

# UCDC Law Program

## Introduction and application instructions

The UCDC Law Program is a full-semester Washington externship program, offered in the fall and spring, for students from Berkeley, UCLA, Davis and Irvine law schools. The Program consists of full-time, supervised 14-week placements in government and public interest advocacy organizations, a required 14-week companion course, special events, and individual mentorship and counseling. While participating in the Program you will earn a full 13 credits: 10 pass-fail credits for the placement, and 3 credits for the graded seminar course.

### Important Points:

1. There is no cap on enrollment in this program. Your UCDC Law application is informational, not competitive; we use it to get to know you, and to help you identify placements that align with your interests. The application, however, is mandatory as we need to know that you are considering the program so we can assist you.
2. To be accepted into the Program, you will need to secure an appropriate placement in Washington. Once the placement has been approved by the Program director, the Director will notify your home school and you will be given permission to register at your home school for the placement and the companion course.
3. Start early, while placements for the next term are still plentiful. The Program offers extensive individual advisement, but you should get started without waiting for it. Some externship opportunities disappear early in the cycle; the earlier in the term you submit your materials, the more opportunities will be available.

### To apply for a UCDC Law externship, follow these steps:

1. **Determine your eligibility** based on your school's requirements.
2. **Complete the UCDC Law application.**
3. **Sign up for a phone check-in** with the Program director.
4. **Start applying immediately** to your favorite placements, without waiting for our advice.
5. **Report briefly on your progress** on the 1st and 15th of each month, via e-mail to [law@ucdc.edu](mailto:law@ucdc.edu) and to your school's externship coordinator, starting when you apply and continuing until you secure a placement.
6. **Obtain the Program's approval before accepting** a placement offer.
7. **Plan your logistics**, including start and end dates and housing in California and D.C.
8. **Most importantly, please let us know that you are applying or considering the program so that we can help you!**

**Step 1: Determine whether you satisfy the basic eligibility requirements.** Your transcript must show you're in good standing. The Program is generally open to students in their 2L and 3L years. However, you **MUST** check with your individual schools as to which semester you can participate. For example, some schools may not allow a first semester 2L or a second semester 3L without approval. Typically applicants apply in a given term for the following term. There are no binding course prerequisites, but you should consider waiting to do the Program until you have taken some relevant upper-year courses, e.g., for a litigation placement, evidence, federal courts, advanced civil or criminal procedure and the like; for a Congressional placement, legislative process or drafting; for an administrative agency externship, administrative law; for an international organization, international law; and some course preparation or extracurricular experience in the subject matter area of the externship. The Program director and your participating school can advise you about your decision whether and when to apply.

**Step 2: Complete the UCDC Law application, and submit it by the deadline to the Program and to your participating school.** Attach a resume, unofficial transcript, and any other materials you'd like to share in confidence. Because there is no cap on enrollment, the UCDC Law application is informational, not competitive: it helps us to know you and to advise you effectively. The deadline in the UCDC Law application is intended to give us enough time to learn about you and advise you while the opportunities you want are still available. One of our commitments is to work closely with each UCDC Law applicant to secure the best possible match between student and placement, taking into account the student's background and interests and the needs of the host office. We advise you individually on where to apply based on your UCDC Law application.

**Step 3: Sign up for a phone check-in with the UCDC Law Program director.** This brief telephone conference, normally held about two weeks after the UCDC Law application deadline, is intended to give you the earliest possible individual attention and advice as you begin looking for and identifying a placement in line with your academic and professional interests and goals. Once you submit your application you will be contacted by a UCDC staff member to sign-up for a phone call.

**Step 4: Start applying to placements immediately.** Remember, you apply on your own; we advise you as extensively as you want, but we do not do it for you. We encourage you to begin your search and even apply before you submit your UCDC Law application or receive our first post-application advice. We want that advice to be as helpful to you as possible in deciding where and how to apply to placements, so the more you know about your own goals and interests, and how they might be furthered in Washington, the better. On the other hand, please do not be deterred if you are not sure where you would like to work and need additional counseling. When you are ready to apply you should prepare a resume and tailored cover letter and send them to each placement host office or organization. Explain in your letter that you will be externing—without pay—through the full-time, full-semester UCDC Law Program, 40 hours a week for 14 weeks for a full term's law school credit.

To comply with ABA accreditation standards and your home schools' academic policies, a placement has to be willing to give you substantive legal work under a lawyer's supervision, with regular feedback,

mentorship, and insulation from purely clerical or administrative work that's incommensurate with law school credit. The Program will help you figure this out.

Obviously we cannot guarantee that a host office will take you on as an extern, but we will make every reasonable effort to promote you to placement hosts of your choice. If you learn that a security clearance is part of the externship application process, apply with as much lead time as possible to let the agency complete that, even if there's no stated deadline.

**Step 5: Report briefly on your progress.** Please provide us with brief twice-monthly progress report from the time you apply until the time you secure a placement. Please email these reports to the Program's general mailbox, [law@ucdc.edu](mailto:law@ucdc.edu), and to your school's externships coordinator. Briefly tell us exactly where and when you have applied, to whom if to a specific person, any interviews with names and dates, decisions or timing of expected decisions, updates on your preferences, thoughts on how we can help, and up-to-date information on how we can reach you.

**Step 6: When an offer comes, obtain the Program's approval before accepting.** When you get an offer, thank the placement host and tell them you will give an answer as soon as the placement is approved. After you are made an offer, the Program director will contact the host office and secure its commitment to meet our placement criteria. You cannot accept any offer or enroll in the Program without this step. Once the placement is approved, we notify your participating school and then you will be permitted to register for the placement and companion course.

Prior to working out the placement start and end dates please check with the Program start and end dates. **You must be at your placement for at least 14 weeks and you must attend all 14 mandatory seminar classes.** Placement start and end dates normally track the start and end of classes at our participating schools, but a number of factors can alter that timetable. Consult the Program about non-conforming placement dates before you agree to them. Class meets from 6 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday evenings. You should not make any elective plans that call for you to miss any of our 14 meetings.

**Step 7: Plan your D.C. logistics, including housing in California and D.C.** The Program does not provide or arrange for housing, but can advise you on neighborhoods, transportation and some nuts and bolts of D.C. life. We try to let each term's students know one another's non-privileged contact information early enough to be useful for roommate searches and co-transportation. Plan on arriving a week before the companion course or placement begins, whichever is earlier, and staying until the end of the term. Keep your travel arrangements as flexible as you can. **Expect to have to change a return flight, for instance, depending on circumstances that arise once you are in Washington.**

**Step 8: Most importantly, please let us know that you are applying or considering the program so that we can help you!** Ask questions and seek advice from the Program or from your participating school. If you are considering applying please let us know so we can help you think through whether to apply, when, and to what potential placements.