Loyola University Chicago School of Law
Education Law Practicum (Law 166, 1-4 credits)
Offered Fall, Spring and Summer Semesters

This unique course has a classroom seminar component and a field work component. The seminar meets for one hour weekly and addresses substantive education law issues and focuses on skill development tailored to the practice of education law. The seminar is scheduled prior to the start of the semester and based on the availability of course participants.

For the field work component of the class, students have the option to work in one of a variety of local placements where they will work under the supervision of practicing attorneys. Students may choose from the following different areas of work: (1) providing direct representation and legal assistance to children and families in need of support relating to special education and/or school discipline matters; (2) representing school districts or other educational institutions in education law matters; or (3) working on educational policy matters. Placement options include local organizations, school districts, law firms and government agencies. Students may also participate in Loyola’s Educational Advocacy Project as an alternative to an external field placement. More information on the different placement options is below.

If you are interested in working at one of the placements below for credit, contact Miranda Johnson, Associate Director of Loyola’s Education Law and Policy Institute, at mjohnson11@luc.edu. DO NOT contact any of the sites below about a placement for academic credit without express permission. Placements are subject to approval by both the Education Law Practicum faculty and the field placement site. Additional placements may be added on an on-going basis, so please contact Miranda Johnson for the most updated list of placements and if you are interested in an education law field placement with an organization not on this list.

Placement with Loyola’s Educational Advocacy Project (1-4 credits)

As part of the Education Law Practicum, students may participate in Loyola’s Educational Advocacy Project as an alternative to an external field placement. The Educational Advocacy Project is designed as an experiential learning opportunity primarily for second year full-time students or their part-time equivalents.

Working under the close supervision of a law school faculty member, students will provide representation for youth involved in school disciplinary proceedings and/or those who require advocacy support in connection with special education rights and needs. Students may also work on policy projects related to education law matters, develop training manuals and materials, and provide trainings for parents or community organizations. Students may be involved in additional education law-related projects based on the interest of the student and needs of community organizations.
Law Firm Field Placement

Franczek Radelet P.C. (Chicago, IL)

Franczek Radelet is a midsize law firm representing educational institutions in all aspects of education law, including student issues, governance, labor and employment, and operations. Students who work at Franczek are assigned a supervising attorney who helps manage their practicum experience. All practicum students will have an opportunity to do extensive legal research and writing, draft client newsletters to be published on Franczek's website, and participate in monthly department meetings with practicing attorneys. Practicum students may also have an opportunity to attend critical school meetings, negotiations, due process administrative hearings and/or court proceedings, as well as education law-related firm events.

Franczek Radelet requires submission of a cover letter, resume and transcript.

Field Placements with Non-Profit Organizations

Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Inc. (Chicago, IL)

The Educational Equity Project of the Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law works to combat the school-to-prison pipeline. EEP protects and promotes access to education by addressing the individual and systemic barriers that disproportionately impact historically-disadvantaged communities. EEP has identified these communities as ethnic and racial minority students, low-income students, students with disabilities and LGBTQ students.

The project’s work spans three areas:

1. Protecting Individual Students’ Rights: EEP provides direct legal services to youth at risk of losing access to education due to harsh discipline or because of re-enrollment barriers. As part of its direct services program, EEP trains pro bono volunteer attorneys to represent students at expulsion hearings. In addition to providing direct legal services to students, EEP provides referrals to community-based resources and other support services for expelled youth. EEP also provides re-enrollment services to court-involved youth to reduce rates of recidivism.

2. Promoting Systemic Reform: EEP addresses systemic barriers to education by reforming school policy through an explicit social and racial justice lens. EEP advocates for better practices in school discipline policies, the implementation of restorative justice programs and provides trainings on school-to-prison pipeline issues.

3. Empowering Communities and Building Partnerships: EEP works under a community lawyering model to advise community groups, advocate for partnerships and conduct outreach to parents and students who are affected by the school-to-prison pipeline.
 Equip for Equality – Special Education Clinic (Chicago, IL)

The mission of Equip for Equality is to advance the human and civil rights of children and adults with physical and mental disabilities in Illinois. It is the only statewide, cross-disability, comprehensive advocacy organization providing self-advocacy assistance, legal services, and disability rights education while also engaging in public policy and legislative advocacy and conducting abuse investigations and other oversight activities.

Equip for Equality's Special Education Clinic is staffed by several practicing attorneys and handles a wide variety of special education matters on behalf of students and parents. Students who work at Equip for Equality will have extensive client interaction and work on active cases under the supervision of an attorney. After completing special education law training, all student externs conduct case intakes through Equip for Equality's special education hotline and also assist clients with self-advocacy. Practicum students' responsibilities on active cases may include legal research and writing, case strategy, client counseling, and/or providing direct legal representation (under the supervision of an attorney) at critical school meetings, negotiations, due process administrative hearings, and/or court proceedings.

Illinois Network of Charter Schools (Chicago, IL)

INCS is an education reform organization focused on advocacy and support of Illinois charter schools, as well as promoting effective reform throughout the public school system. Today INCS serves 146 charter schools across Illinois, representing 60,000 students. INCS’s mission is to improve education by establishing high-quality charter public schools that transform lives and communities. As the voice of the Illinois charter schools, INCS advocates on behalf of the Illinois charter sector, provides support to strengthen charter schools, and influences education policy for the benefit of all public school students.

Student would work closely with INCS’ Senior Policy Manager to:

- Develop district advocacy skills within Chicago Public Schools’ environment;
- Develop knowledge regarding innovative education practices, initiatives, studies, and policies;
- Analyze and communicate new legislative and district requirements;
- Perform legal research to inform schools’ compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations;
- Develop legal and policy-related tools to support local and statewide charter public school initiatives;
- Draft policy and legislative memos and/or briefs to inform schools and local and state officials;
- Develop networking and leadership skills; and
- Develop a better understanding of non-profit legal and policy work.
INCS requires applicants to submit a cover letter, resume, unofficial transcript, three references, and a 3-5 page writing sample.

**LAF – Education Law Project** (Chicago, IL)

LAF’s Education Law project represents students who are wards of the state (in DCFS custody) and parents with incomes at 150% of the poverty line and below, in special education, school discipline, and other school-related matters including residency. In the past, the most successful interns have been those with an interest in research, writing, and client interaction and who are able to commit to at least 12-15 hours per week. A background in education law is helpful, but not necessary as long as students are interested in learning more about the area. Typically, interns will begin with research projects, intake, and client communications. They often move on to more complex projects including drafting complaints, reviewing documents, hearing prep, and even taking on their own cases. LAF provides supervision, mentoring, and the opportunity for exposure to school meetings like individualized education program (IEP) meetings and manifestation determination reviews (MDRs). Interns may also be able to attend expulsion hearings and if possible, a due process hearing.

**James B. Moran Center for Youth Advocacy** (Evanston, IL)

The James B. Moran Center for Youth Advocacy (the "Moran Center") provides integrated legal and social work services to low-income Evanston youth (21 and younger) and their families to improve their quality of life at home, at school, and in the community. Legal matters handled include juvenile delinquency, adult felony and misdemeanor, school discipline and special education, and ordinance violations. Law students placed at the Moran Center attend and observe at juvenile delinquency and adult felony proceedings. Law students also participate in conducting witness interviews, fact investigations, trial preparation, legal research, drafting of legal briefs and memoranda, and document subpoenas and review. Students with a 711 license will have the opportunity to examine witnesses in court, make evidentiary arguments, and assist in any way as requested by the supervising attorney. Additional information may be found on the website at [http://moran-center.org/](http://moran-center.org/).

**Teach for America – Legal Affairs Team** (Chicago, IL)

The Legal Affairs Team provides legal and strategic advice to the fifty Teach For America regions nationwide and the central functional teams – Program, Regional Operations, Finance, Marketing and Communications, Growth Strategy and Development and Human Assets. Our team of attorneys consists of lawyers that practice in a wide range of substantive areas including employment law, administrative law, nonprofit law, trademark and copyright protection, general compliance, and education laws. The day-to-day work often includes, partnering closely with staff members to manage questions of law and policy; creating training materials for organizational compliance such as
copyright and lobbying trainings; and drafting and negotiating contracts with other partner entities and vendors.

The Legal Affairs placement provides a platform for law students committed to working in a mission-driven organization to develop legal skills and acumen while partnering directly with our attorneys to work on various legal projects throughout the summer. The student will get exposure to a wide range of matters from lobbying compliance to developing organization-wide policies to real estate matters. Through this summer internship, you will have the chance to observe the strategy development of a national non-profit.

Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:
- Conducting legal research across a wide variety of substantive areas with a particular focus on employment and benefits law, state lobbying compliance requirements, contracts, and non-profit corporation and tax law with an opportunity to create a writing sample
- Producing high-quality written communication for different constituencies within the organization, including training materials and presentations related to various areas of legal compliance

Requirements include:
- 3.2 GPA
- Ability to work effectively in a fast-paced, deadline-driven environment
- Discretion, ownership and initiative to drive projects forward independently
- Strong research skills
- Strong written and interpersonal communication skills
- Knowledge of MS Outlook, PowerPoint, and Excel are preferred
- Access to Lexis/Nexis or Westlaw is preferred

TFA asks for submission of a (1) resume, (2) cover letter, and (3) copy of the student’s law school transcript.

Field Placements with School Districts

Chicago Board of Education Law Department—Labor Relations Unit (Chicago, IL)

The Law Department’s Labor Relations Unit is responsible for handling traditional labor law cases and employee discipline matters. Law students working in this placement would concentrate their work in prosecuting employee dismissal cases. With the oversight of attorneys, interns/externs would be responsible for: (1) gathering background information; (2) contacting the client and witnesses to prepare them for their testimony; and (3) presenting opening and closing statements, direct and cross-examination of witnesses, and arguing orally before an administrative hearing officer. Many law students in the past have found this direct hands-on experience challenging and
rewarding. Additionally, if desired, law students will have the opportunity to handle traditional labor law matters as well.

The Law Department requires submission of a cover letter and resume.

**Chicago Public Schools—Ethics and Policy** (Chicago, IL)

The Chicago Public Schools is the third largest school system in the United States. Law students would work directly with the CPS Senior Policy Advisor to support ethics compliance efforts and policy initiatives. Ethics responsibilities include assisting with ethics inquiries and investigations; supporting training development and presentation; preparing for and attending standing Ethics Committee Meetings; and implementing ongoing process improvements to the ethics program. Policy responsibilities include research and drafting of policies and policy amendments due to legislative developments or organizational mandates.

CPS requires submission of a cover letter, resume, unofficial transcript, and short writing sample.

**Federal Government Agency Field Placement**

**United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights** (Chicago, IL)

The United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, (OCR), enforces several Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex disability and age. OCR also enforces the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act of 2001 that prohibits the denial of equal access or a fair opportunity to meet to, or discrimination against, any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America. Law students working in this placement will work with OCR attorneys and investigators on one or more teams in the Chicago Office to resolve discrimination complaints.

Law students will observe and participate in complainant and witness interviews, participate in the drafting of all documents pertinent to an OCR investigation including, letter of notification, data requests and letters of finding; they may have the opportunity to participate in local on-site investigations, and they will assist with data analysis, engage in substantial legal research and be expected to adhere to the tight timeframes of the Department. The team attorney(s) with whom the student will work will supervise the student's work. The extern coordinator, the deputy chief attorney and chief attorney will also be available to assist the extern. Law students should be available to work a minimum of 12 hours per week during the field placement.

OCR requires submission of a letter of interest, law school transcript, resume and writing sample.