a great day!

[Webinar concluded]

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