



Texas A&M University School of Law
Fall 2026 Externship Criminal Law
Law 7835-603 (Criminal Law) (2-4 CR)

Adjunct Prof. Cody L. Cofer
Phone: (682) 777-3336
Email: ccofer@coferluster.com
Office: 604 E. 4th Street, Suite 101

Adjunct Prof. Monroe Solomon
Phone: (817) 617-7500
Email: monroe@nwslawfirm.com
Office: 4200 West Vickery, Suite 200

Office Hours by Appointment

Course Information:

Law 7835-603
Tuesday 5:30-7:00; LEB 618B
Friday (8/21/26 only) 12:00-2:00

Catalog Description: Learning opportunities provided through placements in approved legal settings; designed to increase understanding of the range of skills necessary for effective lawyering; improve abilities to perform lawyering skills (e.g., applying an area of law to an actual case); begin to identify and reflect upon the strengths and weaknesses as a practicing student attorney; develop productive working relationships with supervisors, clients, support staff, and peers; reflect on placement experiences through journals and class discussions; placement can be in either courts, public interest organizations, corporate or government offices, or law firms; timesheets and journals submitted every two weeks; classroom component consists of in-class meetings and online discussions.

Course Description and Prerequisites:

This course is a criminal defense field placement course that provides students with the opportunity to engage in a criminal defense practice outside of a law school clinic under the supervision of a licensed attorney (or other individual qualified to supervise an experience). As a primarily experiential course, this course focuses on teaching professional skills and integrates doctrine, theory, and legal ethics. This course offers students multiple opportunities for performance, faculty feedback, and self-evaluation. It satisfies the requirements of ABA Standard 304 (a) and (d).

Through this program, students gain legal experience outside the classroom by working in approved legal settings with practicing criminal defense attorneys. Under the supervision of practicing attorneys and the school, students perform legal tasks, apply their academic studies to real-world legal issues, and gain valuable insight into legal practice. Students must complete fieldwork hours, which can vary from 73 to 158 hours, depending on the number of credits sought. A classroom component is required for students participating in their first externship. Students will receive practical instruction and application in various criminal defense scenarios in the classroom that they will utilize as criminal defense attorneys.

Prerequisites:

- (1) Completion of at least 29 credit hours at the law school;
- (2) Minimum 2.3 GPA; and
- (3) No honor code violations.

Course Objectives:

This Externship Course is designed to provide you with a learning experience in criminal defense. The following outlines the specific educational objectives, all of which are focused on the practice of criminal defense:

1. To improve students' lawyering skills such as research, writing, analysis, and oral advocacy;
2. To increase their understanding of the range of skills necessary to effectively perform legal and law-related work;
3. To enhance students' understanding of substantive law, and the legal or law-related issues facing the host organization and its mission;
4. To enhance students' understanding of the issues related to professionalism, professional responsibility and other workplace issues which arise in legal practice and in professional work environments;
5. To develop productive working relationships and explore professional options; and
6. To engage in critical self-reflection to promote self-directed, lifelong learning.

The classroom component is offered to support your fieldwork experiences and provide opportunities for critical reflection related to field experiences, the legal profession and career paths.

By the end of the seminar, students will have explored:

1. How to maximize their learning from experience: Plan, Do, Reflect & Integrate;
2. Reflection as key to professional development, good judgement, and sound legal, and interpersonal/leadership skills;
3. Navigating and engaging in the professional workplace (Feedback, Self-awareness; Relationships & Communication); and
4. Engaging in critical self-reflection to promote self-directed life-long learning

Textbook/Resource Materials:

There is no required textbook for this course. Any required readings and materials will be made available on the course page and/or via online links in the Class Agenda/Calendar. These readings will provide further instruction to the classroom component and will be specific to the topic(s) presented and practiced each class.

You will see references to suggested readings. While many of these will be provided on the Google course page, any referenced books not provided on Google will be on reserve in the library. Additionally, Chapters from *Learning from Practice: A Text for Experiential Legal Educations*, (Leah Wortham et al. eds., West Academic Publishing 3d ed. 2016) can be purchased directly from West Academic's website store: **store.westacademic.com**. The direct link to a list of chapters from the book is:

<http://store.westacademic.com/Store/?ext=F&search=wortham+3rd+chapter>

Evaluation and Grading:

This is a pass-fail course. Students' grades will be based on satisfactory and timely submission of all required coursework including hours and reflective journals, class participation and supervisor evaluations.

Evaluations: Your supervisor will do an end-of-term evaluation with you. You will be able to review this evaluation.

Journals: Journals will be reviewed in accordance with the Journals-Writing and Instruction guidelines provided to you in class. If a journal is determined as either “poor” or “needs improvement” or does not meet the word count requirement, the student, upon notice, can submit a revised journal to be considered “proficient” or “excellent”. If a student submits more than 1 journal determined as “poor” or “needs improvement” which has not been re-submitted, or which falls short of the word count requirement, it may be the basis for not passing the course.

Late or Missing Required Course Materials, Hours & Journals: Missing or Late submission of any of the required course materials can result in a failing grade. If you need to submit any of your course requirements late, such as a journal, you must obtain prior approval. Failing to keep your hours up-to-date or not including a daily description of your work can result in a failing grade.

JD students will follow the grading scale and grading policies outlined in Academic Standards 8.1-8.54, which may be found in the [Student Handbook](#). The following courses are subject to a maximum allowed class GPA of 3.20: (1) all lockstep courses, other than Legal Analysis, Research and Writing I and Legal Analysis, Research and Writing II; (2) Constitutional Law; (3) Professional Responsibility; and (4) all other nonlockstep courses with enrollments of over twenty-four J.D. students. The following courses are subject to a maximum allowed class GPA of 3.40 regardless of size: (1) Legal Analysis, Research and Writing I; (2) Legal Analysis, Research and Writing II; and (3) all nonlockstep courses (other than Constitutional Law and Professional Responsibility) with enrollments of no fewer than thirteen and no greater than twenty-four J.D. students. A maximum class GPA of 3.40 is encouraged but not mandatory for any course meeting one or more of the following criteria: (1) a graded nonlockstep course (other than Constitutional Law or Professional Responsibility) with enrollment of twelve or fewer J.D. students, (2) a graded course where at least one-third of the course instructional time is spent on one or more field trip(s), and (3) graded law clinics.

Attendance Policy:

JD students are required to adhere to the law school’s attendance policy as outlined in the [Student Handbook](#).

The law school requires regular and punctual class attendance by all students in all courses taken for credit. Students are expected to attend regularly scheduled classes as well as make-up classes scheduled during the official make-up times. Official make-up times are noted on the registration materials each semester. A law clinic may have office attendance requirements in addition to classroom attendance requirements. Students are required to attend the classroom seminar component of this course, which will meet every week for 12 weeks during the semester, as follows:

- Students enrolled in a 12-week law clinic that meets twice per week may not miss more than 3 seminar classes.
- Students enrolled in a 12-week law clinic that meets once per week may not miss more than 2 seminar classes.
- Students enrolled in a 12-week externship that meets once per week may not miss more than 2 seminar classes.

Because of the ethical obligations owed live clients, a student whose total absences in a law clinic or externship seminar component exceed the maximum permissible absences set forth above will

be withdrawn from the course, will have an F entered on his or her transcript, and will not receive credit for the course. (See Academic Standard 5.2.2 in the [Student Handbook](#)).”

Statement on Credit Hours:

This course includes a classroom component. The amount and level of credit awarded in each externship placement depends on the amount of time allocated to the classroom component and to student field work. Students will spend at least 42.5 hours in and out-of-class work during the term for each hour of academic credit earned. Students are responsible for keeping a log of their field hours for review by a faculty member at the end of each semester.

Students enrolled in externships for the first time must attend a seminar. Students enrolled in externships for a second time must attend individual and group meetings led by the Externship Program Director. Please see registration materials for the externship seminar or meeting schedule.

Students enrolled in an externship must devote, on average, the following hours of out-of-class work for the externship placement per week:

<u>No. of Credits</u>	<u>Hours at Placement</u>
2 credits	8 hours (over 10 weeks)
3 credits	12 hours (over 10 weeks)
4 credits	16 hours (over 10 weeks)
9 credits	33.5 hours (over 12 weeks)
10 credits	37.5 hours (over 12 weeks)
11 credits	35 hours (over 14 weeks)
12 credits	38.5 hours (over 14 weeks)

This is a minimum estimated weekly time commitment. Students working additional weeks will adjust their weekly time commitment accordingly.

Travel time does not count for hours. Academic credit is awarded on a pass/fail basis.

Professionalism:

“What is professionalism? ‘Professionalism is conduct consistent with the tenets of the legal profession as demonstrated by a lawyer’s civility, honesty, integrity, character, fairness, competence, ethical conduct, public service, and respect for the rule of law, the courts, clients, persons who work within the legal profession, witnesses, and unrepresented parties.’”¹

You should be familiar with:

- The Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct, available at http://www.texasbar.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Ethics_Resources&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=14125 ; and
- The Texas Lawyer’s Creed, available at <http://www.supreme.courts.state.tx.us/pdf/TexasLawyersCreed.pdf>

¹ Commission on Professionalism, State Bar of New Mexico. Available at <http://www.nmbar.org/attorneys/commissionprofessionalism.html>

Statement on Classroom Access and Inclusion

Texas A&M University is committed to providing an inclusive, equitable learning environment for students of all ages, backgrounds, citizenships, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, races, religions, languages, and socioeconomic statuses. The Aggie Core values of respect, excellence, leadership, loyalty, integrity and selfless service in addition to civility, and the ability to listen and to observe others are the foundation of a welcoming instructional climate. Active, thoughtful and respectful participation in all aspects of the course supports a more inclusive classroom environment, as well as our mutual responsibilities to the campus community.

Technology, Access & Support:

Technology Requirements

- As a result of the changing landscape in higher education, Texas A&M University now requires students to have access to an appropriate computer to complement course instruction. Minimum computer specifications are listed at: <https://it.tamu.edu/services/academics-and-research/teaching-and-learning-tools/computer-requirements/>. *Most computers purchased in the past few years should meet the minimum standards.* Please note this policy requires that students have access to a webcam.
- **Students in this course will be required to have their webcams on and be visible during any synchronous online classes or when participating in remotely in a face to face class.**
- If you are participating remotely, you must identify a location during class time where you are able to participate in class discussions in confidentiality and with minimized distractions.
- Students should bring a laptop or other device to class to be able to access the course google folder, and their individual folders, and to complete in-class assignments.

Course Access

We will be using TAMU's Google Drive to access to readings, course materials and submission of your assignments. You can access TAMU's Google Drive through your Howdy Portal. There will be course Google folder, in which you will find any readings and materials referenced in class. You will upload group assignments in the course folder. You will also have an individual folder in which you will find forms that you will need to complete and submit. You will upload your individual assignment in your individual folder.

Support:

If you have questions or need assistance in accessing or uploading your assignments, please contact Wendi Lazier at wlazier@law.tamu.edu

Texas A&M University provides students technical support. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Phone: 979.845.8300

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Website: <https://it.tamu.edu/help/>

Help Desk Central also offers **CHAT** support at hdc.tamu.edu via the yellow **Start Chat Now!** icon. *Please note that the Chat feature is only available 8:00 am – 11:59 pm.*

Course Requirements & Meeting Times

Fieldwork:

1. Depending on the number of credits for which you are registered, you must complete the following minimum number of fieldwork hours as a first-time extern:
 - 2 credits - 73 hours
 - 3 credits – 115 hours
 - 4 credits – 158 hours

Fall externships run a minimum of 10 weeks. All externship hours and required paperwork are due according to deadlines posted below based on a start date of August 18.

Reporting: MOA, Timesheet and Journals:

The following are required to be submitted by due dates to receive a passing grade:

Requirements:

Pre-Externship Skill Self-Assessment
Goals
Timesheets

Due Date:

First Class
Sept. 2
Input Daily;
Updated timesheets due – Sept. 16 & Oct. 7

Journals:

Journal 1	Sept. 1
Journal 2	Sept. 15
Journal 3	Oct. 20
Final Journal	Nov. 17
Mid-term Meeting:	Sept. 15 - Oct. 20 – Schedule during weeks 5-7
Evaluations	
Supervisor Evaluation	Nov. 17
Student's Site Evaluation	Nov. 17
Post-externship skill assessment	Nov. 17
Supervisor Signed Hours	Nov. 17

*This assumes a start date during the first week of class. If you start the second week of classes, **notify Cody or Monroe and adjust these due dates back one week.** For example, if you start Aug. 21, your first journal will be due Sept. 4.

Goals: Field Supervisors must sign-off on your goals. You can either upload a signed copy, or share a link to your goal file with your supervisor for their electronic signature.

Journals: Instructions on how to write journals and journal topics will be covered in class.

Time Recording Hours:

1. You will record your time daily using the excel file provided to you.
2. Only time spent on legal and law-related tasks can be counted toward your hour's requirements. You may count up to 1 hour each week (up to 7 hours total) for journal and class preparation time.
3. You must include a short description of work for each entry. Failing to do so may result in hours being denied and not passing the course.
4. You must track time in quarter increments; thus, time must be entered as a whole number and accompanying fraction representing quarter increments. For example, time representing an hour and 15 minutes must be entered as 1.25.

5. Field supervisors must verify all hours by dates set forth above. You can either present a hard copy for signature and upload the signed version to your Google folder or share a link with your supervisor to your timesheet file, and they can sign electronically.

Evaluations:

Supervisor: Your field supervisor will complete a final evaluation for you. You must provide the evaluation to your supervisor at least 1 week before your externship is over. You may provide a hard copy and upload the completed evaluation to your Google folder or share a link to the Evaluation for their completion.

Student: You will also complete a confidential evaluation of your site (field supervisors will not see this) and a post-externship self-assessment on skills.

Course Schedule:

The classroom component consists of eight class meetings scheduled primarily every other Tuesday, 5:30PM – 7:30PM. There is one class the first week of class on Friday from 12:00PM – 1:30PM. If a class period is recorded, the cloud recorded lecture may only be accessible to students enrolled in the course in the current semester through NetID and password.

Class Dates:

- Class 1:** Tuesday, August 18
- Class 2:** Friday, August 21
- Class 3:** Tuesday, September 1
- Class 4:** Tuesday, September 15
- Class 5:** Tuesday, September 29
- Class 6:** Tuesday, October 20
- Class 7:** Tuesday, November 10
- Class 8:** Tuesday, November 17

Course topics & assignments: See *Externship Fall 2026 Class Agenda*

Statement on Syllabus Changes: This syllabus is subject to change. The professors will promptly update and alert students of any changes.

Next Page: Additional Policies

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.

“Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one’s work, should the instructor request it, is sufficient grounds to initiate an academic dishonesty case.” ([Section 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)).

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu> and the law school [Student Handbook](#).

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Texas A&M University is committed to providing safe and non-discriminatory learning, living, and work environments for all members of the University community. The University provides equal opportunity to all employees, students, applicants for employment or admission, and the public regardless of race, color, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions), religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status. Texas A&M University will promptly, thoroughly, and fairly investigate and resolve all complaints of discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), complicity and related retaliation based on a protected class in accordance with System Regulation 08.01.01, University Rule 08.01.01.M1, Standard Administrative Procedure (SAP) 08.01.01.M1.01, and applicable federal and state laws. In accordance with Title IX and its implementing regulations, Texas A&M does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity, including admissions and employment. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding the non-discrimination policies: Jennifer M. Smith, TAMU Associate VP & Title IX Coordinator at YMCA Ste 108, College Station, TX 77843, 979-458-8407, or email civilrights@tamu.edu. For other reporting options, visit <https://ocrcas.ed.gov/contact-ocr> to locate the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

Civil Rights, Free Speech, and Title IX Policies

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit discrimination and harassment based on an individual’s race, color, sex, (including pregnancy and related conditions), religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other legally protected characteristic. This includes forms of sex-based violence, such as sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, dating/domestic violence, and stalking.

Students can report discrimination/harassment, access supportive resources, or learn more about their options for resolving complaints on the [University’s Civil Rights & Title IX webpage](#).

Students should be aware that all university employees (except medical or mental health providers) are mandatory reporters, which means that if they observe, experience or become aware of an incident that they reasonably believe to be discrimination/harassment alleged to have been

committed by or against a person who was a student or employee at the time of the incident, the employee must report the incident to the university.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact the Office of Student Affairs at (817) 212-4111 or law-disability@law.tamu.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Allison Elsbernd as soon as possible. Due to the law school's policy of testing anonymity, students should not discuss their accommodations with professors. For additional information visit the [Disability Accommodations & Temporary Conditions section](#) of the Law Student Portal. If you are experiencing difficulties with your approved accommodations, contact the Office of Student Affairs at (817) 212-4111 or law-disability@law.tamu.edu, or the Texas A&M ADA Coordinator Julie Kuder at ADA.Coordinator@tamu.edu or (979) 458-8407.

Pregnancy Accommodations

Texas A&M provides reasonable accommodations to students due to pregnancy and/or related conditions, such as childbirth, recovery and lactation. Students should contact the Office of Student Affairs at (817) 212-4111 or law-disability@law.tamu.edu as soon as they become aware of the need for accommodation. Depending on the circumstances, accommodations could include extended time to complete assignments or exams, changes in course sequence, or modifications to the physical classroom environment. Texas A&M will also allow a voluntary leave of absence, ensure the availability of lactation space, and maintain grievance procedures to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints of sex discrimination. For information regarding pregnancy accommodations, email law-disability@law.tamu.edu.

Statement on Mental Health and Wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors influencing a student's academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy self-care practices by utilizing the resources and services available through [University Health Services](#) on its [mental health webpage](#). The [TELUS Health Student Support app](#) provides access to professional counseling in multiple languages anytime, anywhere by phone or chat, and the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline offers 24-hour emergency support at 988 or 988lifeline.org.

For in-residence students needing a listening ear, the law school has a professional counselor. Law students can set up a meeting with the counselor through this link: <https://uhs.tamu.edu/appointments/index.html> (select Counseling and Mental Health Care Appointment Portal).

In addition, the [Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program \(TLAP\)](#) provides free, confidential assistance for law students and lawyers. If you or someone you know are dealing with substance abuse, impairment, mental health issues, or concerns related to living and studying remotely, please do not hesitate to contact Telus (referenced above) and/or TLAP by calling 1-800-343-TLAP or texting TLAP at 555888. Trained professionals are available on a 24/7 basis. In addition, the [TLAP](#)

[website provides helpful resources and material.](#) Remember: professionals exercise good judgement when they proactively seek help and guidance. Check out the video clip, [It's Good to Get Help.](#)

Statement on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of educational records by limiting access to these records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their educational records and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate and misleading data through informal and formal hearings. Currently enrolled students wishing to withhold any or all directory information items may do so by going to howdy.tamu.edu and clicking on the "Directory Hold Information" link in the Student Records channel on the MyRecord tab. The complete [FERPA Notice to Students](#) and the student records policy is available on the Office of the Registrar webpage.

Items that can never be identified as public information are a student's social security number, citizenship, gender, grades, GPR or class schedule. All efforts will be made in this class to protect your privacy and to ensure confidential treatment of information associated with or generated by your participation in the class.

Directory items include name, UIN, local address, permanent address, email address, local telephone number, permanent telephone number, dates of attendance, program of study (college, major, campus), classification, previous institutions attended, degrees honors and awards received, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, medical residence location and medical residence specialization.