One of the most distinctive features of UNSW Law is its commitment to experiential learning. We encourage our students to step outside the classroom and experience the law in action through internships, clinical legal education, international opportunities and skills competitions.

We are the only law school in Sydney fortunate enough to have our own community legal centre in the building and we run the largest program of internships and clinics in Australia. And it just keeps getting bigger. All our students have the chance to participate in one or more of these programs as an elective subject in later years. Not only do they receive course credit for it, but an eye-opening experience which many say is the highlight of their time at Law School.

Frances Gibson
Director of Experiential Learning

NEWS

NEW OVERSEAS DESTINATIONS FOR STUDENTS

UNSW Law students can study overseas at over sixty international law schools and receive course credit for it. These are the latest universities to offer exchange programs to our students.

- Boston College USA
- Tilburg University NETHERLANDS
- Hebrew University of Jerusalem ISRAEL

JD students also have the chance to study at Oxford after their 5th semester to obtain a JD and BCL or MLF. Read more at law.unsw.edu.au/oxford
NEWS

LAND AND ENVIRONMENT COURT CLINIC

An exciting new clinic starts in Semester 1 2013 which places students in the Land and Environment Court. Students will be undertaking projects designed to increase access to justice in the court including research on environmental and planning matters, gaining an insight into the workings of the court, and assisting registry staff in providing information to unrepresented people who have planning and environment problems.

POLICE POWERS CLINIC

Located within Redfern Legal Centre, students will gain practical experience of law and policing in action while critically analysing the effect on disadvantaged clients. Students will be assisting Solicitors in advising clients in making complaints against the police, as well as conducting work on research, policy and community legal education under the supervision of the Police Powers Clinic Convenor.

MOOTING

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT MOOT

Five UNSW Law students will compete at The Hague following selection for The International Criminal Court (ICC) Trial Competition. Their essay on forced marriage as a crime against humanity secured them one of just 37 places in the intensely competitive international rounds, which will take place in April.

The team, which includes Harj Narulla, Henry Cornwell, Louisa Bonaventura, Peerce McManus and Truman Biro, are one of only two Australian delegations chosen for the prestigious event.

Read about the experience of Vanessa Chan who competed in the 2011/2012 round of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Trial Competition and how preparations are going for the 2013 competition.

“PEERCE MCMANUS
It is a lot of work, but the chance to compete against some of the brightest law students in the world in a place like The Hague is not to be missed.”
SOUTH AFRICA HUMAN RIGHTS CLINIC

Six UNSW Law students flew to Johannesburg for the first South Africa Human Rights Clinic in Johannesburg over summer. This five-week elective course is also the first of its kind in Australia, offering students the opportunity to work at human rights and public interest law organisations over summer. Highlights included visiting the prison where Nelson Mandela was held, assisting diverse clients such as a homeless group that was living under a highway, and a dinner with Professor Andrea Durbach to discuss the film ‘A Common Purpose’, based on a famous Apartheid trial in which she represented some of the accused.

LAURA O’REILLY
I have spent my time here meeting with very desperate people, and then trying to find ways that the human rights framework can be applied to help them.

NEW YORK SUMMER SCHOOL

The first New York Summer School was held in July 2012 with a total of 36 UNSW Law students visiting the Big Apple. Held at Columbia Law School’s Human Rights Institute in conjunction with UNSW Law, the students undertook the elective course ‘Human Rights Law in Practice’ over two weeks in early July. The intensive course covered foundations in international human rights law and an introduction to the US Bill of Rights and civil rights law. Expert human rights lawyers from across the world provided case studies from US courts and the UN system, which students were able to reflect on through an Australian lens. Students were lucky to see inside the UN headquarters immediately after a General Assembly meeting and take advantage of city celebrations for Independence Day.

SIMON COOKE
You will hear from inspiring world class speakers about issues as they are evolving and spend your nights in glorious NYC.
INTERNSHIPS

JUSTICE ACTION

Justice Action is a community-based advocacy group targeting abuse of authority in the criminal justice and health systems. Farzana Choudhury, Hazel Pais and Taariq East were placed in their Sydney office last year, liaising with both prisoners and parliamentarians alike, gaining insight into the treatment of convicted criminals after ‘justice’ has been dispensed.

CAPE YORK LAND COUNCIL

Cape York Land Council (CYLC) is responsible for administering native title claims from Cairns north to the Torres Strait. Prue Mewburn completed an Aurora Internship alongside Indigenous and non-Indigenous lawyers, liaison staff and support staff who assist clients and other stakeholders with the Native Title claim process.

SOCIAL JUSTICE INTERNSHIP: GILBERT + TOBIN CENTRE FOR PUBLIC LAW

Housed within the Law Building, the Gilbert + Tobin Centre for Public Law plays a prominent, independent role in public debate on issues vital to Australia’s future. During their internship Emily Burke and Erin Walker worked on a range of contentious projects, such as the same-sex marriage equity bill and ‘Stronger Futures’ alcohol laws in the Northern Territory. Emily even presented her argument at the Parliamentary Inquiry in Canberra.

TAARIQ EAST

I came to the realisation that his incarceration was punishment enough for his crime and, beyond that, he still deserved to be treated like any other human being.

PRUE MEWBURN

I thoroughly enjoyed my time at CYLC and would recommend it to anyone who has an interest in working in native title and working for Aboriginal people.

EMILY BURKE

It was exciting to speak at a parliamentary inquiry…and be part of a debate of such contemporary social importance.
IN PROFILE

Internship courses at UNSW Law include a seminar component where students can reflect on their experiences. Lecturers in these courses have a great variety of expertise and come from a variety of backgrounds.

REBECCA MCMAHON
Criminal Law Lecturer and Internship Supervisor

Why do students choose an internship course?
One of the main reasons students choose this course is because they have a genuine interest in public interest issues and social justice. I also think students are motivated by the chance to gain practical experience and insight into the area of practice in which they intern prior to graduation, after which more permanent decisions are generally made about employment.

How should students decide on which internship placement to choose?
Of course, students should consider undertaking a placement in an area of law in which they have an interest as they are more likely to bring prior knowledge and enjoy the learning process and experience. Additionally, they should give consideration to the type of experience they want to gain. For example, do they want to be at Court regularly, researching policy, giving advice to clients, working with judicial officers?

How would you describe the classes?
The classes go for an hour and are held every fortnight. Students share stories about their placement and compare differences in relation to their workplaces and the services which their organization provides.

MORE INFORMATION

Watch this video to hear from students who have participated in clinics, internships, competitions and overseas programs.

All UNSW Law students have the chance to experience the law in action as an elective course in later years. Read more about the opportunities on offer at: law.unsw.edu.au/current-students/beyond-classroom