

## Vermont Law School Clinic Credit Hours

The clinic hours below are required of students registered for any of our clinics. Students are expected to work no less than the hours below for the credits granted:

### Fall and Spring:

- 13 credits = 40 hours/week to ensure a minimum of 585 credit hours of work; from first day of classes to three work days after the last day of classes.
- 9 credits = 30 hours/week to ensure a minimum of 405 credit hours of work; from first day of classes to last day of classes.
- 6 credits = 20 hours/week to ensure a minimum of 270 credit hours of work; from first day of classes to the last day of classes.
- 4 credits = 14 hours/week to ensure a minimum of 180 credit hours of work; from first day of classes to the last day of classes.
  
- The time expectations include any clinic classroom time and preparation for clinic classes. The weekly hour requirements take into account school breaks.
  
- *The hours listed are minimum hourly requirements and you are expected to devote more time as needed for the demands of your cases. However, if more time is needed for cases at certain points in the semester, the clinic should seek to balance the overall demand on the student consistent with the credit hours described above. In addition, achieving the total minimum hourly requirement before the end of the semester does not mean that you may leave the clinic early; the clinic obligation and its associated weekly hours requirement run through the end of the semester (whether at the end of classes or in exam period).*

### Summer:

- 9 credits = 40 hours/week for 11 weeks, beginning at the start of the summer term on the Tuesday after Memorial Day and ending one week after the end of the summer term, to ensure that the required 405 credit hours of work can be met for the 9 credits.<sup>1</sup>
  
- Clinics offering fewer credits in the summer may allow students to take the summer break or end after 10 weeks, but the time commitment should be made clear in the interview process and in clinic materials.

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<sup>1</sup> For 9 credits in the summer, 11 weeks = approx. 38 hours per week. This takes into account the loss of Memorial Day and allows a day off for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday; it does not include other summer breaks.

- In no case shall a summer clinic student's credit hours begin before the Tuesday after Memorial Day or end before the end of the summer clinic session, unless the student obtains express approval from the director of the clinic before enrolling. Exceptions to this rule will be granted only in very limited circumstances.

Additionally, the following policies govern absences:

1. If a student is absent from 20% of regularly scheduled clinic seminar classes without adequate excuse, the student will be automatically withdrawn or fail.

The number of clinic seminar classes that can be missed will depend on the number of classes that each clinic holds. Each clinic will determine what 20% of its total classes would be in order to establish the number of absences that would trigger a withdrawal or failure. E.g., in the ENRLC, classes generally meet 30 times in the fall and spring semesters. If a student missed 6 class meetings in a semester unexcused, the student would face an automatic "withdraw" or "fail."

2. Regarding whether students have worked the requisite number of clinic hours for their credit levels (e.g., 270 hours for 6 credits), if a student is more than two hours short of his or her required clinic practicum<sup>2</sup> hours, the time missed must be made up, whether excused or not. If the time cannot be made up prior to the date on which grades must be submitted, then the appropriate clinic or externship faculty member will request an incomplete.
3. Adequate excuse means that a student will be excused for religious observance, serious personal or family illness, personal emergency, or an unavoidable conflict, provided that the reason for the absence is communicated to the faculty supervisor and the clinic director within a reasonable time prior to the anticipated absence and the proffered excuse is accepted.

\*For Externship Program time commitments, *see* <http://www.vermontlaw.edu/academics/clinics-and-externships/jd-externships/information-for-students>

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<sup>2</sup> Clinic practicum hours include all clinic hours that are not allocated to the clinic seminar.