JOURNAL GUIDELINES

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES WORKSHOP
SPRING SEMESTER
2015

IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ
1. Journals are due by 9 a.m. each Monday for the previous week.
2. At the top of each journal, write “Week of ...” and Monday’s date of the week you are reporting. For instance, the journal for the week of January 26-January 30 will be due at 9:00 a.m., Feb 2, and will be labeled:
   Week of January 26. It will also help you and us keep track if you number your journals: 1 for the first week, 2 for the second week, etc.
3. If you are in Salem more than one day in the same week, please make separate, dated entries in your journal for each of those days. For example, “Week of January 26” at the top, then a subtitle for the 1st day in Salem (“January 27”) and a subtitle for the 2nd day in Salem (“January 28”).
4. Journals are to be submitted by email. Begin the document title with your last name. Please submit your journal entry as an attachment in Microsoft Word.
During your internship you are required to keep a journal of your experiences.

**Please send your journals by email to:** Kamala Shugar at [kshugar@msn.com](mailto:kshugar@msn.com). Journals are due by 9 a.m. on Mondays for the prior week. That gives me time to review journals for issues to be discussed at the Monday evening workshops.

Please put your name at the top of your journals along with the dates of the week covered. For example: **“David Jones: Week of January 26”**. Also, if you are in Salem more than one day in the same week, please make separate, dated entries in your journal for each of those days.

We think it will be of most benefit to you if, in writing your journal, you are candid. However, we ask that you respect the confidentiality of the parties involved, which may require use of pseudonyms or redacting names.

**Why a Journal?**

The journal has several functions. First, it requires you to take time to reflect on what you have been doing in connection with your internship. Second, it provides us with information for discussion of the demands and constraints of the lawyer’s role in the legislature or in the agency/organization to which you are assigned. Third, it may provide us with helpful information should problems arise in your internship – an exception to the confidentiality rule. Fourth, the act of writing helps the writer clarify ideas and feelings.

The adage about experience being the best teacher is familiar to all of us. Internship programs try to enhance your learning from experience by helping you develop a systematic way to reflect on and analyze your experience and by pushing you to examine critically and in depth your performance, reactions, and feelings. The journal is a significant part of this learning process.

**Content?**

Your journal should not be primarily an account of what you did each day. Rather, it should record what you are thinking and feeling about your experience. What’s exciting? What’s bothering you? What are your questions or insights about lawyers and the legislative process? What criticism or praise do you have for the system, your supervisor, or yourself?

Your journal also might include your thoughts and feelings about the following:

- Getting comfortable in a new work environment;
- The effects of a partisan role on your perception, interpretation, and analysis of data;
- The tension between partisanship and the need for dispassion in evaluation facts;
- The impact of other people’s reactions and behavior on the legislator/agency staff and his/her activities;
- The stress of having responsibility for making decisions;
- How to balance professional and personal lives;
- Impact of interpersonal relationship on the legislative process;
Authority relationships in the legislative/agency system
How to give guidance to a client while respecting client authority;
The place of honesty in relations with the legislature, constituents, and other legislators;
Legislators and constituents who are manipulative;
How it feels to make decisions where there is no right answer and, often, insufficient data;
Anything else that interests you or is important to you

Getting Started

Some students have difficulty providing more than an account of the day’s events in their journals. If this is a problem for you, try the following:

1. Keep a daily log. Summarize the day’s events from your log.
2. List three or four questions raised by the day’s events.
3. Record your perceptions: what happened during the day, what you saw, patterns that are beginning to emerge in the course of your internship, what you observed about the legislative/agency process.
4. Record your feelings.
5. Imagine yourself in the roles of players whom you observed (legislators, legislative or agency staff, constituents, lobbyists, etc.).

One last suggestion: Take time every day as a legislative intern to write in your journal. Stale journal entries have little value for you or for faculty!

If you have questions about the journal requirements, check with Kamala Shugar, kshugar@msn.com, 541.521.2708.