

DePaul University College of Law Third Year in Practice Program Student Guide

I. Third Year in Practice Program Summary

The Third Year in Practice Program (“3YP”) bridges the gap between the theory of law and the practice of law by affording law students the opportunity to dedicate their last two semesters of law school to the practice of law. Through participation in 3YP, students will acquire more general practical litigation and transactional experience and specific practical experience in their preferred practice area or areas through taking professional skills courses, legal drafting courses, clinics, and externships, especially the Intensive Externship, discussed in more detail in Sections II and X below.

Furthermore, if a 3YP student does not yet know what area(s) of law they wish to practice, 3YP gives students the opportunity to learn about many different practice areas and in doing so will help the student to determine what areas of law most interest them. This includes students who are deciding whether to pursue a career in litigation or transactional law.

II. Why Apply to 3YP?

DePaul University College of Law (“DePaul”) created the Third Year in Practice Program because we wanted to give our students the opportunity to dedicate a third of their legal education to learning and developing an array of practical litigation and transactional skills.

While the American Bar Association requires students to complete 6 credits of experiential coursework as of the date of this version of the 3YP Student Guide, those students who wish to acquire a deeper and broader range of skills by taking a variety of practical courses should consider applying to 3YP.

In addition to learning and refining practical skills, students also greatly benefit from the Intensive Externship, which is only available to members of 3YP and which offers an unparalleled opportunity to practice law with an Externship Site of the student’s choice so long as the Externship Site is approved by DePaul.

The program especially benefits students who plan to practice law outside of Illinois as students may perform their Intensive Externship at an approved out-of-state Externship Site so long as all of the conditions set forth in Section XI of this *Guide* are met.

III. Who is Eligible to Apply to the Third Year in Practice Program?

Year in School: Full-time students entering their second year of law school are eligible to apply when the application process begins every fall semester. Part-time students can apply after they have completed 28 course credits.

Transfer Students: Students who transfer to DePaul University College of Law after their first year are eligible to apply along with the rest of their new 2L cohort.

LLM Students: LLM students are not eligible to apply because of the unique requirements of the LLM program, which does not allow enough space

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for students to complete the 3YP requirements. With this said, LLM students are encouraged to take experiential courses, especially those pertinent to their LLM degree.

Grade Point Average (GPA): While there is no minimum GPA requirement to apply to 3YP, a student's academic performance may be considered when making admission decisions.

IV. How Many Students Can Be Admitted to the Third Year in Practice Program?

The program is currently capped at a maximum of twenty students. Due to the growing popularity of the program since it began in 2016, applications must be submitted by each year's application deadline set forth on 3YP's webpage, go.depaul.edu/3YP, and also stated in our *Experiential Learning Calendar*, available here: <https://law.depaul.edu/academics/experiential-learning/Pages/default.aspx>.

V. Program Requirements

Admitted full-time students must complete 24 credits of experiential coursework in their last year of law school, referred to below as a student's "3YP Year." Admitted part-time students must also complete 24 credits of experiential coursework but will work with the 3YP Director to determine the timeline for completion of the 24 credits of experiential coursework. Consequently, part-time students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible after completion of their initial 28 credits of coursework.

Admitted students will be allowed to carry-over up to 6 credits of experiential coursework performed in the semesters preceding their "3YP Year" and have those credits applied to the 24 credit hours requirement. For example, a student who completes one 3 credit experiential course prior to their 3YP Year will only need to complete 21 credits of experiential coursework in their 3YP Year. A student who completes three 3 credit experiential courses prior to their 3YP Year can only apply six of those nine credits to their 3YP Year, and thus will only need to complete 18 credits of experiential coursework in their 3YP Year.

We encourage admitted students to take two experiential courses during the terms preceding their 3YP Year because it lays a foundation of practical skills that the student will build upon in their 3YP Year. It also allows a 3YP student to take more doctrinal courses in their last year of school, including bar and bar-prep courses.

VI. Application Process

Full-time 2L students and part-time students who have completed their initial 28 credit hours of coursework can apply to 3YP when applications become available on 3YP's webpage in September of every Fall Semester. The specific date the application becomes available will vary from year to year and will be announced in *DePaul College of Law's Weekly News* and also announced on the 3YP webpage at the beginning of each academic year. Application dates and other dates pertaining to 3YP are also available in the *Experiential Learning Calendar*.

Students must complete the online application and submit their resumes and Unofficial Transcripts by the deadline announced in these same sources, and which will be a minimum of 14 days from when the application became available. The 3YP

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Director may choose to interview applicants, in which case applicants will be promptly notified. Applicants will be notified of our admission decision shortly after the application deadline and admitted students will be given a brief period of time to decide whether to accept the admission decision. These dates will also be set forth in the *Experiential Learning Calendar* for each academic year.

VII. Overview of 3YP Program Upon Admission

Upon admission into the program, a student will meet with the 3YP Director prior to registering for his or her second semester 2L courses in order to discuss the student's practice area interests and career plans and begin planning the student's experiential and doctrinal coursework in a manner consistent with each student's learning objectives and career plans and to ensure the student enrolls in pre-requisite courses for courses the student intends to take in a later semester. Students will be required to email the 3YP Director with their proposed course schedule prior to their initial meeting and also to meet with their Academic Advisor to ensure the student is on track to meet their graduation requirements and the requirements of any certificate programs.

The 3YP Director in conjunction with the student's Academic Advisor will provide guidance to the student based on the student's legal interests and graduation requirements but the student will ultimately choose the courses to take so long as the student chooses courses that will keep the student on track to complete the program's required 24 credits of experiential coursework. Students will submit their final course schedules to the 3YP Director and the administrative assistant to the 3YP program, whose contact information will be provided to all admitted students.

The student will meet with the 3YP Director again prior to registering for their last two semesters of law school with an emphasis on thinking about an appropriate Intensive Externship Site for the student and whether it best for the student to perform their Intensive Externship in their fall or spring semesters of their 3YP Year. As with regular externships, it is the student's responsibility to inform themselves of the rules and procedures governing DePaul's Externship Program and timely take all steps necessary to secure the Intensive Externship, including all of the steps outlined in the *DePaul Externship Program Student Manual*:

<https://law.depaul.edu/academics/experiential-learning/field-placement-program/Pages/default.aspx>

In addition to providing course guidance, the 3YP Director also meets frequently with each 3YP student before, during, and after the student's 3YP Year to provide ongoing academic and professional advice and guidance.

VIII. Out-of-Classroom Credit Limit for 3YP Students is 21 Credits

In order to allow 3YP students to complete their 24 credits of experiential coursework, 3YP students have an out-of-classroom cap of 21 credits versus a cap of 12 out-of-classroom credits for students not in 3YP. Out-of-classroom courses include externships, journal work for which a student receives credit, ASP Student Mentors, Independent Research, and Guided Study. More information about what courses constitute out-of-classroom courses can be found in the *Student Affairs*

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Handbook located here along with other useful information for both 3YP and non-3YP students: <https://catalog.depaul.edu/student-handbooks/law-student-handbook/academic-policies/>

IX. What Counts as an Experiential Course?

Experiential courses develop practical litigation and transactional lawyering skills through three kinds of courses: (1) professional skills courses that develop these skills through simulations, role-play, and the simulated representation of clients; (2) clinical courses where students represent real clients; and (3) externships.

The first group of courses include *Professional Skills* courses (found in DePaul's course schedule under "Experiential Education Courses"), *Legal Drafting* courses (except for seminar courses), and *Student Competitions* such as National Trial Team and National Moot Court Competition. The second group of courses include *Clinics and Field Clinics*. The third group of courses are *Externships*.

An overview of these kinds of courses, including links to each category of courses, can be found on DePaul's Experiential Learning webpage: <https://law.depaul.edu/academics/experiential-learning/professional-skills-courses/Pages/default.aspx>.

During each of the meetings the 3YP Director has with each 3YP student to discuss their course registration, the 3YP Director will work closely with the student to facilitate the progressive acquisition of lawyering skills and to ensure the student stays on track to meet the program's requirements and the student's graduation requirements. With that said, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to ensure that their graduation requirements are met.

NOTE 1: A student who completes the 3YP Program will also have completed the six credits of experiential education required by DePaul and the American Bar Association.

X. The Intensive Externship

The 3YP Intensive Externship is an externship for which a 3YP student can receive 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9 credits (versus the 2, 3, and 4 credit regular externships). Only 3YP students can take an Intensive Externship and a 3YP student is required to perform a one-semester Intensive Externship in their 3YP Year in the semester of their choice. At the same time a 3YP student performs his or her Intensive Externship, he or she will also be enrolled in the Intensive Externship's companion class - and 3YP's capstone class – the 3YP Seminar, described in Section XII below.

The process for securing an Intensive Externship is the same process for securing a regular externship as outlined in Section II and detailed in Section III of the *Externship Program Student Manual* with the following additional steps. First, the 3YP Director will work closely with the 3YP student in identifying potential externship sites, but it will ultimately be the responsibility of the student to choose the Intensive Externship Site subject to the rules for Externship Site approval set forth in the *Externship Program Student Manual*. Second, the student will expressly state his or her participation in 3YP in the Externship Application and will promptly notify the

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3YP Director of his application submission. The 3YP Director will work with the Externship Director to determine whether the 3YP student qualifies to join the Externship Program and whether the Externship Site is approved. If both requirements are satisfied, the Externship Director will register the student for the Intensive Externship for the number of credits chosen by the student and will register the student for the 3YP Seminar (the student will not need to be enrolled in the regular Externship Seminar).

The chart below reflects the number of hours of total and weekly work associated with each credit hour.

3YP Intensive Externship

Credit Hours Earned	Minimum Number of Hours Worked During the Academic Semester	Average Minimum Number of Hours per Week
5	225	16
6	270	19
7	315	23
8	360	26
9	405	29

NOTE: DePaul limits all students to two academic year externships and one summer externship, and so a 3YP student may only enroll in one regular academic year externship in order to qualify the student to enroll in an Intensive Externship.

XI. Out-of-State Placements

A 3YP student may perform an out-of-state intensive externship so long as four conditions are met: (1) the student and the Externship Site meet the application requirements set forth in the *DePaul Externship Program Student Manual*; (2) the student performs the Intensive Externship in the last semester of their 3YP Year; (3) the student completes Legal Profession and an Advanced Writing course; and (4) the student need only take the number of credits of the Intensive Externship (5 to 9 credits) and the 3YP Seminar (2 credits, done remotely) in order to complete the 86 credit hours required to graduate (keeping in mind the 21 out-of-classroom credit limit for 3YP students). For example, if a student needs only eleven credits to graduate, the student may, if all other preceding conditions are satisfied, do a 9 credit out-of-state Intensive Externship and the 2 credit 3YP Seminar.

NOTE: If a student need only complete less than 12 credits to graduate, the student should consult with DePaul's financial aid office to ensure that the number of credits they intend to take qualifies them for the financial aid they are receiving.

XII. The 3YP Seminar

The 3YP Seminar is a complement to the 3YP student's Intensive Externship. In the seminar students will reflect on, discuss, and further develop the knowledge and skills obtained at their respective externships, learn about different law practices, and develop strategies for maintaining and expanding their legal knowledge and skills after law school.

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XIII. Additional Information

We hope this *Guide* provides you with answers to the most common questions about the Third Year in Practice Program. However, we realize that not every question or situation can be anticipated, and so if you have any questions not answered by this *Guide*, please email 3YP@depaul.edu.