

2018 Health Law Semester in Washington D.C.

Since health care law is a legal subspecialty, recent law school graduates must have the right combination of education and experience to secure employment in the field. As the premier health law program in the country, the Center for Health Law Studies at SLU LAW recognizes that educational experiences in health law must exist both in and out of the classroom. The *Health Law Semester in Washington D.C.* provides these experiences.

The practice of health care law is complex and fast paced. The health care industry is highly regulated, with substantial regulation occurring at the federal level. In Washington D.C. law students clerk in a health-related federal agency on a nearly full time basis for an entire semester. Students gain significant practical experience working with complex health care regulations. Additionally, they begin building a network of contacts within the federal government and in Washington D.C. in particular.

Students participating in the Program are eligible to earn 12 to 14 credits through a combination of experiential and course work. Students work 30, 33, or 36 hours per week for a full semester at an assigned externship placement to earn 10, 11 or 12 credits, respectively. Additionally, students enroll in a complementary 2-credit course, *Health Law Agency Practice*, addressing both professional responsibility issues that arise in agency practice and advanced topics in administrative law.

Offered annually during spring semester, this Program is available to students formally pursuing a health law concentration, health law dual degree or the health law LLM. Additionally, each student is required to have successfully completed Administrative Law, Health Care Law, and Legal Profession prior to his or her semester in Washington D.C. A student must also have earned at least 54 credit hours towards his or her JD and have a cumulative GPA of 2.8 or better at the time of application to the program, and never have fallen out of good academic standing or been on academic probation while pursuing the JD.

The *Health Law Semester in D.C.* Program relies on licensed practitioners employed at the federal agencies where students are placed to act as the supervising attorneys. The supervising attorney will oversee the student's work, assuring that it serves both the educational purpose of the placement and the agency's needs. The supervising attorney will train the student as needed, address issues of professional responsibility that might arise in the course of the student's work, and communicate with the Center about the student's performance. Additionally, the Program relies on an adjunct professor based in Washington D.C. with suitable experience and teaching ability to lead the weekly two-credit companion course.

Finally, the *Health Law Semester in D.C.* Program provides an additional layer of professional and career support by matching each student in the Program with a D.C.-based mentor. Mentors are selected from SLU Law alumni working in Washington D.C. The placement supervising attorneys and adjunct professor are not eligible to also act as any student's mentor. An attorney-mentor meets with her assigned student face-to-face several times throughout the semester, communicates regularly with the student, and provides a means by which the student can contact the mentor directly and easily. The mentor provides an invaluable service to the Program by ensuring students are having a positive experience; by alerting the Center to challenges a student may be having; and, by providing career and professional guidance to students as they work in a professional environment and near the completion of their formal legal training.

For more information about the Center for Health Law Studies and the *Health Law Semester in D.C.*, contact Associate Director Amy Sanders at amy.sanders@slu.edu or (314) 977-8176.

Application Timeline

Wednesday, August 30 – Informational Session

Thursday, August 31 – Informational Session

Thursday, September 7 – Letters of Intent Due by 5pm, please email to amy.sanders@slu.edu

Tuesday, September 12 – Applications DUE by 5pm to amy.sanders@slu.edu or in person to Room 942

Thursday, October 12 – Placement matches should be announced by this date

Other Important Dates

October 26 – Regalia Days for Semester in DC students graduating May 2018

November 10 – “Know Before You Go” Meeting – Due at this meeting: proof of housing and emergency contact

January 8, 2018 – Report to placement for first day of externship

Possible Placements

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Quality and Safety

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of General Counsel

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Counsel to the Inspector General

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of General Counsel, Public Health Division

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of General Counsel

U.S. Department of Justice, Antitrust Division

Federal Trade Commission, Bureau of Competition, Health Care Division