NUS FACULTY OF LAW – AY 26/27 (SEM 2)

LL4377V/LLJ5377V – Law in Action: Legal Policymaking Externship

Convenors: Adjunct A/P Colin Chow, Adjunct A/P Sarala Kumari Subramaniam

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

1. **This is a 5-unit 100% continuous assessment clinical course for self-starter students interested in the development of legal policy and the practice of law in a government setting.**
2. **Please note that due to the nature of the course, we are unable to accommodate late enrolments. Once enrolled, students cannot drop this course.**
3. **To get prior approval to enroll, you must apply according to the requirements specified. To apply, please see the instructions below (see "How to Apply").**

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WHAT IS THE LEGAL POLICYMAKING EXTERNSHIP?

1. *Law in Action: Legal Policymaking Externship* offers students the opportunity to gain unique insights into Government policy making by working directly on various projects at the Ministry of Law ("**MinLaw**").

2. The course provides a structured programme for students who wish to experience and acquire skills relevant to policy development in a Government setting.

3. Students will be involved in policy and legislative projects drawn from MinLaw's work, spanning topics regarding governance and the Rule of Law, and legislative reforms to civil, criminal, family, community-related, private international and public international laws. Students will be part of a dynamic and challenging process of shaping policy goals to enhance the legal infrastructure in Singapore.

4. At the end of the Semester, students will submit a written report and conduct an oral presentation before Government officials.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

5. **At the end of the course, students will have acquired:**

   (a) An understanding of fundamental legal policy principles;

   (b) A deeper appreciation of the law-making process in a Westminster system;

   (c) Knowledge of how to direct legal research and analytical skills to the conceptualisation and development of policy proposals;

   (d) The ability to convey complex legal concepts succinctly and clearly in writing, in a manner suited to the professional practice of law, including in a government setting;

   (e) Improved policy-development skills, by interacting directly with and providing assistance to full-time policy makers across a wide spectrum of civil and criminal law matters; and

   (f) The ability to make persuasive and clear oral presentations on policy proposals.

INDICATIVE SYLLABUS

6. As this is a largely hands-on, project-based course, there will be minimal assigned readings or homework as such; the workload is the project itself, and will vary depending on the teams that the students will be assigned to. Students will have the opportunity to step into the shoes of a policy maker, to prepare policy papers, legal submissions, consultation papers and be involved in internal and external stakeholder engagements (where applicable).

7. Students will be assigned to one of the Ministry's ongoing projects. For this iteration of the course, students will be given the opportunity to work on one of the following projects:

   - **Public international law:** Calibrating Consent: A Framework for Formulating, Reviewing and Responding to Treaty Reservations and Declarations
   - **Public international law:** Review of legal policy approaches to extraterritorial regulation and overreach
   - **Criminal Justice:** Review of victim compensation and involvement in the criminal justice system
   - **Civil Justice:** Designing an effective legal framework to address elderly financial abuse
   - **Arbitration:** Review of arbitration framework

- **Corporate restructuring and insolvency:** Review of the Insolvency, Restructuring and Dissolution Act

8. Students will submit a final report and conduct an oral presentation at the end of the course.

INDICATIVE READING LIST

9. An indicative reading list is set out below for students who would like to have a general flavour of the course:

- Tom Bingham, The Rule of Law (2011)
- Valerie Thean, "Law Within Government: Law as a Purveyor of Justice, Values and Culture" in Tang Hang Wu, Michael Hor, Koh Swee Yen, The Practice of Law, LexisNexis (2011)
- Speech by Mr Heng Swee Keat, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance at Singapore Convention Signing Ceremony and Conference Gala Dinner on 7 August 2019 at Shangri-La Hotel
- Speech by Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Law, K Shanmugam at the inaugural forum, "A Free Press for a Global Society" at Columbia University
- Speech by Minister for Law K Shanmugam at the Opening Cocktail Reception of the Seasonal Meeting of NYSBA International Section

MODE OF ASSESSMENT

10. The assessment breakdown for the course can be found in the table below:

Component	**Weightage**
Legal policy work (including research, written work and other forms of participation in legal policy work, in the course of the externship)	70%
Final presentation & Report	30%

HOW TO APPLY

11. Students should apply by sending an email **before 4 December 2026** to A/P Colin Chow at Colin_CHOW@mlaw.gov.sg, A/P Sarala Kumari Subramaniam at Sarala_Kumari_SUBRAMANIAM@mlaw.gov.sg, copying Lee Yun Ze LEE_Yun_Ze@mlaw.gov.sg and Donna Yeo at Donna_SY_Yeo@mlaw.gov.sg with the subject: **Legal Policy Externship Application**.

12. The email should state, in order of preference, the top five projects in paragraph 7 that you are interested in. The email should also include the following attachments:

    (a) Your Curriculum Vitae (CV), which must include:
        (i) Name as matriculated;
        (ii) Email address;
        (iii) Educational qualifications, including your past law courses and your grades, and any previous degrees;
        (iv) Relevant work experience, such as internships or attachments;
        (v) Awards or honours;
        (vi) Co-curricular activities at NUS;
        (vii) Student exchange experience, if any, and if so, the details.

    (b) A personal statement of up to 250 words, stating why you would like to enroll in the course, highlighting the skills, personal attributes and experience which will make you a valuable extern, and your career plans after graduation (e.g. whether you have a practice training contract and where you will be serving it).

    (c) A bio of up to 100 words laying out any personal information about yourself which is not in your CV or personal statement, and which provides insight into your personality and interests (e.g. passions, goals, hobbies).

Important note: Applications will be processed on a rolling basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications early. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an interview from 18 November 2026 to 16 December 2026 based on availability.

We look forward to receiving your application!