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Pathway to Potential Externship Pilot Program Evaluation Report

By: Professor Gemma Smyth

Date: June 30, 2015

Note: This is an unpublished report made publicly available for curriculum and policy purposes. Views expressed here are the author's only, informed by the data collected. Nothing here represents policies of the University of Windsor Faculty of Law or the Law Foundation of Ontario.

Introduction

This report examines the results of interviews with staff and students who participated in a social justice, policy-focused externship pilot project. In this externship, Windsor Law students were employed at Pathway to Potential (P2P), a poverty reduction collaborative in Windsor-Essex. This evaluation was one of two completed for the purposes of examining development of an externship program at Windsor Law. The other report was completed by Adam Vasey, Law Foundation Fellow at Windsor Law. Mr. Vasey's report is available separately, and deals with some of the theoretical foundations of externship programs. This report was funded by a small Centred on Learning Innovation Grant provided through the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Funding supported the work of a research assistant, Mr. Leo Gil.

This report sets out student and staff feedback based on the externship. It also outlines elements of a successful externship of this type. This report is based on interview data but does not engage with specifics regarding, for example, curriculum integration or funding. This data is usefully supplemented by the significant amount of research on externship development, primarily from the United States, outlined in Mr. Vasey's report.

In this externship program, students completed a full time, paid summer placement with no formal credit or class attached. Students were then offered the opportunity to complete a directed research project with a faculty member in Law. All students took this opportunity. This paid placement/ research credit model was intended to ensure a more traditional research approach to the externship as well as to provide more formal research to P2P. This externship was also explicitly interdisciplinary and social justice and policy focused, rather than the more typical law firm-based, individual client focused externship placements available in other jurisdictions. There are many ways an externship program can be organized, as Mr. Vasey's report will identify. This model tested a unique approach reflecting the access to justice mission of Windsor Law.

Part 1 gives further background to the externship project. Part 2 sets out the Research Ethics and Methodology. Part 3 describes the backgrounds and experiences students who were placed at P2P, as well as staff perspectives on student learning. Part 4 describes the P2P organizational perspective and the interdisciplinary nature of the program. Part 5 describes the various curricular and pedagogical issues discussed by research participants. Part 6 summarizes the elements of a successful externship program of this type. If the reader is pressed for time, Part 6 is the most useful section to peruse. Part 7 describes potential contributions of Windsor Law to the ongoing success of this program from the viewpoint of P2P staff and students.

Part 1: Program Description & Background

This Externship placement aligned with Mr. Vasey's Law Foundation Fellowship project, which investigated the possibilities of interdisciplinary, policy-focused and other social justice-based placement opportunities for Windsor Law students. The Faculty of Law has discussed the idea of creating externships, which, because of Windsor's size, access to justice focus and geography, would require creative examination of student opportunities.

This initial externship piloted a model in which law students were placed for one summer full time in a paid placement.¹ Students were invited to apply for these positions and interviewed by the Director. After the summer placement, students were encouraged but not mandated to complete a directed research project with a Windsor Law faculty member engaged with placement-related research. All students took up this opportunity.

P2P was chosen as a pilot site due to the Director's education (LLB, LLM, MSW), his Law Foundation of Ontario Fellowship with Windsor Law, and history of working with students including those in social work, nursing, marketing, and other programs. While this placement site has an unusually deep history with Windsor Law. This history might limit how generalizable these results will be for other potential placement sites; however, the placement was also considered low risk for initial student placements and aligned with the social justice mission of Windsor Law.

P2P has significant experience hosting full- and part-time students from an array of disciplines, and its orientation to students may be considered unique among possible placement sites. Students were, as one staff said, "set them up for success".

¹ Payment was the fortunate byproduct of funding; however, student payment is not typically part of an externship placement program. The effects of payment are discussed later in this document.

Another articulated: “we always prioritize the learning of students... and make that a really foundational part of how we do our work and providing those learning opportunities and allowing space for students to really make a contribution to Pathway to Potential.” This affected the externs’ learning, evidenced later in this report.

Part 2: Research Ethics and Methodology

This report was granted REB approval by the University of Windsor’s Research Ethics Board under the title “Community-based Externship Evaluation Project”. Individual interviews with students occurred at the Faculty of Law. Interviews with staff took place at Pathway to Potential, 80 Chatham St. E. All interviews were audio recorded. Participation in the study was voluntary. Subject response rate was 3 of 4, or 75%. Employer/ placement supervisor response was 2 of 2, or 100%.

Due to ethical concerns, interviews were completed by Mr. Leo Gil, a Masters of Social Work student. Mr. Gil transcribed the responses and created codes for respondents. The Principal Investigator (PI), Professor Gemma Smyth, analyzed the data, along with Mr. Gil. As noted in the REB application, the respondents’ information was confidential but potentially not anonymous because of the small sample size. Efforts have been made to anonymize student data by removing any identifying information (i.e. previous identifying job experiences). Responses from the staff might reveal their identities. Again, given the low risk nature of this study, this risk was foreseeable and precautions were taken to minimize conflicts of interest.

Per the REB application, interview questions adopted a semi-structured, open format, wherein the interviewer followed a set of specific, pre-determined questions, but occasionally decided to explore participants’ answers with further questions to gain more relevant information. All interviews took place after the summer portion of the placement was complete.

The student survey (Appendix A) was designed to elicit students’ perceptions of their learning, the quality of their experience, how well or poorly they were prepared, what additional education would have been useful, whether they were impacted by financial remuneration, and any other relevant considerations. The supervisor survey (Appendix B) was designed to elicit supervisors’ perceptions of students’ preparation, the value to the organization, strengths and weaknesses of the program.

Data was mostly qualitative in nature, along with several short, quantitative Likert scale questions. Given that the researchers did not approach this data with a particular pre-determined theory, the researchers used thematic analysis and an inductive approach. We used an essentialist or realist approach in which the

subjects reported meaning of their experience with little interpretation required. We used a semantic approach in which the explicit or surface meaning was taken, rather than looking for hidden themes. The PI considered this appropriate given the nature of the subject (curriculum and program reform). The researchers looked for prevalence in responses and themes, but since the data set was small prevalence was given less weight. The researchers also looked for outlier or otherwise noteworthy responses.

Part 3: Students' Experiences

This externship required a pre-placement interview. All students expressed an interest in social justice and/or access to justice before beginning the placement. Students were from different academic backgrounds and political orientations, but shared several characteristics. First, most students had little to no familiarity with the Windsor-Essex community. All students had previous work and volunteer experience in community organizations. All had previous legal clinic experience, two as volunteers at Community Legal Aid (CLA) and one in another Toronto-based clinic. All students were entering their second or third year at Windsor Law.

What Did Students Do?

Students were assigned a particular portfolio in an area relevant to the current work at P2P, including living wage, food security, transportation policy the municipal election and social enterprise. Students completed research both formal and informal in legal and sociolegal areas. They learned about and engaged with formal and informal policy. They designed advocacy initiatives and campaigns. They presented to city council, professional audiences, and people with lived experience of poverty, decision makers, businesses, and many others. They organized a municipal election awareness campaign and event, and wrote reports and advocacy materials.

What Did Students Learn?

Students reported learning a range of skills, values and knowledge throughout their externship including: team work, communication skills, networking, building relationships with government, learning “how the micro leads to the macro”, and project management. One student discussed “[d]evelop[ing] of all the soft skills... things like organization and time management...We learned to be independent”.

The most detailed responses about content knowledge were in the general areas of community development, policy and advocacy. Students reported learning about formal and informal forms of advocacy. For example, students talked about learning to be creative and flexible, and how to tenaciously pursue a set of strategies, and how to plan to fail. They discussed learning about “how things work”. Students also

reported learning how municipal politics functions and how community organizations are linked to policy making. One student reported that “[i]t’s not just legal analysis, it’s not just the law framework, it’s also how different organizations work, theories how more informal organizing and structures work and that’s not just law, and so building that sort of, or integrating that sort of interdisciplinary ... training and having students realize from day one this isn’t about you being a law student. It’s about you being a cog in this functioning machine that makes policy happen and propels it.” This same student spoke about connecting ideas from her previous legal training to the externship:

... this concept of everything being connected and this idea of gate keeping and how the law is a gate keeper for a lot of policy change and how the law is policy itself. It’s kind of as though there were a bunch of dots that existed and what I learned was how the dots all connect. Even my understanding of legal analysis and the analysis of the laws itself as well, that sort of policy bit has more room for it and kind of a study that’s more sociological of the law and the way it functions and how it changes and who the actors are... that wasn’t sort of a connection I had made before, it was just kind of learn the classes, learn the law, write the exam but now it becomes more about how the system of power functions.

Students also demonstrated self-directed learning skills: “...[b]eing able to understand where my knowledge shortfalls are and to reach out or to have a better sense of how to reach out to the right people to be able to better understand the issues”.

P2P staff was also asked what they thought students learned throughout the placement. Staff noted they thought students learned the following competencies throughout their placement: collaboration, community engagement, oral and written communication, formal and informal research, event planning, community development theories and principles, how to work in an interdisciplinary environment and understanding multi-sector environments, and working as part of a team.

Much like the student responses, staff members reported the most significant learning in the areas of policy and community development. One staff member also noted that students engaged with “notions of social justice and... trying to define collectively what that means in the context of anti-poverty work... looking at taking anti-oppressive approaches to some of the work we are doing around poverty... empowerment and inclusiveness and dignity of the person and distribution of resources in an equitable way”. The same staff noted:

“I saw a lot of growth in all of the students as far as new knowledge, new learning... I guess content knowledge certainly of poverty and even conceptualizing poverty law differently or thinking about again

coming back to, you know, a less traditional role of a lawyer being engaged in the issue of poverty where it's less of a direct client engagement in that sort of more clinical model and more engaging with community as client, which is a very different experience. So I think there's a lot of that community development knowledge that I saw and a lot of confidence too through that... through those new experiences or in some cases it was a matter I think of, for the students connecting some of their past experiences which might have been relevant to their current role as law students."

Professional Identity and Professional Development

As evidenced in the previous quote, P2P staff and students discussed how the externship placement broadened students' views of the role of law and lawyers. One staff stated that "the students I think really seemed to be fulfilled by that experience of working with the community at a certain level that they might not have thought of or have experience in sort of strictly legal role or even their role as a law student previously". Students' career goals and connections with the law school were also affected by the experience:

"Having the summer experience has influenced me to continue my studies where I wouldn't have otherwise... I'm thinking about doing a Masters... because I was able to kind of be shown the way through a chain of events... to the academic and research side of things. That would be a product of the supervised research opportunity that we had at the end of the placement... it made the law school more accessible as far as the faculty".

Law Student Preparation and Skills

Part of the success of the placement could also be attributed to the characteristics of the particular students chosen for the placement. Students were asked about the characteristics that they brought to the placement that fostered success. They mentioned: their research abilities, ability to work autonomously, and an understanding of social justice. They also discussed their personal characteristics such as "sociability" and being "outgoing".

Interestingly, students used many affective words to describe why they were successful. They mentioned caring about the experience, caring about the issues, and wanting to make a difference. One student said, "I cared so much about my experience and I sort of got into the idea of being a part of the community and getting to know what was going on in Windsor, I sort of had a desire to go to the different community events...". Another student mentioned that she continued working with various community groups even after her placement had ended.

In order to better situate externships from a curricular perspective, students were asked to make connections between their previous experiences in law school and in other placements. Students reported similarities between their previous clinical and volunteer experiences. Most placements worked with a similar client group – those experiencing poverty and other socioeconomic challenges. P2P seemed somewhat different from their previous experiences because of its uniquely community-based and policy perspective. For example, students' experiences in Toronto and Windsor clinics were focused more on individual advocacy within the legal system, whereas P2P focused more broadly and systemically. One student said, "[e]ven though I had worked at community legal aid and kind of familiarized myself with some of the issues at the clinic, it really was a focus on legal issues and so... they didn't have a strong ... emphasis on systemic issues... it was more of a focus on 'how do we meet these legal issues'." Students also discussed the importance of building community trust in their P2P experience. "Building that rapport, building that trust relationship with other community groups, expressing your interest and showing your genuine interest in these community needs for Windsor is different than... I would say than what I had previously experience in Toronto".

Students also discussed what they had learned in law school and how it connected to their externship. One student reported that "my law student foundation gave me a really strong interest in the development of legislation... it is a really empowering feeling ... to look at the issues on the ground and being to think about 'well if this was to go... to become law, or if this was to be implemented through formal policy or legislation what would that process look like?'" All students mentioned the Access to Justice course as being important to their understanding of the issues at P2P: "[the] Access to Justice course kind of look[s] at ... the legal aspects of access to justice and barriers.... how much that sort of overlaps and interplays with the social aspects... teaching some of that foundational stuff in access to justice gives you some of that background knowledge". Another student reflected on her increased understanding of the role of formal and informal law. The student reported learning about "[h]ow different things connect to the law, which might not be so much because of what I learned in law school as it was just an awareness of the boundaries surrounding the law environment".

Part 4: P2P Organizational Perspective

Staff members were impressed with the quality, preparation and professionalism of the law students placed at P2P. One staff member mentioned the increased "level of responsibility" and "ownership that the student took on" in comparison with other students placed at P2P, and that "their level of dedication was higher, accountability was higher... with these students it never seemed to be sort of 9 to 5". One staff member noted "they were exceptional. They seemed.... better prepared for that environment than other faculties... they just handled the whole experience and ... brought a different level of professionalism...".

P2P staff was also impressed with students' oral and written communication abilities, including public speaking. Staff also noted students' compassion and openness to multiple perspectives, as well as their flexibility, ability to articulate their positions, their curiosity and positivity. Staff also noted that the students demonstrated resilience in the face of challenging issues.

Staff was concerned with law students' perceptions that what they were learning was not as explicitly "law focused" as they might have wished. One staff member thought students struggled with "what they were doing... as not being explicitly law or tied to their learning or their legal education... especially when we talked about policy... trying to get beyond some of those conceptions of what policy is, what law is, what that practice is".

Interdisciplinary Programming

This specific learning environment was interdisciplinary, with social work and law students as well as a media studies intern. Working in an interdisciplinary environment brought with it some challenges and significant benefit. One staff said "there's always challenges with when you do ask students to work across disciplines because I think there are just different norms and expectations in different theoretical orientations and ... world views. [F]or law it tends to be more of objective or focused more on that rational approach, that detached approach where social work more explicitly brings values into it, more explicitly deals with interpersonal dynamics overtly and so I think sometimes... it can be hard... for students to fully understand where students from other disciplines might be coming from".

Students were universally happy with the interdisciplinary nature of the program. One student stated that "[i]t exposes you to skills in areas that you wouldn't otherwise have access to exposure to... it's really important to have that experience and I think people should". Another said an interdisciplinary environment "[o]pens your mind up to thinking of things from different perspectives you wouldn't otherwise think".

Part 5: Curriculum and Pedagogy

There was no formal education plan, learning outcomes or syllabus for this placement, although the Director had previous experience with structured place-based learning through the School of Social Work, as well as familiarity with Windsor Law's clinical program. P2P staff also had informal learning goals for students. Students and staff had several suggestions to improve the curriculum.

All staff and students agreed that some mix of training before and during the training would be idea. Subjects included: basic concepts in policy formation and

social change, and more about the nature of P2P, collaboratives, the community, and community partners. One student reported that “I think that having a better understanding of the policy art of it and how the different moving pieces and how a society works together would be helpful for making sure that students know where they are situated and how they as law students are situated in this project and that environment that they are in.”

Some students expressed interest in reading materials beforehand, while another student said they would not have understood the materials unless she was already immersed in the environment. Another student suggested “ongoing summer reading lists”.

Staff expressed interest in a structured set of learning outcomes. One staff member reported that “I did find that consistently challenging the face that there was no template really to be working from... it wasn’t as clear which theoretical foundations or... what were our reference points really for directing this learning and experience”.

Staff and students were asked if it would be possible or preferable to have a generalized externship training program, or a training program aimed specifically at a particular placement site such as P2P. Generally, staff and students thought a mix of approaches was appropriate, with some broad topics such as community development, policy and poverty suggested by both staff and students. One staff member thought that there could be a general umbrella of social justice externships in which students were introduced to concepts such as anti-oppressive practices, strengths-based approaches, community lawyering and empowerment. This staff expressed concerns about students entering community-based placements without explicitly training on the ethics of working with community. Staff also mentioned the importance of increased, explicit opportunities for critical reflection. Students thought a specific training on the work of P2P, possible projects and community partners would have been beneficial before beginning the placement.

One student mentioned the possibility of having a course aligned with the placement:

“I think it’s really great ... that they [clinic students] have to do this class component to their experience of the clinic. I think that externship students would benefit from that as well... it would be maybe a week or so and have that be sort of more a mini course... maybe getting students to write out what their expectations are for the summer would be great... to see how they’ve grown at the end of it and to also center where they’re having this experience from”.

One staff recommended better exit interviews both to establish student learning but also to more effectively transition projects. Both students and staff expressed interest in having specific types of projects that could accomplish some goal,

however minor, within the prescribed time period. Many community development issues are too large to see significant impact in four months.

Part 6: Elements of a Successful Program

Students were overwhelmingly positive about their experience. They also had feedback to improve the program. The section outlines elements that seemed to be key to a successful placement, along with suggestions for improvement.

a) Pre-Placement Assessments

Upon beginning their placement, students were interviewed and asked about their previous experiences, current interests and future goals. Staff attempted to assign them to tasks that aligned with their interests and skills. Some flexibility was required in matching current community issues and student interest. This matching program seemed to improve student interest and success.

b) Learning Design

Staff was intentional about giving students specific experiences that would support them in becoming policy experts and leaders. Staff ensured that all students were given leadership experience, as well as a broad array of community development experiences in the general area of policy. Students were also given a significant amount of autonomy. The placement relied largely on a guided but largely self-directed form of learning in which students took responsibility over a specific project. This approach seemed to work to get the most from students in terms of learning and performance.

c) Meaningful Work

Students were given a choice of meaningful projects. As one student said, “[w]e weren’t just given busy work. There were actually things that needed volunteers to actually propel [projects forward]... the autonomy that I had in making my project go in certain directions and how the ideas that I would come up with from my own brain, being able to see that kind of materialize was kind of really exciting and not something I had experienced often or ever before.”

d) Supervision

Another key to the experience was having high quality supervision. Key characteristics report by students include: flexibility, availability (the term “open door policy” came up several times), supportive, approachable, and excited about their work. One student said, “[w]e were really lucky having

Adam and Laura... having someone who is approachable... someone obviously excited about the work that you are doing, I think that's really important. Just in terms of the general sort of atmosphere and culture in the place, I think that really has an effect on performance and outcome." The primary supervisor at P2P had a professional background in both law and social work which was helpful in understanding the benefits and limits of both approaches.

e) Work Environment

The environment was also supportive and relied on teamwork. One student said, "We were each given a portfolio... which worked really well because we were each able to be the authority and leader on that different project but then also reach out to other students for help... we all worked together as a team and that was done really well because it felt like we were part of the organization as opposed to law students who were sort of shipped in, so that was really good".

f) Length of Placement

As with any placement or educational experience, P2P staff and students weighed the length of time students spent in the placement against the cost of training them. A four month training period seemed ideal for both staff and students. One staff reported that "I would have kept them forever but it was a decent amount of time that we were actually able to accomplish things".

g) Filling the Gaps

Although not the intended purpose, the placement filled a gap in one student's learning that she was unable to fill through the available curricular offerings. This student reported having "a fantastic learning opportunity because I developed a really strong interest in municipal and land use planning law... I was concerned how I was going to build experience in this area and so this externship was fantastic because food security issues really do lend themselves to municipal and land use planning". The placement also provided education and experience in systemic and policy advocacy that is difficult to achieve outside an intensive clinical experience.

h) Should students receive payment?

In the United States, the ABA bars payment for externship programs (although there is current discussion as to whether amend this policy). As discussed earlier, payment was an unexpected bonus for this project, but would be a matter for discussion in future years. Staff and students varied widely on how and whether payment affected performance in this project. Staff reflected on how having paid students affected how they treated them. One staff said "I think we gave them more power than we typically would and

did treat them more as staff and colleagues versus interns... we gave them higher profile projects”.

Students did not think that payment influenced their behaviour, but lack of payment would be otherwise limit the number of students able to complete the placements. One student said: "I don't think it really influenced performance. For myself, and I imagine for a lot of other students, without remuneration we probably wouldn't be able to do it. Just... financial realities. The alternative would be a volunteer basis thing, you know a couple hours a week can't really accomplish too much in that time".

Students and staff both thought that receiving credit was a viable option in lieu of payment. When asked if there were other options instead of payment, one staff suggested “if you can't get paid, if you could at least leave with an awesome portfolio piece to say 'I executed this project' to get something published or a research project”. Another student stated that “[i]f we were able to get credit for it and there was research involved it would encourage students...”.

Part 7: Potential Contribution of Windsor Law

Externships are a partnership between the community, the law school, and the firm or agency with which students are placed. One staff suggested that if the law school did want to expand the program it would be important to consider an externship director to facilitate placements, or that a placement program could seek funding to pay positions, potentially as a type of bursary program. The law school might also consider these types of placements a way of increasing experiential learning opportunities and bringing further coherence to the access to justice mission of Windsor Law. One research subject indicated that an explicitly social justice-focused externship program could provide another opportunity for the law school to begin “talking about it explicitly as an access to justice type of initiative and providing students with really meaningful skills and knowledge and training... that is directed toward addressing major social and economic challenges in the community”.

APPENDIX A

PROJECT: Evaluating Non-Traditional Externships DOCUMENT: Student Interview Questions

Introduction

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this interview. This interview was designed to gather information about the pilot externship project that took place at Pathway to Potential over the summer of 2014. This information will be used to identify the strengths and limitations of the externship pilot and develop recommendations for a formal Externship program.

The externship pilot was a small-scale project, increasing the possibility that the primary investigator could deduce your identity. For more information on how your information will be handled in order to reduce loss of anonymity, please refer to the confidentiality agreement you signed prior to participating in this interview. Your confidentiality is important to us, which is why all identifying characteristics will be removed from the final report, and no data will be directly attributable to you. We seek to develop a formal externship program that will enrich the learning experience of undergraduate law students, both at the University of Windsor and abroad. Any publication produced as a result of this may include quotations or observations that you recognize as your own; however, such quotes will not be directly attributed to you.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact Professor Gemma Smyth at gemma.smyth@uwindsor.ca. If you are uncomfortable contacting the primary investigator, please feel free to contact Associate Dean Reem Bahdi at bahdi@uwindsor.ca

Instructions

The interview will take about 60 minutes to complete. Should you require a break at any time, please let me know. This interview has been designed to adopt a semi-structured format. Therefore, depending on your responses to questions, I may request that you clarify or elaborate upon your answers. With this in mind, the interview will consist of approximately 30 questions. Should you not wish to answer a specific question, please let me know. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary and you are under no obligation to answer any or all questions.

{Assessment of Previous Experience}

- 1) What year of law are you in currently?

- 2) Please describe your previous experience in both clinical (law) and community settings, if any.

- a) How has your externship experience differed from other placement experiences? How is it similar?
 - b) What experiences or competencies did you bring to this placement that you would consider mandatory for other students?
- 3) How has your education and training as a law student helped to prepare you for this externship experience?

In Regards to your Perception of Student Performance

- 1) What projects did you work on for Pathway to Potential?
 - a. What skills do you feel you have developed through these roles?
 - b. What other experiences would you have liked to have through your externship position? How would these experiences have enriched your learning?

1=Quite unsuccessful, 2 = unsuccessful, 3= neither, 4= successful, 5= Quite successful
--

- 2) Overall , on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being Quite Unsuccessful and 5 being Quite Successful, how successful or unsuccessful do you feel this experience has been for the following:
 - a. Learning new knowledge?
 - b. Gaining deeper understanding of policy more specifically?
 - c. Gaining valuable and relevant new experiences?
 - d. Contributing to Pathway to Potential's goals?
 - e. Contributing to the Windsor-Essex community at-large?
 - f. Facilitating connections for employment?
 - g. Facilitating personal development?
 - h. Facilitating professional development?
- 3) This placement was intended to focus on policy. Can you expand on what you learned about policy specifically? Community development?
- 4) Please comment on working in an interdisciplinary setting.

PROMPTS:

- Communication with professionals and/or students from other disciplines
- Acquisition and/or application of knowledge/perspectives from other disciplines
- Ability to apply and adapt legal expertise to the multi-faceted challenges that arise in community practice settings

- 5) What qualities – both personal and professional – contributed to your success in the externship pilot?
- 6) Do you feel that you would have benefited from additional/special training prior to beginning the externship pilot, and if so what kind (e.g., training seminar, full-day workshop, week-long prep course, etc.)?
 - a. Should training be generalized, specific to externship setting/organization, or a combination of both?

In Regards to the Externship Design

- 1) In your opinion, what were the goals to be accomplished through the externship pilot, with regard to both student learning and contributions to the Windsor-Essex community at-large?
- 2) What elements of the current externship pilot design do you feel were successful (e.g., student projects, student recruitment, paid vs. unpaid, etc.)?
 - a. Do you feel that receiving remuneration for these externship pilots has influenced your performance/perception of your placement? If yes, how so?
- 3) Is there anything that immediately comes to mind about the pilot that should be adjusted to foster greater success for students and for Pathway to Potential?
 - a. How could the Faculty of Law contribute to the pilot's success?
- 4) What are the characteristics of a placement that would help you succeed?
- 5) What are the characteristics of a supervisor that would help you succeed?
- 6) If the program is for credit rather than pay in future years, what method of evaluation would be meaningful for you?
- 7) Is there anything else you would like to add?

APPENDIX B

PROJECT: Evaluating Non-Traditional Externships **DOCUMENT TITLE: Supervisor Interview**

Introduction

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this interview. This interview was designed to gather information about the pilot externship project that took place at Pathway to Potential over the summer of 2014. This information will be used to identify the strengths and limitations of the externship pilot and develop recommendations for a formal Externship program.

The externship pilot was a small-scale project. You were the only supervisor in the pilot; thus, your identity is immediately recognizable and we can offer neither anonymity nor confidentiality.

Any publication produced as a result of this may include quotations or observations that you recognize as your own; however, such quotes will not be directly attributed to you.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, you may contact Professor Gemma Smyth at gemma.smyth@uwindsor.ca. Due to your relationship with Professor Smyth, you may wish to contact Associate Dean Reem Bahdi at bahdi@uwindsor.ca.

Instructions

The interview will take about 60 minutes to complete. Should you require a break at any time, please alert the researcher so that you may be accommodated. This interview has been designed to adopt a semi-structured format. Therefore, depending on your responses to questions, the interviewer may request that you clarify or elaborate upon your answers. Also, please inform your interviewer should you not wish to answer a specific question – your participation in this interview is completely voluntary and you are under no obligation to answer all questions.

Supervisory Experience

- 1) Please describe your previous experience supervising and mentoring students.
 - a) How has this experience prepared you as a supervisor for the pilot externship program for law students?
 - b) How has this experience differed from previous supervisory roles? How is it similar?
 - c) As a supervisor, how challenging was this supervisory experience relative to those where students are performing roles that more traditionally align with their expectations of their profession (e.g., macro social work)?

- 2) How has your education and training as a lawyer helped to shape the externship experience for your students?
- 3) How has your education and training as a social worker helped to shape the externship experience for your students?
- 4) How necessary do you feel it is that an on-site, non-traditional externship supervisor possess this knowledge and experience (i.e., would an “off-site” supervisor suffice for this placement experience?)?

Perception of Student Performance

- 5) What kinds of placement/experience opportunities did you offer students in this placement?
 - b. What specific skills, knowledge and values have these duties helped students develop?
 - c. How have students developed in their professional identity through their assigned roles? (If prompted, professional identity means their understanding of their roles as future lawyers, regardless if in a "traditional" or "non-traditional" legal career)

- 6) Overall (e.g., on a scale from 1 to 10) how successful do you feel this experience has been for:
 - d. Student learning of new knowledge?
 - e. Contributing to the Windsor-Essex community?
 - f. Contributing to Pathway to Potential’s goals?

- 7) How well have students adapted to an interdisciplinary setting? Please comment on the following:
 - a. Communication with professionals and/or students from other disciplines
 - b. Acquisition and/or application of knowledge/perspectives from other disciplines
 - c. Ability to apply and adapt legal expertise to the multi-faceted challenges that arise in community practice settings

- 8) What student qualities – both personal and professional – appear to have contributed to success in the externship pilot?
 - a. In what ways have these qualities contributed to success?

- 9) What limitations have students generally demonstrated and/or encountered during their externships?
 - a. Would students have benefited from additional/special training prior to beginning the externship pilot, and if so what kind (e.g., training seminar, full-day workshop, week-long prep course, etc.)?

- b. Should training be generalized, specific to externship setting/organization, or a combination of both?

Externship Design

- 10) In your opinion, what were the goals to be accomplished through the externship pilot, with regard to both student learning and contributions to the Windsor-Essex community at-large?
- 11) What elements of the current externship pilot design do you feel were successful (e.g., student projects, student recruitment, etc.)?
- 12) Which elements of the current externship pilot design could have been improved?
- 13) Do you feel that receiving remuneration for these externship pilots has influenced student performance/perception of their placements? If yes, how so?
- 14) With the externship program being continued as unpaid student placements in the upcoming semester, is there anything that immediately comes to mind about the pilot that should be adjusted to foster greater success for students and for Pathway to Potential?
 - a. How could the Faculty of Law contribute to the pilot's success?
- 15) What skills do you feel students have developed in this non-traditional externship that they might not otherwise develop in a traditional for profit law firm setting?
- 16) What skills do you feel students have developed in this non-traditional externship setting that they might not otherwise develop, or develop to the extent that they have, in traditional clinical legal education settings?
- 17) Is there any element of the program that you feel could be monitored on an on-going basis (i.e., bi-weekly or monthly) that could track the program's success? (For example: student attitudes, self-perceived development of student skills, supervisor perception of student skill development, communication with students/professionals from other disciplines, etc.?)
- 18) Would you accept law students in future?
- 19) Do you have any other comments to add?