Notre Dame Law in Chicago

General Information

Notre Dame Law in Chicago allows Notre Dame law students to spend a semester living in Chicago and engaging in an intensive externship in a non-profit, governmental, judicial, or corporate counsel setting. Students enroll in a companion classroom seminar that meets weekly in Chicago as well as additional course work that may be undertaken either in the Chicago classrooms, the South Bend campus, or by videoconference. The externship term and companion seminar follow the Notre Dame academic calendar, including mid-semester breaks.

The Externship

The heart of the program is a 32 hour-per week volunteer externship placement in a non-profit legal organization, a governmental law office (local, state or federal), a judicial chambers (state or federal), or an in-house corporate counsel office. The Chicago legal market offers an astounding array of opportunities in those sectors. The externships must involve substantial legal work. Some placements such as low income legal services providers, public defender offices or state government agencies may allow students to provide direct legal representation and appear in court pursuant to an Illinois 711 license. Students earn 8 fieldwork credits, graded on an S/U basis, during their externship placements. They may not receive compensation for their work.

Students work under the supervision of an attorney or judge who agrees to serve in a mentoring role by providing guidance and careful oversight of a student’s legal work, by engaging the student in reflection on broader questions raised by the office’s work, and by providing detailed feedback on the student’s performance.

The Seminar

This two-credit, letter-graded seminar will meet weekly in Chicago. The seminar is designed to enhance the learning that occurs during the field placement by deepening students’ reflection on the justice system, lawyering skills, professional identity, ethics, and their own professional development. Students will have reading assignments, regular short writing assignments, and responsibility for class presentations. Students must be available for a classroom orientation in the Chicago classroom on Monday morning, the first class day of the semester. Students will be assigned preparatory work before the orientation session.
**Additional Course Work**

The Law School requires students to earn a minimum of 14 credits per semester. Students in the Notre Dame Law in Chicago must earn at least 4 credits in courses beyond the externship and the externship seminar. Students may do so through courses offered either at the Law School’s Chicago Center at 224 S. Michigan Street or on the South Bend campus. Students may attend South Bend classes in person and may also connect to a limited number of South Bend-based classes by a videoconference link. Some ND Law in Chicago students also earn credits through Directed Readings or journal work.

**Housing**

Students are responsible to find their own housing in Chicago. Information on some housing options is available at law.nd.edu/Chicago.

**Eligibility and Application Process**

Second and third year students are eligible. Second year students are generally discouraged from applying during the fall semester.

Interested students should contact Associate Dean Bob Jones or Assistant Dean Janet Laybold to discuss their interest, Chicago opportunities, timing and preparation. Students should meet with Dean Jones or Dean Laybold before contacting potential placement sites.

**Further Information**

Visit the Law School’s web site (law.nd.edu/chicago), contact Associate Dean Bob Jones (rjones1@nd.edu or 574-631-4863), contact Assistant Dean Janet Laybold (jlaybold@nd.edu or 312-291-8239, or contact Cathy Kustner, JD Externship and LRAP Coordinator (ckustner@nd.edu or 574-631-9301).