

CLINIC EXPERIENCE HEIGHTENS *Student Marketability*

New job seekers know the vicious cycle: “You can’t get a job without experience, and you can’t get experience without a job.” In today’s highly competitive and evolving job market, the more practical experience you can highlight on your résumé the better chance you have at getting noticed by employers.

The legal profession is no different, and third-year Washburn Law students can gain important practical skills by enrolling in Washburn Law Clinic.

“Washburn Law Clinic students already have many of the skills employers are looking for — appearing in court, interviewing clients, and taking depositions,” said Margann Bennett, director of professional development and pro bono at Washburn Law.

“Working in Clinic moves you along the learning curve quicker and gives you a head start.”

According to Bennett, the current economic reality faced by employers has forced many to rethink their hiring strategies. New employees are expensive to train so businesses have curtailed their training expenditures and are looking for applicants with proven, practical skills.

“In economic downturns, employers, especially in the private sector, look for experience since most likely they have cut back on resources and staff to help train new lawyers,” she said. “Clients are not willing to pay to train new lawyers.”



Whether students are looking to ultimately work in transactional law or litigation, practical skills acquired through participating in Clinic can be applied to all areas of law practice.

“Working with clients directly will help you to be a better transactional lawyer. Any setting where clients depend on you will,” Bennett said. She emphasizes that Clinic teaches law students the nuts and bolts of client interaction; how to work effectively with opposing counsel, supervising attorneys, and professional staff; the realities of working in a professional environment; and how to bill time.

The Clinic experience also provides students with professional recommendations from those who have observed the students’ work in the Clinic setting. These references are invaluable and applicable regardless of a student’s chosen career path.

“Sometimes students think Clinic skills are not relevant to what they want to do, but that’s simply not true. At the very least, the experience gives the Clinic interns confidence that they can do the work.”

Bennet said that confidence combined with real-world experience can provide an advantage to students when applying for jobs. “We’ve had employers specifically request students from Clinic knowing they will have valuable experience.”



More information about the Washburn Law Clinic is available at washburnlaw.edu/clinic