

CAMPBELL LAW CAREER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP GUIDE

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the near term, judicial clerks have two basic highly sought after and marketable advantages: an added educational experience and a beneficial stepping-stone for entry into the legal market. In the long term, throughout your legal career, a judicial clerkship magnifies your return on your law school investment in vast ways no other experience can. "According to a [recent] NALP survey, a remarkable 97 percentage of former clerks said they would clerk again, largely because of the value impact their clerkship experience had on their future careers. The intangible benefits of the clerkship experience cannot be overstated. Thus, the Career Center and Faculty recommend as strongly as possible that students consider clerking. We sincerely believe that if you have the opportunity to clerk, you will be grateful for the rest of your career that you did so.

Speak to any former law student who has pursued a judicial clerkship as their initiation into the legal community, and he or she will tell you that it was one of the most beneficial work experiences of his or her career. The former clerk will mention many positive aspects of the clerkship, including the sharpening of research and writing skills, exposure to subjects within the law that he or she did not pursue or have time for in law school, an enhanced confidence in practice skills, and the unique opportunity to learn the court system from the inside out. These benefits are a great deal to gain in the one or two short year(s) following graduation.

Judicial clerkships are considered prestigious positions by the legal community, especially at the federal level. The clerkship experience offers the opportunity to develop a one-on-one relationship with a particular judge while gaining insight into the court system as a whole. Additionally, this experience provides for unlimited networking opportunities with practicing attorneys.

Judicial clerks are not limited to those who are interested in practicing trial law. In fact, a number of those who have participated in clerkships have never again entered the courtroom. For those who seek to practice other forms of law, the judicial clerkship serves as a maturing experience by providing insight into other aspects of the law. The diversity of insight gained through this experience accounts for one of the reasons that former law clerks tend to have an added advantage in pursuing a legal career.

The Career Center has compiled this Judicial Clerkship Guide to explain the clerkship experience, highlight the benefits of such an experience, and provide specific application information for interested students. The Career Center strongly encourages students who are interested in pursuing a judicial clerk experience to start early. Clerk positions are few in number and highly sought after. The unspoken etiquette of judicial clerkship states that if offered a position, you accept immediately with no questions asked.

See Bryan R. Walters, Judicial Clerkships and the Salary Wars, 48-JUN Fed. Law. 4 (2001).

The Career Center hopes the information in this Guide will demystify the application process for judicial clerkships, as well as offer increased visibility of these unique positions for our law students. We are proud of our former students who have had some of their initial training within the court system, and we encourage our current law students to consider judicial clerkships honorable avenues of entry into the legal community. We offer this Guide as an aid to those students who may wish to pursue a judicial clerkship for all of its many benefits.

If you have any questions regarding the duties of a judicial clerk or the specific application process, the reference materials listed in this Guide are available in the Career Center. The Career Center will be

happy to answer any questions or provide extra information on specific judges if information is available.

II. JUDICIAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

A judicial internship is an excellent first step in obtaining a judicial clerkship. The North Carolina Supreme Court Justices and the North Carolina Court of Appeals Judges are always in need of interns. Internships are given for fall and spring semesters and also during the summer. You may apply for an internship as early as the second semester of your first year of law school. Internships are not paid. Academic credit may be awarded.

Each fall, the North Carolina Department of Administration Youth Advocacy and Involvement Office, accepts applications for paid Law Internships. You will also see judicial internships posted on Symplicity. Many but not all Supreme Court Justices and Court of Appeals Judges notify the Career Center of internship opportunities. If you have an interest in an internship by all means apply, even if you have not seen a posting. The Career Center will assist you.

North Carolina Department of Administration Youth Advocacy and Involvement Office State Government Internship Program

History

Since 1969, over 3300 college and law students have gone through the State Government Internship Program. It may be the oldest and largest paid internship program of any state government in the United States.

The makeup of the NC Internship Council, which oversees the program, is also unique. The council includes former interns, a legislator, a judge (who also is a former intern), several college professors, and college placement professionals. The Internship Council chooses the projects and interns, thus keeping the program fair and patronage free.

Many of the interns have accepted full time state jobs at their internship sites after graduation. Even some of our legislators were interns in the program!

For more information visit www.doa.state.nc.us/yaio

III. DEFINITION OF A JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP

A judicial clerkship is a post-graduate position with a judge or a court, in which the law clerk works closely with the judge as an assistant in handling his or her caseload. The duties of a law clerk range by judge and court from conducting legal research, drafting bench memoranda for pretrial motions and advising the judge on the resolution of these issues, to assisting in the drafting of opinions and the conducting of conferences, hearings and trials. The law clerk sometimes acts as a liaison between the judge and the attorneys or litigants. Depending on the judge, law clerks may also be responsible for various administrative clerical duties.

Most clerkships are temporary in nature, lasting for a term of one or two years at the discretion of the judge. In some instances, the clerkship continues for a longer period of time, typically in the category of a "career" or permanent clerk. Some judges start their law clerks at the same time, while others stagger the terms, resulting in a "senior" and a "junior" clerk.

- Behind the Bench-The Guide to Judicial Clerkships,
Debra M. Strauss, Esq. (2002)

IV. DUTIES OF A JUDICIAL CLERK

Trial court clerks have close contact with the litigation process. Law clerks sometimes participate in the discovery process, playing a role in assisting to resolve discovery disputes by phone, pre-trial conferences and motions; often this involves practical judgment as to fairness and dispute resolution techniques that can only be learned by watching the process at work. With the law clerk always by the judge's side, the range of tasks for bench (non-jury) trials includes assessing the credibility of witnesses and the evidence, preparing findings of fact and conclusions of law, and drafting or editing final orders. For jury trials, the law clerk will prepare questions for the jury voir dire at the beginning of the trial and the jury instructions for the end of the trial, researching and advising the judge as well on whatever evidentiary issues come up on the spot in the course of the trial. During the trial, the law clerk may act as a courtroom clerk, with or without the deputy clerk, marking exhibits, keeping trial minutes, handling (but not swearing in) the witnesses, and just plain watching the dramatic events of the trial.

Although trial court clerks play a key role in the courtroom, they also do a great deal of behind-the-scenes work. Some judges resolve motions from the bench in an oral decision based in large measure on this work of the law clerk, while others prefer to issue a written opinion, which the law clerk assists in drafting as well.

The appellate clerkship experience is more academic and reflective. The law clerk performs a research function, writing opinions and bench memoranda on the issues of law being appealed. With no courtroom exposure except during the limited times of oral appellate argument, the focus of the work takes place exclusively in chambers or in the library.

Although there are reduced contacts with the litigants and less court exposure, an appellate law clerk can, through observation, gain knowledge of the techniques of oral argument and a greater appreciation for the record. Typically, the appellate clerk helps to prepare administratively for oral arguments, including bench memos summarizing the briefs, analyzing the legal issues, and suggesting questions for the judge to raise or key points needing clarification by the attorneys at oral argument.

Another aspect unique to the appellate court is the amount of contact with other judges and the law clerks from other chambers, in addition to the intensive writing and editing experience with one's own judge. In the process of creating a decision for the court, the draft opinion circulates among the panel of judges and is the object of suggestion and compromise. The appellate clerkship thus offers the opportunity not only to witness first-hand the collective process and collegial interaction among the judges, but also to participate in a significant way.

- Summarized from Behind the Bench-The Guide to Judicial
Clerkships, Debra M. Strauss, Esq. (2002)

V. VALUE OF A JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP

Clerkships are prized from all different perspectives, transcending the distinctions between private practice and the public sector, corporate practice and litigation. Regardless of your future career path in law, a judicial clerkship can be a significant asset to your career. In academia, it is an important credential.

In addition to being a key credential for future law practice in any area, a judicial clerkship is itself a valuable life experience. A clerkship offers a unique opportunity to glimpse behind the scenes of a courtroom into the practical workings of a judge's chambers. The same is true for the once-in-a-lifetime prospect to gain first-hand knowledge of current legal issues, and to impact the law through the judge's decision-making and opinion writing.

The special knowledge and skills you acquire, and the contacts and relationships you develop, are considerable in such a concentrated period of time. The clerkship experience enhances your research, writing and analytical skills. As an additional asset, you join a network of co-clerks, former clerks and future clerks, with a common link to the judge and a mutual interest in each other's lives and careers. The name of "your" judge will be carried with you on your resume for the rest of your professional life. Ultimately, you may gain a lifelong mentor who will take an interest and assist in the development of your future positions.

Most law firms zealously seek law clerks and highly prize those former law clerks included among their ranks. Representatives from one prominent law firm, Hale and Dorr, LLP in Boston, presented this perspective in a seminar to firms about recruiting and hiring law clerks. Speaking first from his personal experience as a former clerk, Jonathan A. Shapiro, who before joining the firm clerked for the Honorable Joseph A. DiClerico, Jr., Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of New Hampshire, offered this explanation: "A clerkship is sort of an extension of your educational experience. It's a further and unique training. In particular it's an opportunity for people who have been in largely an academic setting to see, at least for litigation, the soup to nuts process of filing a complaint, pretrial process, pretrial/post-trial motions and, in the case of an appellate clerkship, how the appeals process works."

Judicial clerkships are not just valuable if undertaken immediately out of law school. There is a trend toward young lawyers working a year or two with a law firm or in government and then clerking. Because the value of a clerkship lasts throughout one's career, the beneficial effects of the experience are recouped regardless of whether it happens immediately after law school or a few years later. As for the short term, in either case most law firms will credit the year(s) spent clerking toward their partnership track.

Clerking after working at a firm has several advantages and a few drawbacks. The major drawbacks are the disruption in job continuity and the difficulty in adjusting to a lower income for a year or two. On the advantage side, it provides additional opportunities to apply for clerkships because one can apply in successive years. Your candidacy for a clerkship position will strengthen as you gain relevant work experience. In addition, in the federal court system, clerkship salaries can be dramatically higher (as much as 50-70%) for clerks who have passed a state bar and have worked a year or more.

Finally, most who clerk after working discover that their lateral mobility and marketability has dramatically increased as a result of the experience.

Another factor in gauging the value of a clerkship is whether one's short-term financial situation can bear the lower income. There is every reason in the world to make the sacrifice. It is one that can be

proven to payoff handsomely in the long run. However, in the short run, bills must be paid. There are a small number of programs that provide loan repayment during the clerkship, but most students will have to rely on another mechanism: loan deferment. While an extremely frugal individual in certain situations may be able to start loan repayments and clerk, many clerks simply defer or forbear loan repayments for the year or two of clerking. This allows the clerk to manage cash flow at an adequate level during the clerking year(s). Most lenders have perfunctory procedures to effect a deferment or forbearance for this type of situation, without any negative impact on credit ratings, etc. To use an example from another field, lenders expect to have graduates of medical school defer or forbear any loan repayments for at least three years while the M.D. completes a residency. Cash flow is important and must be managed, but we encourage students whose primary inhibition to seriously considering clerking is financial to discuss their situation with a member of the faculty clerkship committee or the Career Center. The numerous advantages of a judicial clerkship are widely recognized. As a consequence, these coveted positions are both prestigious and highly competitive.

-Summarized from Behind the Bench- The Guide to
Judicial Clerkships, Debra M. Strauss, Esq. (2002)

VI. CONSIDERATIONS OF A CLERKSHIP

Like most things in life, clerking has its good points and its bad points. The good far outweighs the bad for most people, but everyone is different, and you're the only one who knows what's best for you.

A. Pros

1. Nearly everyone who has clerked describes the job as a fascinating experience. The country is full of lawyers who look back on their clerkship as the best job they ever had.
2. You learn more about how the legal system actually works than it would be possible to learn doing anything else.
3. You get a credential on your resume that will help you for the rest of your career, no matter where you go or what you do.
4. You get to know a judge very well after working closely with the judge for a year. That's worthwhile in itself, but it also gives you a person with clout who will be in your corner for the rest of your career, telling potential employers how great you are.

B. Cons

1. The most serious downside to clerking is that you do not make as much money as you might at other jobs. In the federal courts, salaries vary slightly according to the cost of living in the city where you are located, but they are all generally between \$40,000 and \$50,000. Salaries in the state courts vary from state to state, generally within the same range. Over the course of your life, there is a good chance that clerking will raise your income by more than you forgo in the first year, but some people legitimately feel constrained by the debt they face upon graduation.
2. A clerkship occasionally makes it difficult to accept a full-time attorney job offer from the employer for whom you worked in the summer between your second and third years of school. Most employers

are happy to let you delay the commencement of a permanent job for a year in order to clerk, because they realize the practical educational value of the clerkship. (Some of the larger law firms even provide bonuses and partnership credit for people who have clerked but some employers, especially very small law firms, are unable to hold a position open for a year). The clerkship will most likely open up even more job possibilities, but students who are already certain about where they want to work may need to check with their future employer. If you are uncertain about how to approach this issue with employers be sure to talk to the Career Center.

3. Clerkships will all involve significant writing. This is especially true of clerkships in appellate courts, but even clerks for trial judges have to write. Some people just dislike writing; for them, a clerkship would not be ideal.

C. Self-Assessment

As you consider a judicial clerkship, it is suggested that you do a self-assessment which will assist you with this decision and how you choose to proceed. See Appendix for self-assessment tool.

VII. SELECTING A COURT AND RESEARCHING JUDGES

Please remember, it is inappropriate to interview with a judge if you would not accept a clerkship offer on the spot.

1. Decide on a geographic preference.

2. Decide whether or not you are interested in a federal judicial clerkship or a state judicial clerkship, or both. You may want to base this decision by whether you envision yourself ultimately practicing primarily in the federal courts or the state courts. Please be advised, however, that certain benefits that you receive in clerking, such as sharpening your research and writing skills, will be acquired no matter which level of court you pursue, and these skills will be transferable to any type of legal practice.

If you decide to work at the federal level, decide if you are interested in appellate work, or trial work, as this will influence your decision to apply to either the federal appellate circuit court level or the federal district court.

3. Research Judges and Courts. Begin your research on those judges and courts to which you would like to apply. Choose judges in the geographic areas that you have defined, and at the level of judiciary which most interests you. Once you have compiled a list of judges of interest, it may be advantageous to research some of their opinions. You may also be able to acquire some biographical information on particular judges through some of the resources noted in this guide.

Judges in larger cities usually receive more applications than those located in smaller cities. Please be advised that most judges cannot pay travel expenses, thus you will have to fund your own interviewing travel expenses. You should only apply to judges for whom you would clerk if an offer were made. Be prepared at the time of the interview (or shortly thereafter) to accept the judge's offer of a clerkship or to withdraw your application. If you do not withdraw your application, the judge may rightfully assume you will accept a position if offered. If that is not your intention, you should explain your intention to the judge.

The following pages provide an overview of North Carolina State Courts and Federal Courts, including Administrative Law Judges. If applying to a state other than North Carolina consult the Vermont Guide to State Court Clerkships. (See Appendix for this information and a list of resources).

State Courts

The best resource for information about applying to state judicial clerkships is the Vermont Guide to State Judicial Clerkships. <http://forms.vermontlaw.edu/career/guides> (Login updated annually, consult Career Center for password.) Review the Guide for application requirements for state courts throughout the country. If you plan to practice law in a particular state, a state judicial clerkship can help you establish yourself in that legal community and some judges are interested in the geographical commitment of their clerks.

In North Carolina, the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals and the Business Court regularly hire judicial clerks. These courts do post clerkship opportunities with the Career Center. If you are interested in clerking for a particular judge / justice apply even if you do not hear of an open position. You should contact the judges / justices chambers to confirm their requirements and deadlines. Hiring is done throughout the school year with each judge / justice determining their requirements.

As with the Federal courts, you must determine if you have a preference of type of court or if you plan to apply more broadly. For example, if you have a finance or business background or wish to practice law in related areas, consider applying to the Business Court.

Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is the state's highest court. This court has a Chief Justice and six associate justices, who sit as a body and decide cases appealed from lower courts, including from the Court of Appeals. The Supreme Court has no jury, and it makes no determinations of fact; rather, it considers only questions of law, which means resolving a party's claim that there were errors in legal procedures or in judicial interpretation of the law in the trial court or the Court of Appeals.

Court of Appeals

The Court of Appeals is an intermediate appellate court that was created to relieve the Supreme Court of a portion of its heavy caseload. It has fifteen judges, who sit in panels of three to hear cases. One of the judges is the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Most of the court's sessions are held in Raleigh, but individual panels sometimes meet in other locations throughout the state. Like the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals decides only questions of law.

Specialized Courts

Business Court

The business court is a superior court of special jurisdiction. In 1995, the North Carolina Supreme Court created the business court, in which a designated special superior court judge hears "complex business cases." Reasons that a case might be designated a complex business case include factors like a large number of parties with diverse interests or the involvement of complex legal issues. The designation of a case as a complex business case means that it is assigned to a special superior court judge designated to preside over such cases. That judge generally presides over the entire case from the pretrial matters through the trial. Specialization in business court cases allows the business court judge to develop

expertise in both the substantive business law and the case management issues that arise in complex business cases. Currently, the business court sits in Charlotte, Greensboro and Raleigh. For more information visit www.ncbusinesscourt.net.

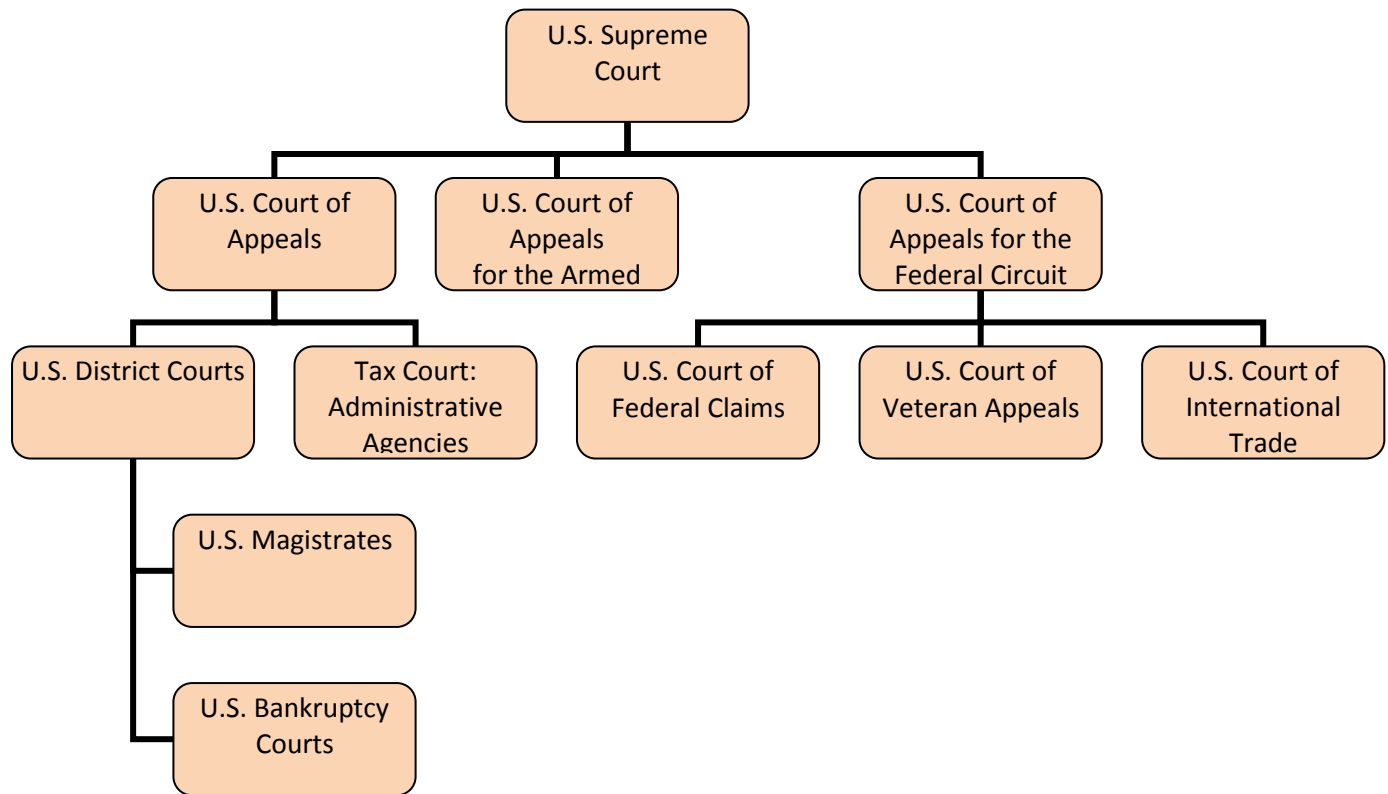
Family Court

Family courts are district court sessions set up to deal with a particular family's multiple legal issues, such as divorce, child custody and abuse. Traditionally the court has dealt with each family issue as a separate, individual case before whichever judge was assigned to hold court on the date of a particular hearing. Family court assigns each family to one judge who will be able to gain an understanding of the needs of the family and see the family's entire situation. The court also encourages families to resolve conflicts through mediation and will see that services are provided at an earlier stage of the proceedings. Intensive case management services are provided to make sure that cases move through the system as quickly as possible and to coordinate available court and community resources needed by a particular family.

Depending on the need Family Courts may hire externs during the summer and school year. Family courts currently exist in selected counties including Wake. See the website for a listing of selected counties. For more information visit www.nccourts.org/Citizens/CPrograms/Family.

Source: The North Carolina Judicial System,
Administrative Office of the Courts, 2008
Edition

Federal Courts



U.S. Supreme Court (Article III)

www.supremecourt.gov

The United States Supreme Court is the highest court in the federal court system. Each year this court reviews a limited number of cases from lower federal courts and the highest state courts. These cases usually involve important questions about the Constitution or federal law. The nine justices of the U.S. Supreme Court are appointed for life by the President with the advice and consent of the U.S. Senate. The court sits in Washington, DC. Unlike other clerkships, the Supreme Court justices require applicants to clerk for at least one year in the federal court of appeals.

U.S. Court of Appeals (Article III)

[See website for each circuit.]

The U.S. Court of Appeals (circuit courts) courts are intermediate appellate courts originally created by an act of the 1891 Congress to relieve the Supreme Court of considering all appeals from the federal trial courts. They are the intermediate appellate courts in the federal judiciary. The judicial districts are organized into 12 regional circuits, each of which has a U.S. Court of Appeals (First – Eleventh and DC Circuit). These courts hear appeals from the district courts within each circuit, as well as appeals from decisions of federal administrative agencies.

Circuit court judges are appointed for life by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The judges sit in various courthouses within the jurisdiction of the circuit.

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit (Article III)

<http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/>

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit is an intermediate appellate court that has nationwide jurisdiction in specialized cases, such as those involving patent laws arising from the district courts. This court also has jurisdiction over appeals from the Court of International Trade, U.S. Court of Federal Claims, U.S. Court of Veteran Appeals, International Trade Commission, Board of Contracts, Patent and Trademark Office, and Merit Systems Protection Board.

As with the circuit judges discussed above, these judges are appointed for life by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. This court sits in Washington, DC. Students with backgrounds in engineering, science, or mathematics are ideal clerkship candidates.

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces (Article III)

450 E. St., NW

Washington, DC 20442-0001

www.armfor.uscourts.gov

This court exercises world-wide appellate jurisdiction over court-martial cases involving United States military personnel. A panel of civilian judges review court martial appeals as well as appeals in matters under the Uniform Code of Military Justice which involve a general or flag officer, the death penalty, a sentence of one year or more imprisonment and/or dismissal, a dishonorable or bad conduct discharge, and cases certified by the Judge Advocate General of the armed services. There is no further appeal from this court's decision.

The judges of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces are civilians appointed for 15-year terms by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The court is located in Washington, DC.

U.S. District Court (Article III)

The U.S. District Courts are the general trial courts of the federal court system with jurisdiction to hear nearly all categories of federal cases, including both civil and criminal matters. There are 94 federal judicial districts, including at least one district in each state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Three territories of the United States (the Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands) have district courts that hear federal cases as well.

Except for the judges for the three territorial courts, district judges are appointed for life by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. These judges sit in various courthouses within the federal judicial district. Judicial clerks within this court are exposed to a wide variety of criminal and civil cases at all stages of litigation.

U.S. Magistrate Judges (Article I) [see page 20 for detailed information]

U.S. Magistrate Judges are judicial officers appointed to serve in a U.S. District Court for a term of eight years. Although these judicial officers officially "report" to the district court judges, the role of U.S. Magistrates in the adjudication of civil cases has expanded so that they now have judicial responsibilities similar to those of district court judges. U.S. Magistrates cannot conduct trials for felony criminal cases; therefore, the workload is more civil than criminal.

U.S. Bankruptcy Court (Article I) [see page 21 for detailed information]

The U.S. Bankruptcy Court has exclusive jurisdiction over bankruptcy cases and handles individual and business reorganization and insolvency matters. However, this court's caseload involves much more than standard bankruptcy issues. Complex issues of commercial law, consumer law, and real estate law are often related to the debtor's case.

U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (Article I)

625 Indiana Ave., NW

Suite 900

Washington, DC 20004-2950

<http://www.uscourts.cavc.gov/>

The U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims was created by an Act of Congress in 1988. It exercises exclusive jurisdiction over the decisions of the Board of Veterans' Appeals on the motion of claimants. Such cases include all types of veterans' and survivors' benefits, mainly disability benefits, but also loan eligibility and educational benefits. This court's decisions are subject to limited review by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

The judges of the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims are appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The court is based in Washington, DC.

U.S. Tax Court (Article I)

400 Second St., NW

Washington, DC 20217

www.ustaxcourt.gov/

The U.S. Tax Court is a trial court that handles controversies involving deficiencies or overpayment of income, estate and gift taxes, and personal holding company surtaxes. When contesting a notice of deficiency in tax from the Internal Revenue Service, a taxpayer has the option to file suit for a refund in a U.S. District Court of the U.S. Claims Court after first paying the tax and filing a claim with the IRS for a refund. If the taxpayer does not want to pay the tax in advance, he or she may litigate the matter in the Tax Court. This court's decision may be appealed to the federal courts of appeal and are subject to the review of the Supreme Court.

The tax court judges are appointed by the President for terms of 15 years. This court hears cases in approximately 80 cities, but its offices are located in Washington, DC. Students with a background in tax, estate planning and probate law or ERISA issues may find this court of interest.

U.S. Court of Federal Claims (Article I)

National Courts Building

717 Madison Place, NW

Washington, DC 20005

www.uscfc.uscourts.gov/

The U.S. Court of Federal Claims is a special trial court with nationwide jurisdiction over most suits against the federal government for money damages. This court handles a variety of cases, including tax refunds, federal taking of private property for public use, constitutional and statutory rights of military personnel and their dependents, back-pay demands from civil servants claiming unjust dismissal, persons injured by childhood vaccines, and federal government contractors suing for breach of contract. The U.S. Court of Federal Claims also hears appeals of decisions of the Indian Claims Commission. Tort claims against the U.S. Government may not be filed in this court, but are heard exclusively in the U.S. District Courts, which also maintain concurrent jurisdiction over tax refund cases. Review of decisions in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims lies in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

The judges of the U.S. Claims Court are appointed for terms of 15 years by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The courts' headquarters is in Washington, DC, but cases are heard at other locations convenient to the parties. Students interested in public policy and government law may want to apply to this court.

U.S. Court of International Trade (Article III)

One Federal Plaza

New York, NY 10278-0001

www.cit.uscourts.gov/

The U.S. Court of International Trade is a trial court and has exclusive national jurisdiction over any cases involving international trade and customs issues. Most of its cases concern the classification and valuation of imported merchandise, custom duties, and unfair import practices by trading partners. The court also has a residual grant of exclusive jurisdiction authority to decide any civil action against the U.S., its officers, or its agencies arising out of any law pertaining to international trade. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit has appellate review of this court's decisions.

The judges of the U.S. Court of International Trade are appointed for life by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The court sits in New York City, NY.

The Board of Immigration Appeals is the highest administrative body for interpreting and applying immigration laws. Judicial Law Clerks are hired through the Department of Justice's Attorney General's Honors Program. Students interested in immigration law should apply to the Attorney General's Honors Program at <http://www.justice.gov/oarm>.

The Immigration Court falls under the jurisdiction of the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge which is a component of the Executive Office for Immigration Review under the Department of Justice. Judicial Law Clerks are hired through the Department of Justice's Attorney General's Honors Program. Students interested in immigration law should apply to the Attorney General's Honors Program at <http://www.justice.gov/oarm>

The Social Security Administration handles legal problems related to the interpretation and research of the provisions of titles II, XI, XVI and XVIII of the Social Security Act. Students interested in social security law may want to apply to this agency.

Alien Terrorist Removal Court

E. Barrett Prettyman U.S. Courthouse

333 Constitution Ave., NW

Washington, DC 20001

This court has the authority to conduct all proceedings to determine whether an alien should be removed from the U.S. on the grounds of being a terrorist.

Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation

Thurgood Marshall Federal Judiciary Building

One Columbus Circle, NE

Room G-255 North Lobby

Washington, DC 20002-8004

<http://www.jpml.uscourts.gov/>

The panel of seven federal circuit and district judges has the power to temporarily transfer from a single district court civil actions pending in different districts that involve one or more questions of fact.

Special Court for the Regional Rail Reorganization Act of 1973 was created to exercise the powers of a U.S. District Judge in any judicial district to order the conveyance of rail properties of railroads leased, operated or controlled by a railroad in bankruptcy reorganization. Students interested in transportation law may want to apply to this court.

Administrative Agencies (Article I)

Administrative law judges (ALJs) are employees of the executive departments and independent agencies within the United States Government. ALJs conduct formal administrative hearings and issue decisions based on trial-type proceedings. Typically, appeals from these decisions of the ALJs are to the U.S. Courts of Appeals.

There are approximately thirty (30) federal executive agencies that utilize administrative law judges, or ALJs. Some ALJs hire law clerks or staff attorneys to assist them with performing legal research and drafting memoranda and orders, among other things, in connection with their quasi-judicial functions. There is no centralized application process in which the ALJs in the various federal agencies participate to hire their clerks. Rather, the hiring process varies agency-by-agency. Students should contact the agencies in which they are interested and inquire directly to determine whether the ALJs are hiring clerks and the process to apply.

Below is a list of the federal agencies that we understand currently have ALJs and their points of contact. Students should also check the online job postings on Symplicity and www.usajobs.gov as federal agencies occasionally announce openings for clerkship positions on those websites.

Department of Agriculture

Peter M. Davenport

Chief Administrative Law Judge

1049 South Building

14th and Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20250

202-720-6383

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=HOME&navtype=MA>

Commodity Futures Trading Commission *

Three Lafayette Centre

1155 21st Street, NW

Washington, DC 20581

202-418-5504

<http://www.cftc.gov>

Department of Education *

Alan Lewis

Chief Administrative Law Judge

Office of Administrative Law Judges

600 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20202-4616

202-619-9725

<http://www.ed.gov/>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency *

Susan L. Biro

Chief Administrative Law Judge

401 M Street, NW

OALJ-1900L

Washington, DC 20460

202-564-6255

<http://www2.epa.gov/aboutepa/epas-administrative-law-judges>

Federal Communications Commission *

Richard Sippel

Chief Administrative Law Judge

4445 12th Street, SW

Room I-C768

Washington, DC 20554

<http://www.fcc.gov/>

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission *

Curtis L. Wagner, Jr.

Chief Administrative Law Judge

888 First St., NE, Suite 11F

Washington, DC 20426

<http://www.ferc.gov/about/offices/oaljdr.asp>

Federal Labor Relations Authority *

Chief Administrative Law Judge

Federal Labor Relations Committee

Office of Administrative Law Judges

1400 K St., NW

Washington, DC 20424

<https://www.flra.gov/>

Federal Maritime Commission *

Clay G. Guthridge

Chief Administrative Law Judge

800 N. Capitol St., NW, Room 1078

Washington, DC 20573

http://www.fmc.gov/bureaus_offices/office_of_the_administrative_law_judges.aspx

Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission

Chief Administrative Law Judge

1331 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 520N

Washington, DC 20004-1710

202-434-9958

<http://www.fmshrc.gov/>

Federal Trade Commission *

D. Michael Chappell, Chief Administrative Law Judge

Sixth and Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Room 110

Washington, DC 20580

<http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/alj.shtm>

Department of Health and Human Services
Food and Drug Administration
Administrative Law Judge [contact agency for current ALJ]
WO Bldg. 1, Room 2218
10903 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20993-00020
301- 796-5000 / Fax: 310-847-3531

Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals
Nancy J. Griswold
Chief Administrative Law Judge
1700 N. Moore St., Suite 1800
Arlington, VA 22209
703- 235-0635
<http://www.hhs.gov/omha/about/bios/meetthecalj.html>

Department of Health and Human Services
Departmental Appeals Board
330 Independence Ave., SW
Cohen Building – Room G-644
Washington, DC 20201
202- 565-0200 / Fax: 202-565-0224
Internship/externship opportunities: Christopher S. Randolph, Special Assistant to the Chair,
Christopher.Randolph@hhs.gov or 202- 565-0151
<http://www.hhs.gov/dab/about/internships/intern.html>
[See website for list of divisions and Administrative Law Judges]
<http://www.hhs.gov/dab/contact/index.html>

Department of Housing and Urban Development
Jeremiah Mahoney
Chief Administrative Law Judge
409 3rd Street, S.W., Suite 201
Washington, DC 20024
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/hearings_appeals/oalj

Department of the Interior *
Harvey C. Sweitzer
Supervisory Administrative Law Judge
Departmental Case Hearings Division
Office of Hearings and Appeals
U.S. Department of the Interior
405 S. Main St., Suite 400
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

International Trade Commission *
Charles E. Bullock
Chief Administrative Law Judge
500 E. St., SW, Room 213
Washington, DC 20436 <http://www.usitc.gov/>

Department of Justice – Executive Office for Immigration Review
Attorney General's Honors Program
Office of Attorney Personnel Management
Room 7254, Main Building
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001
www.justice.gov/eoir/ - Apply via Attorney General's Honors Program

Department of Labor
Director, The Honors Attorney Program
Office of the Solicitor, Room N-2700
200 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20210
202-693-7395
www.dol.gov

National Labor Relations Board *
Robert Giannasi
Chief Administrative Law Judge
1099 14th St., Suite 5400
Washington, DC 20570-0001

National Transportation Safety Board *
Alfonso J. Mantano
Chief Administrative Law Judge
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, SW
Washington, DC 20594
<http://www.nts.gov/legal/alj/Pages/default.aspx>

Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission *
Covette Rooney
Chief Administrative Law Judge
One Lafayette Center
1120 20th St., NW, 9th Fl
Washington, DC 20336-3419

Office of the Comptroller of the Currency
400 7th St., SW, Suite 3E-218
Washington, DC 20219
<http://www.occ.gov/index.html>

Securities and Exchange Commission *
Brenda Murray
Chief Administrative Law Judge
450 5th St., NW, Room 11160
Mail Stop 11-6
Washington, DC 20549

Small Business Administration *
Delorice Price Ford
Assistant Administrator
Office of Hearings and Appeals
409 Third St., SW, Room 5900
Washington, DC 20416

Social Security Administration *
Debra Bice
Chief Administrative Law Judge
5107 Leesburg Pike, Room 1500
Falls Church, VA 22041

Department of Transportation
Ronnie Yoder
Chief Administrative Law Judge
Office of Hearings, M-20
400 Seventh St., SW, Room 5411
Washington, DC 20590

U.S. Postal Service *
James G. Gilbert
Chief Administrative Law Judge
2101 Wilson Blvd, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22201

Department of the Treasury, Office of Financial Institution Adjudication
C. Richard Miserendino
Administrative Law Judge
1700 G. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20552
202-906-5800 / Fax: 202-906-5798

U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration
John J. Mulrooney, II
Chief Administrative Law Judge
DEA Office of Administrative Law Judges
1550 Crystal Drive, 9th Floor
Arlington, VA 22202
202-307-8188 / Fax: (202) 307-8198
<http://www.dea.gov/ops/oalj.shtml>

Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Coast Guard
Walter J. Brudzinski
Chief Administrative Law Judge
Commandant (CG-OOJ)
2100 Second Street, SW., Room 6302
Washington, DC 20593-0001
202-372-4440 / Fax: (202) 372-4964
www.uscg.mil/alj

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Judicial Law Clerk Program
Washington, DC 20555-0001
301-415-7000
Contact: Molly Bupp, ASLBP Chief Counsel
Margaret.Bupp@nrc.gov
www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/employment/judicial-law-clerk.html

U.S. Sentencing Commission
One Columbus Circle, NE, Suite 2-500
Washington, DC 20002-8002
202-502-4500
www.ussc.gov

* University of Arizona College of Law Government Honors and Internship Handbook. See Arizona website/handbook for opportunities outside of Administrative Law Judges.
<http://arizonahandbooks.com/u/campbell> (Login updated annually, consult Career Center for password.)

U.S. Magistrate Judge Clerkship

Clerking for a federal magistrate judge can be a fantastic experience, and is a clerkship option which every aspiring law clerk should consider. Because some students have little information about federal magistrate judges and their role in the U.S. Courts, many students fail to avail themselves of a terrific clerkship opportunity. Intrigued? Read on...

What is the role of Magistrate Judges in the United States District Court?

The role that magistrates play in any particular court is at the discretion of the district court judges of that court, but typically magistrate judges handle cases, or parts of cases in a number of ways. They can be referred non-dispositive motions or whole portions of a case (such as all discovery, or settlement conferences) by the district court judges in their court. They can also decide dispositive motions on Report and Recommendation (or R&R). Magistrates may also take on an entire case on consent of all parties in the case, pursuant to 28.U.S.C. § 626(c). In consented cases, the magistrate judge presides over the case from the filing of the complaint to the resolution of the case, either by dispositive motion, trial, or settlement. Any appeals in fully consented cases are appealed straight to the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals.

What functions do law clerks for U.S. Magistrate Judges perform?

Many magistrates have a high volume of consented cases. Since they do not conduct felony criminal trials and therefore are not subject to the Speedy Trial Act, magistrate judges can offer parties an exact date for trial, an advantage which often leads attorneys to choose a trial of their case with a magistrate over an uncertain future timeframe with a district court judge. Because of this, law clerks for magistrate judges often perform functions which are identical to those of law clerks for district court judges. Those duties include primarily drafting memorandum opinions on dispositive motions, and generally supporting the judge in all aspects of the chambers civil docket. Other than the fact that magistrate judges' chambers will not be conducting felony criminal trials, if you compared year in the life of a district court clerk and a year in the life of a magistrate judge's clerk, there would be a lot more similarities than differences.

Why should I consider applying for a clerkship with a United States Magistrate Judge?

Although magistrate judges technically report to the district court, the magistrate judge and law clerk really have a full range of daily tasks and responsibilities more akin to a district court and clerk. Many students who are less interested in criminal matters may find a clerkship with a magistrate attractive, since the cases are primarily civil in nature. Like a district court clerkship, a clerkship with a magistrate judge is an excellent training ground for future lawyers. So, a clerkship with a magistrate is a first-rate experience, providing many of the same benefits as a clerkship with a district court judge.

How competitive are clerkships with Magistrate Judges?

Clerkships with United States Magistrate Judges are highly sought-after; and therefore competitive, especially in the most competitive jurisdictions such as the Northern District of Illinois, or the Southern District of New York. However, because some law students undervalue the experience of clerking for a magistrate, magistrate judges may have fewer applications to consider. Therefore, while selection standards are extremely high, magistrates may receive a lower volume of applications, therefore increasing your odds at receiving one of those clerkships.

U. S. Bankruptcy Court Clerkship

United States Bankruptcy Courts were established by Congress in 1978. Each district court has a bankruptcy unit that hears and decides petitions of individuals and businesses seeking relief from bankruptcy. Although they are Article I judges, bankruptcy judges may, in certain instances, have jurisdiction over a broad range of proceedings in a personal or business bankruptcy case. Bankruptcy judges are appointed for 14 year terms by the Court of Appeals.

The Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure as well as the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure are used in Bankruptcy Court. Part of the courts practice centers on the approval of debtor reorganization plans. Motion practice occurs daily. Trial issues concerning exemptions, fraudulent conveyances, and preferences under state and federal law, creditor's complaints to except a debt from discharge or to deny a discharge in bankruptcy, and objections by parties to a bankruptcy reorganization plan constitute the bulk of trial matters.

In the daily adjudication of their cases, bankruptcy judges operate virtually independently from the district court judges, however, appeals from the Bankruptcy Court are, in some circuits, to the United States District Court. In the First, Sixth, Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Circuits, however, appeals from bankruptcy judges are made to Bankruptcy Appellate Panels. The Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1978 permitted federal judicial circuits to establish Bankruptcy Appellate Panels to hear appeals from the bankruptcy courts. The panels are comprised of judges from the United States bankruptcy courts who are appointed to hear appeals from certain bankruptcy cases under the supervision of the United States Courts of Appeals.

Similar to a district court clerkship in function, law clerks to bankruptcy judges have a unique opportunity to develop expertise in a specialized area of the law while gaining important experience applicable for judicial clerkships and litigation practice. The Bankruptcy Court provides excellent practical training in such varied subject areas as civil procedure, secured transactions, corporate law, torts, and constitutional law. Students interested in pursuing a career in bankruptcy, tax and general business experience may find it beneficial to clerk in a bankruptcy court.

VIII. APPLYING FOR A JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP

A. Timing of Applications

Ideally, students should begin to explore the option of a judicial clerkship in their first year of law school. The prospective judicial clerk can thus engage in activities sought after by judges, such as research and writing skills. 1Ls and 2Ls should explore interning with a judge to gain insight into life as a law clerk. See the Judicial Clerkship Timeline (see Appendix) for guidance through the process. The key is to start early.

Clerkship terms can be one or two years following a students' graduation from law school. It is recommended that law students contact each court/judge directly to determine what the term length would be with that particular court/judge.

Most judicial clerks' terms with the courts last from September (usually the September following graduation from law school) to the last week of August of the following year.

Each judge establishes their own hiring timelines, and there are resources to help you determine when to apply for a clerkship with a particular judge. The U. S. Federal Courts website which provides information about specific courts is available online at <http://www.uscourts.gov>.

The following information will help you to understand the general timing of applications:

1. **Federal Courts** (includes appellate, district and specialized court judges): The U.S. Federal Courts website and the OSCAR database provide guidance for the application process and the hiring of Federal Judicial Clerks. All judges are encouraged to post their hiring plans and collect their applications via the OSCAR database but participation by judges and law schools is voluntary. Students are encouraged to verify a judge's application procedure by checking the U.S. Federal Courts website (<http://www.uscourts.gov/FederalCourts.aspx>), the OSCAR database (<https://oscar.uscourts.gov>) or by contacting each judge to whom you are applying to verify application procedures. You are encouraged to begin the application process in the fall of your second year of law school or in accordance with the judge's application procedures, whichever comes first. Each judge sets their own hiring practices; therefore, you must confirm a judge's hiring practices and deadlines and adhere accordingly. If you have questions regarding the timing of applications or the application process, please contact the Career Center.

2. **State Courts** The N.C. Supreme Court and Court of Appeals do post clerkship opportunities with the Career Center. Mostly clerkship openings are by word-of-mouth. It is best to submit your application package in May prior to 3L year. There may be judges who hire throughout the school year. The Career Center will assist you in the same manner as with the federal clerkships. If you think you would like to clerk for a certain judge or justice apply even if you do not hear of an open position. State clerkship applications are submitted via hardcopy.

3. **Judicial Nominations** To be nominated to the federal bench is not the same thing as actually being a federal judge. Many nominees never actually get confirmed. Students should strongly consider contacting a nominee about clerking in the nominee's prospective chambers, with a few caveats. For example, a sitting judge has the opportunity to bring his or her current clerks to a new position. Therefore, there may not be as many or any openings. However, and more often than not, a judge being elevated from a lower court will be allotted additional clerks and will need to fill these positions promptly. For nominees who are in private practice or government service, they may especially relish the opportunity to hear from prospective clerks, not wanting to risk waiting to take the bench before

finding suitable candidates. Of course, you may want to use caution in deciding whether it is worth the expense of actually going to an interview with a nominee given that he or she must first get confirmed by the U.S. Senate, and thus any offer will necessarily be conditional. You can contact judicial nominees and newly confirmed judges at their last known address (which is posted on the nomination database), until they get installed in chambers.

To view nominations and confirmation resources, see these related links:

<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/nomis.html>

<http://www.judiciary.senate.gov/nominations/judicial>

B. Application Materials

Judicial clerkship application materials typically include: cover letter, resume, transcript (law school and undergrad, if required by judge), writing sample and letters of recommendation. Even though not always required, you may also consider preparing a list of references. The following will address each of these application materials in more detail.

1. Cover Letter

Your cover letter should simply state:

- a. Your status as a student at X Law School along with your year of graduation.
- b. The term for which you are applying for a clerkship in the judge's chambers.
- c. The items that are enclosed (*e.g.*, resume, transcript, writing sample).
- d. The names and phone number of the people who will be sending letters of recommendations (included in your packet), as well as their relationship to you (*e.g.*, a professor for whom you work as a research assistant). As an alternative or in addition, you may prefer to supplement your cover letter and resume with a separate list of references (and in your cover letter identify this as an enclosure). Be sure to include their phone numbers as well as addresses. A judge may prefer to call a reference, particularly if operating on a quick time frame.
- e. Your contact information (phone number, mailing and email address) as you would welcome the opportunity for an interview.
- f. If the court is located far from your law school and you plan to be in town at a particular time (*e.g.*, during a break to visit family and friends), do include these dates.

Do not describe aspects of yourself in glowing terms, but instead briefly discuss your experiences. For example, the fact that you worked throughout law school to finance your education or did extensive research for a professor on a topic of interest shows your traits of reliability and diligence. You would not want to come across as insincere, arrogant, or presumptuous.

If you are applying to a specialized court, you may want to tailor your letter with your own corresponding particular qualifications. For example, if the clerkship is for a judge in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, you can accentuate your patent background and technical or engineering expertise, including any relevant coursework.

Correctly addressing your cover letter, with the proper titles, spellings and salutation lines, is crucial. In the address portion of the letter, all judges should be referred to as "The Honorable," followed by the judge's full name, court in which the judge sits, and address. For the salutation, you should use the appropriate title (*e.g.*, Judge, Justice, Chief Justice), followed by the judge's last name (*e.g.*, Dear Judge Jones). Note: Judges on senior status should be referred to as "Judge" (not "Senior Judge") in the salutation. (See Appendix for specific examples of the proper manner of addressing a letter to a judge).

Above all, you must be careful to avoid the frequently fatal flaw, any grammatical or typographical errors in your cover letter or in any element of your clerkship application. Your letter should be clear, concise, and generally not longer than one page. It should convey the proper level of formality and professionalism, taking care to avoid being casual or chatty. As is the case with other job applications, you must present your best effort and abilities. The judge will want a law clerk that is meticulous in this regard, as the quality of his or her writing for the judge will largely depend on these traits. (See Appendix for sample cover letters.)

-Summarized from Behind the Bench-The Guide to Judicial Clerkships, Debra M. Strauss, Esq. (2002)

2. Resume

As for the resume, it is not much different from a resume for any other employer, and need not be significantly altered for the clerkship application process. As such, the resume should be neat, professional, internally consistent, and free of typographical or grammatical errors.

Rather unique to a resume for judicial clerkships is the opportunity to present more of you as a person, including relevant non-legal interests. For instance, if prior to law school you started your own business or developed a significant career unrelated to your current pursuits in the law, you should include this background information, which a judge may find adds an interesting dimension to you as an individual. Likewise be sure to list any interesting or unusual skills, experiences or activities such as foreign languages, musical proclivities, travel, or community service. While an "interests" section is appropriate here, we do not recommend a "personal" section, as it tends to get *too* personal (*e.g.*, your spouse and/or children). (See Appendix for sample resume.)

-Summarized from Behind the Bench- The Guide to Judicial Clerkships, Debra M. Strauss, Esq. (2002)

3. Writing Sample

The writing sample is one of the most important elements of the application for a clerkship. As such, the writing sample must represent the best quality of your legal writing-meticulous, well organized, demonstrating your strong legal research and analytical skills.

The type of writing sample that may be appropriate depends on the court. For instance, if you are applying to a district court you might be better off with something concrete such as a legal brief or memorandum rather than a historical theoretical or policy-oriented article, for which there might be more latitude in the court of appeals, if at all. A memorandum or brief you wrote for a first year writing class might be suitable, but reread or rewrite it first to make sure it still represents a good example of your best legal writing; your writing has most likely developed and improved since that early effort.

As an alternative to a paper written in law school, you might choose a memorandum or brief prepared during summer employment. It is very important though, and this is from the point of view of lawyers in practice as well, to always check with the law firm or other employer. If this was writing material from a previous summer's experience, it must be cleared with the employer to make sure that it is permissible to use as a writing sample and then indicate that authorization on the writing sample. Another possibility is to redact or generalize the document.

In any event, it is fundamental that this be your original and unedited writing. Co-authored pieces are not ideal as a representation of *your* work, unless your part is readily severable. A law journal article that has been finished and published may be questionable in that judges will be aware that it has been heavily edited in the process of preparing the article for publication; a more appropriate choice might be an earlier draft of the article as your original work (as long as it is sufficiently polished), with a reference to the final published version on your resume (again, you can always bring that one to the interview).

-Summarized from Behind the Bench-The Guide to Judicial Clerkships, Debra M. Strauss, Esq. (2002)

4. Transcripts (law school and undergraduate)

Typically an unofficial, photocopied transcript will be acceptable - and less expensive - unless the judge has specified that the transcript must be an official copy.

-Summarized from Behind the Bench-The Guide to Judicial Clerkships, Debra M. Strauss, Esq. (2002)

5. Letters of Recommendation (See Appendix for Recommendation Letter Process)

The number of recommendations that will be required may vary by judge. As a rule of thumb, generally two or three letters of recommendation will be appropriate. If there are no published requirements to the contrary for that judge, you should aim for three strong letters.

You should choose as a recommender someone who you believe will write a strong letter of recommendation on your behalf. Certainly the recommendation would be from someone in whose class you excelled. Most importantly, this person should know your legal writing well and be able to address your strengths in this regard. If possible, recommendation letters should come from former clerks of the judge to whom you are applying.

An employer or lawyer in practice from a summer job can also be an appropriate additional recommender if this is someone who worked closely with you and knows your written work. This employer could also speak positively about other attributes such as work habits and character.

-Summarized from Behind the Bench-The Guide to Judicial Clerkships, Debra M. Strauss, Esq. (2002)

C. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

The Career Center is here to assist you every step of the way as you apply for judicial clerkships.

Following are nine easy steps to follow to complete your application.

- Express your judicial clerkship interest to the Career Center. Make an appointment with the Career Center to review your documents and the application process.
- Research judges and justices, make a list of the ones you wish to apply to. You may also see current clerk vacancies on www.uscourts.gov and for state courts, see the Vermont Guide to State Court Clerkships (Log in updated annually. Consult Career Center for password.) Remember all clerkship positions are not posted so if you have an interest in a judge and do not see a posting apply anyway.
- Access OSCAR, the U.S. Federal Courts website or contact the judge's chambers directly to confirm application requirements.
- Make sure your resume is updated.
- Obtain a current law school transcript and request an undergrad transcript.
- Select a writing sample.
- Prepare a list of 3 references with all contact information.
- Select 2 or 3 professors to write a letter of recommendation to your selected judge(s) or justice(s). Approach them early in the process to allow plenty of time and inform them of any deadlines.
- Prepare a cover letter for each judge you select.

1. OSCAR

OSCAR, the On-Line System for Clerkship Application and Review. If the judge you are interested in is accepting applications via OSCAR, you will need to create an account in OSCAR and apply using this system. Every federal judge may accept applications through the OSCAR system but only judges who have opted-in to the system may be applied to via OSCAR. Review OSCAR for the judges that interest you and confirm their application process and deadlines. The OSCAR system provides tip sheets to help navigate each function of the application process.

2. Applying After the Peak Season

Clerkship opportunities remain after the peak application season. If you continue to search for clerkship opportunities, please make the Clerkship Committee and the Career Center aware so they may let you know of appropriate opportunities. Continue to monitor Symplicity, and OSCAR, as well as <http://www.uscourts.gov/Careers.aspx> for newly confirmed and newly nominated judges.

XI. INTERVIEWS AND OFFERS

The timing of interviews following the application process varies from judge to judge. Most judges will meet with 20 to 25 applicants before they select a law clerk. In scheduling your interviews try to coordinate your trips so that you can meet with more than one judge (or law firm) each time you are in the area. You are responsible for paying the expenses related to these interviews so this will help you manage your costs. Once an interview is scheduled (or you plan to be in the area), call other judges to let them know you will be in the area and ask if it is possible to have an interview with that judge.

A. Preparation

Preparation is extremely important to the interview process. A key component of this preparation is to learn all you can about the judge as well as yourself. Use the judicial directories to review his or her professional biography. Search on Lexis and Westlaw for the judge's recent decisions and cases and for published journal articles written by the judge. Also review the Appendix of this guide for various lists including CLS alumni who are current members of the judiciary and who traditionally hire full-time law clerks; law faculty who served as judicial clerks; and CLS judicial clerks and their judges. The faculty members may have more information regarding the judge or the names of former students either currently clerking for the judge or who have clerked for the judge in the past. [Although, be mindful that calling a current clerk at this point in the process may put that clerk in an uncomfortable position.]

Be prepared to discuss everything on your resume, including your personal interests. Be able to discuss the points of law in your writing sample. Also, be prepared to answer questions about why you want to clerk, why you want to clerk on that specific court, how a clerkship plays into your career goals, and what you feel you bring to the clerkship.

Additionally, you should be prepared with questions for the judge and his/her clerks. Questions reflect your preparation for the interview and your interest in the position. As a part of your preparation, schedule a mock interview with the Career Center.

Finally, review the Code of Conduct for Judicial Law Clerks. It outlines the conduct to be observed by a law clerk during his or her tenure as a clerk. See [Maintaining the Public Trust – Ethics for Federal Judicial Law Clerks](#) or access the Guide to Judiciary Policy – Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees on OSCAR, see Reference Materials.

B. The Interview

Judges want to hire someone they have a rapport with during the interview since the two of you will be working closely together. Judges are interested in candidates with enthusiasm and intelligence who are very interested in the law and offer specific skills.

When conducting the interview, judges are likely to ask about classes and grades reflected on your transcript and about the experiences shown on your resume. Your note or article will be discussed if you are on a journal.

You may meet with the current clerk(s) before, during or after your interview with the judge. Please remember these individuals will also be evaluating you and may have a considerable impact on whether or not the judge hires you.

Finally, many Judges ask their secretary about candidates. Often Judges place significant emphasis on their secretary's impression of the candidate. During the entire application process, the person with whom you will most often speak will be the Judge's secretary. Thus, it is advisable to take care to leave a positive impression with the Judge's secretary.

To help you prepare, review the Judicial Clerkship Interview Questions handout included in the Appendix of this guide.

C. The Follow-Up

After meeting with a judge, always send a thank you note to each individual with whom you interviewed within 24 hours of the interview. In the note restate your interest and your qualifications or refer to recent events that might influence your chances of obtaining the clerkship (e.g. obtaining a summer position with a certain governmental agency or law firm, winning a mock trial competition).

D. Receiving and Accepting an Offer

You should not accept an interview if you would not accept an offer. Be prepared to receive an offer during your interview. Judges require an answer to a job offer very quickly; sometimes at the time it is offered. Therefore, you should determine how you will respond to a judge if s/he offers you a clerkship opportunity at an interview. Consider the following:

- Be tactful.
- Establish the time period during which the offer will remain open. Be aware that a judge frequently expects an immediate response and you may not have more than 24 hours to make a decision.
- It is very bad form to rescind your acceptance of an offer, so choose carefully!
- If you do have time to make a decision, it is acceptable to contact judges with whom you have already interviewed to see whether they can make a decision on your candidacy in time for you to take it.
- Once you accept an offer, your decision is final.
- You should cancel any interviews already scheduled and send withdrawal letter to judges with whom your applications are still pending. In addition, notify your recommenders and the Career Center.

Steps to Take If You Do Not Receive Any Offers

- Continue to check www.uscourts.gov, OSCAR and the Vermont Guide to State Court Clerkships for vacancies. If you currently have an application pending, reiterate your interest. Or, if it is a new position, forward your application materials.
- Consider applying after graduation.
- Regularly check the Jobs tab on Symplicity.
- Tell everyone that you are seeking a clerkship. They may know of or hear of openings.
- Apply to newly confirmed judges.

APPENDIX

CLS ALUMNI - JUDICIAL CLERKSHIPS

David Davis '88	The Honorable Max Cogburn US District Court, Western District of North Carolina
W. Gregory Merritt '96	The Honorable Malcolm J. Howard US District Court, Eastern District of North Carolina
Anthony Biller '97	The Honorable William L. Osteen, Sr. US District Court, Middle District of North Carolina
Robert Jones '97	The Honorable Boyce F. Martin, Chief Judge US Court of Appeals Sixth Circuit
Wendy Keefer '97	The Honorable J. L. Edmondson US Court of Appeals Eleventh Circuit
Len Brown '98	The Honorable Malcolm Howard US District Court, Eastern District of North Carolina
Catrin Hughes Joyner '98	The Honorable Kenneth L. Ryskamp US District Court, Southern District of Florida
Kelly Goodrich Salmonsens '99	The Honorable Richard L. Voorhees US District Court, Western District of North Carolina
Daniel Ettefagh '01	The Honorable Ann Marie Calabria NC Court of Appeals
Bryan Boyd '01	The Honorable Robert H. Edmunds, Jr. NC Supreme Court
Ashley Maddox '01	The Honorable James C. Fox US District Court, Eastern District of North Carolina The Honorable B. Waugh Crigler US Magistrate Judge, Western District of Virginia
Tobias Hampson '02	The Honorable Wanda Bryant NC Court of Appeals
Jonathan Bumgarner '03	The Honorable Frank W. Bullock, Jr. US District Court, Middle District of North Carolina

Ashley Canupp '03	The Honorable I Beverly Lake, Jr. NC Supreme Court
Shawn Christenbury '03	The Honorable I Beverly Lake, Jr. NC Supreme Court
Lucinda Clements '03	The Honorable Edward T. Brady NC Supreme Court
Virginia Paris '03	The Honorable Robert H. Edmunds, Jr. NC Supreme Court
Riana Smith '03	The Honorable Sanford L. Steelman, Jr. NC Court of Appeals
Patricia Wilson Magee '03	The Honorable Frank D. Whitney US District Court, Western District of North Carolina
	The Honorable John M. Tyson NC Court of Appeals
Fred Parker, IV '04	The Honorable John M. Tyson NC Court of Appeals
Martin Warf '04	The Honorable Richard A. Elmore NC Court of Appeals
Laura Creasy '05	The Honorable Robert B. Jones, Jr. US Magistrate Judge, Eastern District of North Carolina
	The Honorable Ruth Miller US Magistrate Judge, District of the Virgin Islands
Allegra Collins '06	The Honorable Linda Stephens NC Court of Appeals
Stephen Walker '07	The Honorable Edward T. Brady NC Supreme Court
Natalia Isenberg '07	The Honorable Ann Marie Calabria NC Court of Appeals
Stephanie Evans '08	The Honorable Edward T. Brady NC Supreme Court
Nicole Shoemaker '08	The Honorable Paul Newby NC Supreme Court

Christopher Keitzman '08

The Honorable Cheri Beasley
NC Supreme Court

The Honorable Barbara Jackson
NC Court of Appeals

Elleveve Boyer '09

The Honorable Mark Martin
NC Supreme Court

Adam Sholar '09

The Honorable Paul Newby
NC Supreme Court

Lynn Percival '10

The Honorable Robert N. Hunter, Jr.
NC Supreme Court

Amanda Johnson '10

The Honorable John Jolly
NC Business Court

Matt Cochran '10

The Honorable Chief Justice Sarah Parker
NC Supreme Court

Lauren Miller '11

The Honorable J. Rich Leonard
US Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District North Carolina

Philip Hinson '11

The Honorable Graham C. Mullen
US District Court, Western District North Carolina

Tim Ledino '11

The Honorable John Jolly
NC Business Court

Ted Enarson '11

The Honorable Barbara Jackson
NC Supreme Court

Laura Bethany Morris '11

The Honorable Ann Marie Calabria
NC Court of Appeals

Jeff Russell '12

The Honorable John C. Martin
NC Court of Appeals

Daniel "Cole" Hayes '12

The Honorable Craig Whitley
US Bankruptcy Court, Western District of North Carolina

The Honorable Paul Newby
NC Supreme Court

Jessica Vickers '12

The Honorable Robert B. Jones, Jr.
US Magistrate Judge, Eastern District of North Carolina

Steve Carruthers '13	The Honorable Stephani W. Humrickhouse US Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District of North Carolina
Dorothy Gooding '13	The Honorable Louis A. Bledsoe, III NC Business Court – Charlotte, NC
	The Honorable Calvin E. Murphy NC Business Court – Charlotte, NC
Kenzie Rakes '13	The Honorable Adam M. Conrad NC Business Court
	The Honorable John C. Martin NC Court of Appeals
Paul Skrickus '13	The Honorable Paul Harris Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County – Annapolis, MD
Emily Mather '14	The Honorable Stephani W. Humrickhouse US Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District of North Carolina
Laura “Katie” Greene '14	The Honorable Robert B. Jones, Jr. US Magistrate Judge, Eastern District of North Carolina
Charles McDowell '14	The Honorable David Warren US Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District of North Carolina
Colin McGrath '14	The Honorable John Jolly / The Honorable Greg McGuire NC Business Court – Raleigh, NC
Brett Carpenter '14	The Honorable Patrick Auld US Magistrate Judge, Middle District of North Carolina
Lauren Fussell '15	The Honorable Ronnie Greer US District Court, Eastern District of Tennessee
Scottie Beth Forbes'15	The Honorable James L. Gale NC Business Court – Greensboro, NC
Lauren Suber'15	The Honorable Robert Edmunds NC Supreme Court
Amanda Bryan '15	The Honorable James C. Fox US District Court, Eastern District of North Carolina
Samuel Morris-Bloom '16	The Honorable Paul Newby NC Supreme Court

Jamie Thomas '16	The Honorable Robin Hudson NC Supreme Court
Chelsey Maywalt '16	The Honorable Robert N. Hunter, Jr. NC Court of Appeals
Philip Thomas '16	The Honorable Phil Berger, Jr. NC Court of Appeals
Cassidy Cloninger '17	US Department of Justice Office of the Chief Immigration Judge Orlando Immigration Court
William Cyrus Corbett '17	The Honorable Brian Gibbons Chester Circuit Court (SC)
Jerrod Godwin '17	The Honorable Randall May NC Office of Administrative Hearings
Karlie Hudson '17	The Honorable Robert Hunter, Jr. NC Court of Appeals
Alison M. Kralick '17	The Honorable Cheri Beasley NC Supreme Court
Jared Simmons '17	The Honorable Philip Berger, Jr. NC Court of Appeals
Landon G. Van Winkle '17	The Honorable Joseph N. Callaway US Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District of North Carolina
Brandon Wheeler '17	The Honorable Chris Dillon NC Court of Appeals

CLS FACULTY WHO SERVED AS JUDICIAL CLERKS

Amanda Bryan '15	The Honorable James C. Fox US District Court, Eastern District of North Carolina
Zachary C. Bolitho	The Honorable David W. McKeague US Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
Kanika Capel	The Honorable James R. Spencer U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia
Tuneen E. Chisolm	The Honorable Consuelo B. Marshall US District Court, Central District of California
Johnny Chriscoe	The Honorable Edward Greene NC Court of Appeals
Allegra Collins '06	The Honorable Linda Stephens NC Court of Appeals
Dan Golonka	The Honorable Robin E. Hudson The Honorable Samuel J. Ervin, IV NC Supreme Court
	The Honorable Robert C. Hunter NC Court of Appeals
Michael B. Kent	The Honorable J. Owen Forrester US District Court, Northern District of Georgia
	The Honorable Judge Emmett Ripley Cox US Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
Kevin Lee	The Honorable Herbert J. Hutton, Jr. US District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania
Sarah Ludington	The Honorable Harry T. Edwards US District Court – DC Circuit
Lisa Lukasik	The Honorable Willis P. Whichard NC Supreme Court
Lucas Osborn	The Honorable Kenneth M. Hoyt US District Court, Southern District of Texas

Matt Sawchak

The Honorable Clarence Thomas
US Court of Appeals – D.C. Circuit

Office of the Solicitor General of the U.S.

Greg Wallace

The Honorable Susan Webber Wright
US District Court, Eastern District of Arkansas

Timothy R. Zinnecker

The Honorable Edith H. Jones
US Court of Appeals – Fifth Circuit

The Honorable Frank X. Gordon
Arizona Supreme Court

CLS MEMBERS OF THE JUDICIARY WHO TRADITIONALLY HIRE FULL-TIME LAW CLERKS

Judge Ann Marie Calabria '83

NC Court of Appeals

Judge Robert B. Jones, Jr. '97

US Magistrate Judge
Eastern District of North Carolina

Judge Donna S. Stroud '88

NC Court of Appeals

Judge John M. Tyson '79

NC Court of Appeals

CLS CLERKSHIP TASK FORCE

Chair: Professor Allegra Collins

collinsa@campbell.edu

Task Force Members: Kanika Capel, Vice Chair
Professor Matt Sawchak
Amanda Bryan, Faculty Writing Fellow
Dan Golonka, Faculty Writing Fellow
Ms. Kala Taylor, Career Center Director

kcapel@campbell.edu
sawchakm@campbell.edu

ktaylor@campbell.edu

Judicial Clerkships: Self-Assessment

Factors to consider when deciding about clerkships

- A. Type of Clerkship
 - 1. Trial or appellate
 - 2. State, federal, or international
- B. Reasons for seeking a clerkship
 - 1. Research and writing; practical training
 - 2. Work closely with a judge; gain a mentor
 - 3. Gain insight into the legal system and how judges work
 - 4. See different attorneys' styles of practice
 - 5. Exposure to a variety of legal issues and areas of law
 - 6. The credential on your resume
- C. Constraints on clerkship search
 - 1. Geography
 - 2. Family ties
 - 3. Place(s) you want to practice
 - 4. Personal preferences for judges (experience, ideology)
 - 5. Does it further my career goals?

Factors to consider when evaluating potential strengths and weakness in your application

- A. Law school experience
 - 1. Clinic
 - 2. Journal or other significant writing
 - 3. Moot Court
 - 4. Academic Record
 - 5. Other law school activities
- B. Other academic experience
- C. Non-academic experience and interests (might show skills or interests, well-rounded personality)
 - 1. Jobs (paid and volunteer)
 - 2. Proficiency in more than one language
 - 3. Travel
 - 4. Any other interesting, distinguishing items
- D. Writing Sample (substantive legal writing preferable)
 - 1. Law school work
 - 2. Work for employer (seek employer permission and redact)
- E. Selection of Recommendations (2 or 3)
 - 1. Law Faculty
 - a. Supervised work or writing

- b. Known through a small class (1st year or seminar)
 - c. Research assistant or teaching assistant
 - d. Written good exam
- 2. Legal Employers
 - a. Know your writing/analytical skills
 - b. Speak positively about your attributes (intellect, character, work habits)
- 3. Non-legal Employers or Faculty -- not viewed as well as legal/faculty employers
 - a. Know your writing/analytical skills
 - b. Speak positively about your attributes (intellect, character, work habits)

Source: Yale Law School Judicial Clerkship resources

JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP CHECKLIST

Judge: _____

Executive Assistant / Secretary: _____

Court: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Term _____ 1 year _____ 2 years _____ Fixed Term

Are clerks expected to take the bar exam? _____ No _____ Yes

 If Yes, for what state? _____

When are applications accepted? _____

What should applications include? _____

_____ Resume

_____ Writing Sample(s) (be sure to check for specific requirements)

_____ Law School Transcripts Official?

_____ Undergraduate Transcripts Official?

_____ List of References

_____ Letters of Recommendation How many? _____

When do interviews begin?

When are hiring decisions made?

Hiring criteria?

Other information:

Judicial Clerkship Job Search Timeline - *a 3-year Plan*

NOTE: This is a recommended timeline for judicial clerkship applications. You must confirm a judge's hiring practices and deadlines and adhere accordingly. Each judge sets their own hiring practices.

First Year

- Focus on academics! Strong academic performance is a prerequisite for obtaining a judicial clerkship. Typically the higher the court, the higher the GPA/class rank needed to be considered competitive.
- Develop a strong relationship with one or more of your professors. Clerkship applications require two – four letters of recommendation and at least two should be from law school professors. Consider securing a summer research assistant position to a professor.
- Attend programs on state and federal clerkships that are hosted by the Career Center each year.
- When selecting courses for your second-year:
 - Take a seminar or an advanced legal writing course. Professors from these courses can write a knowledgeable letter of recommendation about your research and writing skills;
 - Federal Courts is important to take either in your second- or third-year if you plan to seek a federal clerkship;
 - Administrative Law can be helpful for clerkships with courts that hear cases from administrative agencies and for clerkships with administrative law judges;
 - Consider courses that may be of interest to specialty courts. For example, tax courses for clerkships with tax courts; intellectual property courses for the U.S. Court of Federal Claims or the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.
- Write on to law review, if invited.
- Take part in competitions (e.g., negotiations, moot court).
- For your first-year summer position look for a position that will provide you with further legal research and writing experience in either the private or public sector. A research assistant position with a professor can be an excellent credential. Summer judicial externships can be good experience to have on your resume for the 1L summer. Positions are typically unpaid but as an externship you can earn class credit. A majority of these positions are posted on Symplicity and can be applied to through Symplicity. Otherwise, to apply you will need to write letters directly to the courts/judges you are interested in working.
- Judicial externships are also available during the school year to 2Ls and 3Ls. Many of these opportunities are posted in Symplicity as well. Watch Symplicity for these postings and note deadlines.
- Conduct a self-assessment to determine whether a judicial clerkship is right for you. If so, what are your preferences? Self-assessment tool – see Judicial Clerkship Guide Appendix or Career Center Intranet page/Judicial Clerkships.
- Review Judicial Clerkship Guide.

- Schedule appointment with a Judicial Clerkship Task Force member or the Career Center to discuss your clerkship interests. See Judicial Clerkship Guide for list of task force members.

Summer between First and Second Year

- Access OSCAR (On-line System for Clerkship Application and Review)
Second-year students receive full access to OSCAR on July 1 (prior to 2L year).
<https://oscar.uscourts.gov/>
- Access OSCAR to research the application process of judges, their requirements and deadlines.
NOTE DEADLINES AND PLAN ACCORDINGLY.
- Schedule Career Center appointment for review of cover letters and resume. (The Career Center is available during the summer for in-person or phone counseling sessions.)
- Request undergrad transcript.
- Develop a writing sample to use with your clerkship application, either in a class or through work experience.
- Request recommendation letters from Campbell Law professors.
- Communicate with any non-Campbell Law professor recommenders regarding writing a letter of recommendation.
- Provide recommenders complete contact information for each judge. (See Judicial Clerkship Guide for step-by-step instructions on the recommendation letter process.)

Fall Semester of Second Year

- Follow-up with recommenders to confirm recommendation letters have been completed.
- **Reminder: Submit your application early in the process, even if a judge specifies a date range or indicates they receive throughout the year.**
- Continue to cultivate relationships with professors who will need to serve as a “recommender”, someone who drafts a letter of recommendation on your behalf. If you have not already done so, consider becoming a research assistant to a professor.
- Take part in moot court and other trial activities. These activities can strengthen your advocacy skills.
- If you are considering applying for state trial court clerkships, plan to enroll in a clinic, trial practice and/or other skills-based courses. For example, if a state probate court is of interest take estate and trust related courses or family law related courses for family courts.
- Attend Federal Judicial Clerkship Panel presented by the Career Center.
- Pursue a summer position that will allow you to further develop your research and writing skills.
- Schedule a mock interview with the Career Center.

Spring Semester of Second Year

- Update all materials for a completed application, including writing cover letters, selecting and polishing a writing sample, and securing a copy of current law school transcript. Update resume to include fall grades, fall externship, etc.
- Attend State Judicial Clerkship Panel presented by the Career Center.
- **Continue to submit federal court applications according to judge’s application process.**

- If you are a member of one of the legal publications, consider obtaining an editorial board position for your third-year.
- Complete all course work to avoid incompletes on your transcript.
- It is recommended to submit state court clerkship applications in May prior to 3L year. Research the deadlines for state court clerkships. Judges vary in their application processes with some accepting applications throughout the year. Be sure to confirm the process of the judge you are interested in applying. Consult Career Center.
- For state clerkships, review the Vermont Law School Guide to State Judicial Clerkships online at <http://forms.vermontlaw.edu/career/guides/> (Log in updated annually. Consult Career Center for password.)

Summer between Second and Third Year

- Update materials for a completed application, including polishing a writing sample, and securing a copy of current law school transcript. Update resume to include summer position.
- **Finalize state court applications and submit according to judge's application process. Encouraged to submit in May.**
- Students should monitor OSCAR for late clerkship openings, including newly confirmed judges.
- Schedule a mock interview with the Career Center.

Fall of Third Year and Spring Semester

- Update Career Center as to status of applications.
- Federal judges continue to review applications and conduct interviews.
- After each interview, submit Judicial Clerkship Interview Form to Career Center.
- Students can continue to apply to state clerkships, as well as any federal clerkships that remain available or come available.
- Students should monitor OSCAR for late clerkship openings, including newly confirmed judges.
- Students should also monitor sites that track newly confirmed judges and newly nominated judges – <http://www.uscourts.gov/careers.aspx>
- Students should monitor Symplicity for state clerkship postings.

Source: Texas Wesleyan University School of Law Judicial Clerkship resources

REFERENCE MATERIALS

This section provides helpful research information. Furthermore, research should be conducted on each judge to whom a student submits an application.

The list of research materials provided below should serve as an introduction to the various forms of research material on clerkship opportunities. If any questions regarding the referenced materials arise, please feel free to contact the Career Center.

For biographies, important rulings, and insights on judges:

Almanac of the Federal Judiciary (library reference section)

The American Bench: Judges of the Nation (library reference section)

Judicial Yellow Book (library reference section and Career Center)

For addresses and application information:

Judicial Yellow Book (library reference section and Career Center)

NALP Federal and State Judicial Clerkship Directory (Lexis)

Directory of Minority Judges in the United States (ABA) (library reference section and Career Center)

Behind the Bench, The Guide to Judicial Clerkships (Career Center)

For general descriptions of court life and duties of a law clerk:

Chambers Guide (Career Center)

Law Clerk Guide (Career Center)

ONLINE RESOURCES

Lexis-Nexis <https://www.lexisnexis.com>

Westlaw www.lawschool.westlaw.com

ABA Judicial Division Section www.abanet.org/jd

FEDERAL COURTS

Federal Law Clerk Information System www.uscourts.gov

Searchable listing of federal judges including their hiring criteria and schedules.

On-line **S**ystem for **C**lerkship **A**pplication and **R**eview (OSCAR) <https://oscar.symplcity.com>

The Federal Judicial Center is the education and research agency for the federal courts. www.fjc.gov

Biographical information on all past and present judges, court histories, educational materials and links to other resources.

Map of Federal Circuits and links to websites of all Federal Appellate, District and Bankruptcy Courts
<http://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/federal-courts-public/court-website-links>

Judicial Staff Directory (LEXIS)

Contains judicial biographies and lists of court personnel for federal courts.

Alliance for Justice, Judicial Selection Project <http://www.afj.org/judicial-selection/>

Provides demographic lists and tables of sitting federal judges based on categories such as ethnicity, and gender as well as reports on nominations and the confirmation process.

Just the Beginning Foundation www.jtbf.org

Contains information about programming as well as lists of African American, Asian American, Latino/American, Native American, and women judges in the federal judiciary.

DOJ Office of Legal Policy www.justice.gov/olp

The Justice Department posts background information on judicial nominees and the process of nominations.

Website helps law students successfully navigate the maze of courts and judicial clerkship opportunities.
www.judicialclerkships.com

Federal Administrative Law Judges Conference www.faljc.org

A voluntary professional association for administrative law judges, this site provides information about the role of administrative law judges and a list of judges, by agency, who are members.

See Section VII of Guide for a listing of Administrative Law Judges.

STATE COURTS

North Carolina Judicial Directory <http://www1.aoc.state.nc.us/judidir/employee/search/public/init.do>

North Carolina State Courts System www.nccourts.org

National Center for State Courts <http://www.ncsc.org/About-us.aspx>

District of Columbia Courts

Superior Court www.dccsc.gov

Court of Appeals www.dccapeals.gov/internet/appellate/main.jsf

Maryland Judicial System www.courts.state.md.us

Virginia Judicial System www.courts.state.va.us

Vermont Law School Guide to State Judicial Clerkships <http://forms.vermontlaw.edu/career/guides>
(Log in updated annually. Consult Career Center for password.)

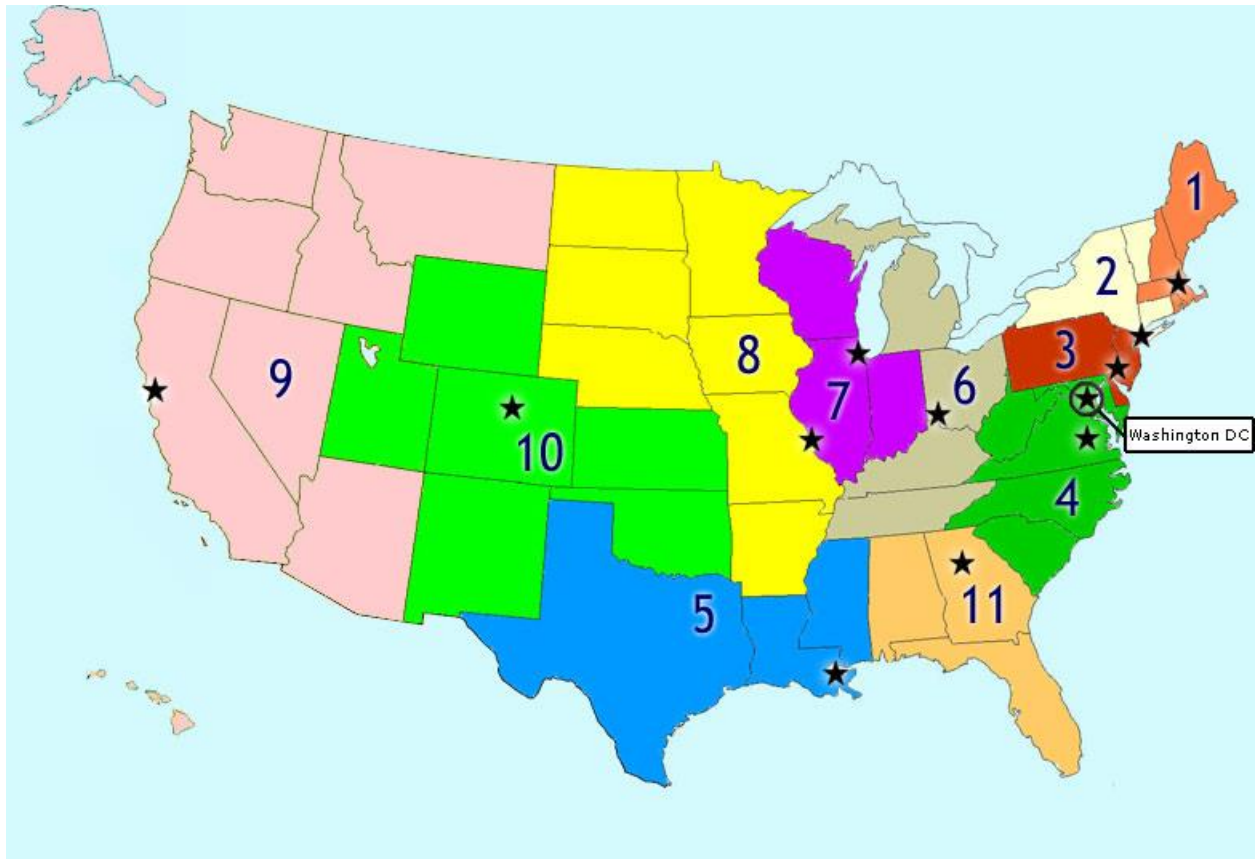
INTERNATIONAL

NCSC International <http://www.ncscinternational.org/>

Yale Guide to Opportunities with International Tribunals and Foreign Courts

[https://www.law.yale.edu/system/files/area/departments/cdo/document/CDO International Tribunals Public.pdf](https://www.law.yale.edu/system/files/area/departments/cdo/document/CDO%20International%20Tribunals%20Public.pdf)

MAP OF THE CIRCUITS OF THE UNITED STATES COURTS OF APPEALS



GUIDELINES FOR ADDRESSING JUDGES

<u>Addressee</u>	<u>Form of Address</u>	<u>Salutation</u>
Chief Justice U.S. Supreme Court	The Chief Justice of the United States (John G. Roberts, Jr.)	Dear Chief Justice Roberts:
Associate Justice U.S. Supreme Court	Associate Justice Clarence Thomas	Dear Justice Thomas:
Chief Judge U.S. Court of Appeals 4 th Circuit	The Honorable William B. Traxler, Jr.	Dear Chief Judge Traxler:
Circuit Judge U.S. Court of Appeals 4 th Circuit	The Honorable Allyson K. Duncan	Dear Judge Duncan:
Chief Judge U.S. District Court Eastern District of N.C.	The Honorable James C. Dever, III	Dear Chief Judge Dever:
District Judge U.S. District Court Eastern District of N.C.	The Honorable Terrance W. Boyle	Dear Judge Boyle:
Chief Justice N.C. Supreme Court	The Honorable Mark D. Martin	Dear Chief Justice Martin:
Associate Justice N.C. Supreme Court	The Honorable Paul Newby	Dear Justice Newby:
Chief Judge N.C. Court of Appeals	The Honorable Linda M. McGee	Dear Chief Judge McGee:
Associate Judge N.C. Court of Appeals	The Honorable Donna S. Stroud	Dear Judge Stroud:

State practices vary, and it is essential that you use the correct form. Therefore, be sure to research the specific state practice.

Judicial Clerkship Recommendation Letters – *the Process*

Step 1

Student Initiates Process - Students ask faculty members and/or external attorneys to be a recommender for them and to prepare a letter of recommendation on their behalf to the judge (s) to whom they are applying. It is the student's responsibility to provide the recommender the following information:

- ✓ the judge's full contact information
- ✓ term of clerkship
- ✓ application deadline (if applicable), and
- ✓ method of submission

For bulk applications of five or more recommendation letters, students must provide the recommender/faculty member with the information above in an Excel spreadsheet to be used in a mail merge. See example on page 2.

As a reminder, addresses for judges can be obtained through OSCAR (federal only), State Judicial Clerkship Guide, Administrative Offices of the Court websites and general internet searches.

Step 2

Recommender Prepares Letter - The recommender will draft and mail (or upload) the letter. If needed, faculty will seek assistance from a faculty administrative assistant for completion of the letter process.

- ❖ **State Court Clerkship Letters** - All state clerkship applications are submitted in hardcopy via US Mail. Recommendation letters to state judges should be either provided to the student under seal or mailed directly to the judge's chambers by the recommender. The delivery method of the letter is at the discretion of the recommender. (Students prefer pick up of sealed letter.)
- ❖ **Federal Court Clerkship Letters** – As determined by each judge, letters may be submitted in hardcopy via US Mail or uploaded in OSCAR (Federal Courts -On-line System for Clerkship Application and Review). Letters submitted in hardcopy should be either provided to the student under seal or mailed directly to the judge's chambers by the recommender. The delivery method of the hard copy letter is at the discretion of the recommender. (Students prefer pick up of sealed letter.)
Letters submitted via OSCAR may be uploaded to OSCAR by the recommender or be forwarded to the Career Center for uploading to OSCAR. Each recommender receives a password which provides access to the OSCAR system.

Sample of Full Contact Information and other relevant information needed by recommender

The Honorable Terrence W. Boyle, District Judge
United States District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina
306 East Main Street
Elizabeth City, North Carolina 27909

The Honorable Barbara Jackson
North Carolina Supreme Court
P.O. Box 1841
Raleigh, NC 27602

Term of clerkship - *2015-2016 clerkship*

Method of Submission (identify one per judge)

- ✓ Upload into OSCAR
- ✓ Hardcopy to be mailed directly to chambers by Recommender
- ✓ Hardcopy (under seal) to be given to student by Recommender

Of Note

For hardcopy submissions, student must confirm whether the recommender will allow pick up of the sealed letter by the student or whether the recommender prefers to mail letter directly to judge's chambers.

For OSCAR system, student should confirm in OSCAR that they have properly designated a recommender (include email address) for each judge. This selection triggers the OSCAR system to send an email to the recommender to begin the process.

Excel Spreadsheet Format (Bulk applications of five or more recommendation letters)

Students: Set up the following fields in the Excel worksheet.

Title	FName	MI	LName	Court Name	Address	State	Zip	Term	Deadline	Letter Delivery
-------	-------	----	-------	------------	---------	-------	-----	------	----------	-----------------

SAMPLE COVER LETTERS

123 Aldermoor Road
Raleigh, NC 27613

June 15, 2017

The Honorable Catherine C. Eagles, District Judge
U.S. District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina
P.O. Box 2708
Greensboro, NC 27402

Dear Judge Eagles:

I am a second-year student at Campbell Law School and I am writing to apply for a clerkship in your chambers for the 2018-2019 term. Attached you will find a resume, law school transcript, and writing sample for your review. The writing sample is a draft of a comment that I am writing for the *Campbell Law Review*. Letters of recommendation from Professor Hetrick and Professor Boyd are also included in my application package. A third letter of recommendation from Ms. Julia Lawson, the Litigation Director of Legal Aid of North Carolina, will be sent under separate cover.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer S. Thomas

Attachments

123 Aldermoor Road
Raleigh, NC 27613

June 15, 2017

The Honorable John R. Doe, Circuit Judge
United States Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit
475 Mulberry St., Room 302
Macon, GA 31201

Dear Judge Doe:

I write to apply for a clerkship in your chambers to begin in fall 2018. I am a third-year student at Campbell University School of Law located in Raleigh, North Carolina. I was born and raised in Georgia and would like to return home to practice law, and so would like to begin my career by serving as one of your clerks.

As you will see from my enclosed transcript and resume, I earned my master's degree in engineering before coming to law school. I am particularly interested in a clerkship in your chambers because of the large number of patent cases on your docket. I have spent each of the last two summers clerking at Smith and Smith with the intellectual property group, and I believe that this experience has prepared me well for a clerkship in your chambers.

I am a member of the *Campbell Law Review*, and have enclosed a draft of my note for your review. In addition, I have enclosed a resume, transcript, and letters of recommendation from three of my professors, including Professors Hetrick, McQuade, and Bowser.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer S. Thomas

Enclosures

STATE COURT COVER LETTER

11 Lonely Place
Raleigh, NC 27603

May 15, 2017

The Honorable Barbara Jackson
North Carolina Supreme Court
P.O. Box 888
Raleigh, NC 27602

Dear Justice Jackson:

I am a rising third-year student at Campbell University School of Law, and I wish to apply for a clerkship with you for the 2018-2019 term. My resume, writing sample, and transcripts are included. Letters of recommendation from Professors Matthew Sawchak, Bryan Boyd, and Greg Wallace are also included.

I am particularly interested in a clerkship with you because I have relocated to North Carolina permanently for law school and will practice in Raleigh after my clerkship. The experience of serving as one of your clerks would benefit me professionally and would benefit my clients as well.

I welcome the opportunity to interview with you, and I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Suzie J. Smith

Enclosures

James S. Smith

123 Glenwood Ave., Raleigh, NC 27603 • (704) 222-5656 • jamessmith@gmail.com

The Honorable J. Craig Whitley, Bankruptcy Judge
U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of North Carolina
401 West Trade Street, Room 111
Charlotte, NC 28202

March 25, 2017

Dear Judge Whitley:

I am a second-year student at Campbell Law School, and I wish to apply for a clerkship with you for the 2018-2019 term. I grew up on a farm outside Charlotte and plan to return to Charlotte for the duration of my career. In addition, the combination of my legal experience and background in accounting will serve you well. I could efficiently review financial documents and prepare the high-quality orders and opinions you expect from your law clerks.

Enclosed in my application packet are my resume, transcript, and writing sample. Also included are letters of recommendation from Justice Paul M. Newby, and Professors Bryan Boyd and Lisa Lukasik.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

James S. Smith

Enclosures

123 Glenwood Avenue
Raleigh, NC 27063

September 4, 2017

The Honorable William L. Osteen, Jr., Chief District Judge
United States District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina
P.O. Box 2708
Greensboro, NC 27402

Dear Judge Osteen:

I am a third-year student at Campbell University School of Law, and I am writing to apply for a clerkship in your chambers for the 2018-2019 term. I was born and raised in North Carolina and I look forward to remaining in the state to begin my legal career.

Over the past three years I have worked diligently to refine my legal research and writing skills. During my first summer, I was a judicial intern in the chambers of Justice Paul Newby of the North Carolina Supreme Court. This position provided me with the opportunity to prepare bench memoranda and drafts of opinions, as well as closely observe court proceedings and participate in conferences with Justice Newby and his clerks. I spent my second summer as an associate at Smith & Jones, where I researched state and federal law and prepared drafts of discovery and dispositive motions. In addition, I am a member of the *Campbell Law Review* and am currently working on a note that is scheduled for publication in fall 2017. I look forward to applying my legal research and writing skills as a judicial law clerk.

I have enclosed my resume and transcript for your review. In addition, I have enclosed a copy of a legal memorandum that I prepared as a summer associate at Smith & Jones. Letters of recommendation from Campbell University School of Law Professors Boyd, Hetrick and Kent will be forthcoming under separate cover. In addition, Justice Newby has agreed to be a verbal reference for me and can be reached at 919-555-1234.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

James S. Smith

Enclosures

123 Glenwood Avenue
Raleigh, NC 27603

September 4, 2017

The Honorable Joel Hoppe, Magistrate Judge
United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia
116 North Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22802

Dear Judge Hoppe:

I am a 2015 graduate of Campbell University School of Law, and I am writing to apply for a clerkship in your chambers for the 2018-2019 term. Both my wife and I were born and raised in Virginia, and I hope to return to the state to continue my law career.

My combination of skills and experience uniquely position me to immediately begin contributing to your chambers. I have always had an interest in litigation, and while I was a student at Campbell University School of Law I honed both my oral advocacy and legal research and writing skills as a participant in the Campbell Moot Court Competition. In addition, I was a Managing Editor of the *Campbell Law Review* and further developed my litigation skills as a student attorney with the law school's Senior Law Clinic. Immediately following graduation I joined the litigation department of Smith & Jones. In this capacity I have researched and prepared numerous motions and briefs on state and federal law, including discovery motions, dispositive motions, interlocutory appeals, and motions in limine.

I have enclosed my resume and law school transcript for your review. In addition, I have enclosed a copy of a summary judgment brief that I recently researched, wrote, and successfully argued in the Eastern District of North Carolina. Letters of recommendation from Campbell University School of Law Professors Lisa Lukasik and Bryan Boyd, and Ms. Clair Jones, a partner at Smith & Jones, will be forthcoming under separate cover.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

James S. Smith

Enclosures

**COVER LETTER FOR DECEMBER GRADUATES
TO BE USED FROM JANUARY THROUGH THE END OF APRIL**

123 Glenwood Avenue
Raleigh, NC 27603

March 10, 2017

The Honorable William L. Osteen, Jr., Chief District Judge
United States District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina
P.O. Box 2708
Greensboro, NC 27402

Dear Judge Osteen:

I am in my second year at Campbell University School of Law, and I will graduate from law school in December 2017. I am writing to apply for a clerkship in your chambers for the 2018-2019 term.

I have enclosed my resume and transcript for your review. In addition, I have enclosed a copy of a legal memorandum that I prepared as a summer associate at Smith & Jones. Letters of recommendation from Campbell University School of Law Professors Boyd, Hetrick and Lee will be forthcoming under separate cover.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

James S. Smith

Enclosures

***COVER LETTER FOR DECEMBER GRADUATES
TO BE USED FROM MAY THROUGH SEPTEMBER***

123 Glenwood Avenue
Raleigh, NC 27603

May 10, 2017

The Honorable William L. Osteen, Jr., Chief District Judge
United States District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina
P.O. Box 2708
Greensboro, NC 27402

Dear Judge Osteen:

I will be starting my final semester at Campbell University School of Law in September 2017, and I will graduate from law school in December 2017. I am writing to apply for a clerkship in your chambers for the 2018-2019 term.

I have enclosed my resume and transcript for your review. In addition, I have enclosed a copy of a legal memorandum that I prepared as a summer associate at Smith & Jones. Letters of recommendation from Campbell University School of Law Professors Boyd, Hetrick and Lee will be forthcoming under separate cover.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

James S. Smith

Enclosures

LAW STUDENT NAME

P.O. Box 123 • Raleigh, North Carolina 27603 • 919-555-4321 • lawstudentname@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Campbell University School of Law, Raleigh, NC

May 2014

Juris Doctor Candidate

Class Rank: 14th out of 96

Honors/Activities: Book Award: Ethics; Honor Court 1L Representative; Intramural Client Counseling Competition; Intramural Moot Court Competition; Voluntary Income Tax Preparation (VITA); Phi Alpha Delta Legal Fraternity; Intramural Football, Basketball and Softball

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC

May 2011

Master of Criminal Justice

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

May 2007

Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice

EXPERIENCE

The Honorable Paul Newby, NC Supreme Court, Raleigh, NC

Summer 2013

Judicial Intern

- Conducted research and prepared memoranda to brief the Judge on a matter before the Court about termination of parental rights
- Researched legal issues regarding the public policy doctrine, breach of contract, admissibility of law and expert testimony, and waiver of the right to counsel
- Attended oral arguments in the NC Supreme Court and the NC Court of Appeals

Professor John Jones, Campbell University School of Law, Raleigh, NC

Summer 2012

Research Assistant

- Researched case law and statutes in the areas of Admiralty Contracts, Telecommunications Contracts, Insurance Contracts, and Contracts for the Sale of Securities for the 4th Edition of *Williston*
- Edited multiple sections of *Williston* for possible plagiarism
- Read hundreds of cases to determine relevancy in future editions of *Williston*

South Carolina Bureau of Protective Services, Columbia, SC

April 2007 – June 2009

BPS Officer

- Provided protection for people in various state offices; Supreme Court, Governor's Mansion, and State House
- Engaged in intensive nine-week training course at South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy
- Received the JP Strom Award (Valedictorian for Criminal Justice Class of 364)

YMCA for the Greater Columbia Area, Columbia, SC

August 2004 – January 2007

Youth Counselor

- Organized activities for after-school programs; provided tutorial homework assistance
- Provided support and guidance to troubled children

INTERESTS

Running, playing guitar, reading historical non-fiction

Preparation for the Judicial Clerkship Interview – Interview Questions

QUESTIONS A JUDGE MIGHT ASK IN A JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP INTERVIEW

- Tell me about yourself
- Why do you want to clerk?
- Why this particular clerkship?
- What do you hope to learn from a clerkship?
- Why do you want to clerk for me?
- Why do you want to clerk in this city (state, region)?
- What do you consider to be your greatest strengths? Weaknesses?
- What qualities do you have that might make you a valuable law clerk?
- What are your short and long-range career goals?
- Where do you hope to practice after your clerkship?
- What type of law interests you most?
- Describe your work experience.
- What has been your favorite class in law school?
- Describe the work you have completed for your law journal.
- Tell me about the courses (grades, professors) you had in law school.
- To which judges (courts) have you applied?
- How would you approach this particular issue, case, problem?
- Do you prefer to work with others or independently?
- How do you view the long hours and low pay associated with a judicial clerkship?
- If you and I disagree about a certain issue, would you have any problems drafting an opinion incorporating my viewpoint?
- What interests do you have outside of law school? /What do you like to do for fun?
- Who is the person who has influenced you the most? Example
- Who is the person in public life today you most admire?
- What is the best book you've read recently?
- If I asked your close friends to describe you, what adjectives do you think they would use?
- What questions do you have for me?
- Have you read any of my opinions?

QUESTIONS A JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP APPLICANT MIGHT ASK THE CURRENT JUDICIAL CLERK

- Describe a typical day as a clerk in this court.
- What responsibilities do you have?
- Describe your relationship with the judge.
- What are the judge's greatest strengths? Weaknesses?
- What contact do you have with other clerks (with practicing attorneys in the area)?
- Tell me about this city (state, region) as a place to live.
- How has this clerkship affected your job search?
- How has this clerkship affected your career goals?
- What percentage of time do you spend in court, conducting research, drafting opinions, interacting with the judge?
- What criteria seem to affect the judge's selection of a clerk?

QUESTIONS A JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP APPLICANT MIGHT WANT TO ASK A JUDGE

- What criteria do you use in selecting your clerk?
- What will be the scope of my responsibilities?
- What is the nature of your docket?
- Could we discuss the issues you had to reconcile in your recent decision of *Doe v. Smith*?
- What is your timetable for making a decision?
- Do your clerks have contact with local attorneys?
- Describe your legal philosophy.
- What do you see as the primary role of this court?
- What percentage of my time would I spend in court, conducting research, drafting opinions?

IMPORTANT TIPS FOR THE INTERVIEW

- Dress professionally
- Bring extra copies of resume, grades, writing sample and references
- Greet interviewer (introduce yourself/firm handshake/smile)
- Look interviewer in the eye
- Address all interviewers not just the most senior
- Body language: Good posture, lean forward slightly, keep arms open or in a relaxed position in lap (folding indicates defensiveness/insecurity)
- Be confident, NOT arrogant
- Speak in a controlled manner – don't rush answers (take short pauses)
- Avoid "ums"
- Avoid touching hair or clicking pen
- Use active language: action verbs and proper nouns
- Avoid using words "thing" or "stuff" or "doing" – be specific
- Avoid slang
- Maintain a conversation
- Sell yourself – focus on skills and abilities
- Avoid offering excuses for poor performance in a class. If your grades are not good, acknowledge current grades and plan to improve but direct further comments to classes you excel in or show strong performance
- Turn off phone, PDA, etc. (Vibrate is not silent. Never take a call or send message during an interview. Never place phone on desk, table, etc. Keep hidden especially during lunches/dinners with employers – never place phone/PDA on the dining table.)

WHY STUDENTS DO NOT GET HIRED

- No preparation for interview (always research employer, know what they do, review website, take practice/mock interviews)
- Lack of enthusiasm during interview
- Arrogance
- Poor communication skills
- Weak answers to basic interview questions
- Resume/cover letter typos, information not well organized
- Disparage former employer
- Speak negatively about former employer, undergrad institution, current classmates, faculty, administration, etc.

THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits educational agencies or institutions and their employees from disclosing personally identifiable information from a student's educational record without the student's written consent. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g. Specifically, FERPA requires that a student provide a written and signed statement that (1) specifies the records that may be disclosed; (2) states the purpose of the disclosure; and (3) identifies the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made. 34 C.F.R. § 99.30.

Release

I authorize _____ to release the following information in a letter of recommendation or to the following individuals who call or email asking for information about me.

I authorize the release of the following types of information:

_____ My grades on individual assignments.

_____ Information about whether I turned assignments in on a timely basis.

_____ Information about my class participation.

_____ Any other information about my performance.

I authorize

to give the above types of information to the following individuals:

_____ Any person who calls or emails asking for information.

_____ (Name of individual, firm, or agency)

_____ (Name of individual, firm, or agency)

_____ (Name of individual, firm, or agency)

This authorization ends on _____.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

**CAMPBELL LAW CAREER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP INTERVIEW FORM**

Please complete this form after you have interviewed with a judge. You will need to submit one form for each judge with whom you meet.

Name: _____ Date: _____

This information may be made available to other Campbell students? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Judge: _____ Court: _____

Interview Date: _____ On what date were you invited for the interview? _____

Did you interview with anyone other than the judge? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, please list the titles of those individuals (e.g., secretary, current law clerk, court coordinator, etc.) _____

How long did the entire interview last? _____

How long did the interview with the judge last? _____

What type of questions did the judge ask? _____

What type of questions did the law clerks ask? (if applicable) _____

Do you know how many other people the judge intended to interview? _____

When does the judge anticipate making a decision (or when did the judge make a decision?) _____

From what schools did the judge's current clerk graduate? _____

Did you participate in a phone screening interview prior to the face-to-face interview? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, with whom did you interview? _____

Please give any additional information about this judge that might help students who obtain future interviews with this judge. _____

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO THE CAREER CENTER