Part 1: Resources and Opportunities

This *Handbook* describes the resources and activities of the Office of Career Planning, gives an overview of the variety of legal career opportunities available to you, and describes the elements of good career planning and an effective job search.

**Introduction**

The decision to attend law school is a major career decision, but it is really only the first step in finding your niche in the profession. During your three years at Michigan Law School, make it your goal to learn all you can about yourself and about the profession so that you can make well-informed decisions about your place within the legal field. Think about your values and goals. Do you prefer working with people or by yourself? Are you happier doing library research and writing or do you thrive on interpersonal contact? Are you likely to want to coach a little league team, play softball, ski? Are you active in community groups? Where do you want to live? How important are things like money and power to you? Is having a flexible work schedule important? What do you dream about? What makes you happy?

Too often the failure to give serious thought and attention to career planning while in law school leads students to take the path of least resistance. At Michigan that has historically translated into interviewing on campus and accepting a position with one of the large firms that makes an offer. While a large law firm is a wonderful choice for some, many find themselves unsuited for that environment and unhappy with their "choice." Don't fall into this trap! The legal profession is incredibly varied and there is much legal work to be done in a wide array of settings.

While you are in law school you will have the opportunity to meet and interact with many lawyers, in formal and informal settings. Listen to them talk about their practices and their lives, question them about the satisfactions and disappointments in their careers. Most lawyers are willing and happy to talk to law students about their careers and are likely to be more candid in these conversations than when they are recruiting. Learn all you can about what lawyers do and how they do it.

Read publications such as *The National Law Journal, The American Lawyer, The Legal Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*, which are available in print and online. Use Lexis-Nexis and Westlaw to review articles on various areas of the law that interest you. Many resources are available while you are in law school that are less easily accessed once you graduate, so take advantage of them while you are here.

You will find that there are few “right answers” to questions about career planning and that myths and misinformation about the process abound. Only you can decide what is right for you and your life, but we offer many resources to help you. The staff of the Office of Career Planning is here to help you sort through the myths and find your niche in the profession. Please get to know us so we can serve you better.
Chapter 1

The Office of Career Planning: What We Do, Who We Are, and Where to Find Us

Throughout the year, OCP counselors spend thousands of hours with individual students, reviewing their resumes and cover letters, answering their questions, discussing their career plans and job searches and addressing their fears, concerns and problems with the process. Students may make appointments to meet with OCP counselors beginning on November 1 of their first year of law school.

OCP is also responsible for offering training to students in various aspects of career planning and job searching. While programs vary from year to year, OCP staff members and outside attorneys and consultants in the past have conducted sessions introducing students to the legal profession, analyzing job opportunities in major U.S. legal markets, describing various legal career opportunities, teaching students to prepare resumes, cover letters and other professional correspondence, and coaching students in interviewing strategies. OCP frequently works with student groups to provide programming that is of special interest to those groups. We also conduct group meetings pertaining to the judicial clerkship application process and other topics of interest to students or that are requested by students.

OCP maintains a career resource library, in Suite 1100 South Hall, which includes books and magazines with information on legal employers and career planning topics. The OCP has a subscription to The New York Times. Resources regarding the public service job search and international opportunities are also housed in the Career Planning Library, as well as on the OCP web site.

The most visible activity of the Office of Career Planning is the Early Interview Week program, during which hundreds of employers from all over the country come to Ann Arbor to interview second- and third-year law students for summer and post-graduate positions. Typically, over 5,000 individual interviews are arranged, with more than 500 employers participating. During the winter semester, OCP coordinates a smaller on campus interviewing program, primarily for first-year students.

Many employers who do not come to campus to interview wish to recruit MLS students. We keep a list of such employers in our office and post job opportunities on Symplicity. We also provide a recommendation letter service to students and alumni in which students may place letters on file with us and we will copy and mail the letters at the request of employers or students.

Suite 1100 South Hall is the central information center. If you wish to schedule a counseling appointment, have a question, have trouble finding a resource, need to turn in applications, etc., this is the place to come. A telephone, fax, scanner and photocopier (available for job search purposes only), are also located in Suite 1100. There are staff located here to answer questions and to help direct you to the resources you may need in your job search.
Staff Biographies

Susan M. Guindi '90, Assistant Dean
Susan Guindi became Director of the Office in August 1998, and was appointed Assistant Dean in March 2001. Previously, she was Associate Director of the Office of Public Service. She received her J.D., magna cum laude, from the University of Michigan Law School, where she was a member of the Michigan Law Review. After graduation, she clerked for Justice Dennis Archer and subsequently for Justice Conrad Mallett on the Michigan Supreme Court, and then practiced law in Washington, D.C., first at Dickstein, Shapiro & Morin and subsequently at the small litigation boutique of Nussbaum & Wald.

Alyson L. Robbins, Public Interest Director
Alyson Robbins joined the Office of Career Planning as the Public Interest Director in August 2011. Most recently, Alyson was a Staff Attorney at the Family Law Project, an office of Legal Services of South Central Michigan, where she represented low-income victims of domestic violence in civil matters (family law, housing, immigration, and public benefits). She also supervised the law student volunteer program and served as the advisor to FLP's student organization at MLS. During law school, Alyson was a student attorney at the Northeastern's Prisoners' Rights Clinic and Domestic Violence Institute, the Committee for Public Counsel Services of Massachusetts' Youth Advocacy Project, Lawyers for Children in New York City, and the Law Offices of Deborah LaBelle in Ann Arbor. Alyson is a graduate of Northeastern University School of Law (JD), Bank Street College of Education (MSEd), and the University of Michigan (BS).

Kim LeClair, Recruitment Manager
Kim LeClair joined the Office of Career Planning as the Recruitment Manager in March, 2012. Kim manages our three interview programs: Early Interview Week, Fall Interview Program, and Winter Interview Program. She also tracks student employment statistics for the department. Most recently, Kim worked at the University of Michigan School of Natural Resources and Environment doing career advising and event planning. Kim is a graduate of Grand Valley State University (MPA), Oakland University (BS), and holds a Global Career Development Facilitator certification.

Carolyn R. Spencer, Attorney-Counselor
Carolyn Spencer came to the Office of Career Planning with a background in private firm practice, public service, and academia. She graduated with honors from the University of Connecticut Law School after receiving her A.B. from Brown University. After law school Carolyn worked for a medium sized firm, practicing mainly in the areas of medical malpractice and insurance defense. She next worked as an assistant city attorney for the City of New Haven before joining the faculty at Quinnipiac University School of Law where she taught in the Legal Practice Program. While teaching, Carolyn served as a magistrate hearing small claims cases and minor motor vehicle infractions. In 1996, she became Assistant Director of the Legal Practice Program here at the Law School. Carolyn joined OCP in March 1999.
Robin Kaplan, Attorney-Counselor
Robin Kaplan joined the Office of Career Planning in August 2001. Before re-locating to Michigan from Chicago, she was the legal compliance officer for a network of nonprofit environmental and consumer organizations and a staff attorney for an international labor union, where she represented workers in arbitration and mediation settings and advised the union on policy issues, regulatory matters and contract negotiations. Before going to law school Robin was a program officer at a Chicago-area nonprofit foundation specializing in international and domestic human rights and civil liberties issues. Robin received her JD from DePaul College of Law, and her BA cum laude from Macalester College.

Beth Wickwire, Attorney-Counselor and Judicial Clerkship Advisor
Beth Wickwire has relocated. The Office of Career Planning is in the process of hiring a new judicial clerkship advisor.

Laura Scott, Attorney-Counselor and Government Advisor
Laura Scott joined the team in September 2010 as a Government Attorney Advisor, after practicing law in both the public and private sectors. Laura began her legal career as a law clerk for D.C. Superior Court Judge Paul Webber. After her clerkship, she was hired as an Honors Attorney with the Department of Justice Antitrust Division. During her tenure at the Antitrust Division, Laura served as a Special Assistant to the Directors of Operation and was a recipient of the Attorney General’s Outstanding Contribution Award. She also served as a Special Assistant United States Attorney for the District of New Mexico. After leaving DOJ, Laura worked as a senior associate at Jenner and Block and later Dickstein Shapiro in Washington, D.C. Prior to joining our office, Laura worked for the state of Michigan’s Department of Community Health and was appointed to serve on the Governor’s Council on Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She counsels students and alumni who are interested in pursuing a career in the government. Laura is originally from the Washington, D.C., suburbs and is a graduate of Howard University School of Law.

Gary McGinnis, Attorney-Counselor
Gary McGinnis joined OCP in September 2011, from the law firm of Sidley Austin in Chicago. As an associate in the Insurance and Financial Services Litigation Group, his practice focused on reinsurance arbitrations and class action defense. His pro bono work has involved litigating Section 1983 prisoners’ rights claims in the Northern District of Illinois, as well as assisting asylees and refugees in their attempts to gain permanent legal resident status. He earned his JD at the University of Virginia School of Law in 2009, where he served on the editorial board of the Virginia Sports and Entertainment Law Journal, and a BA, magna cum laude, in political science and French from Albion College in 2006.

Tammy L. Sindlinger, Advisor
Tammy Sindlinger joined the office in June 1993. She received her BS in Psychology from Eastern Michigan University in August 1991. Tammy manages the Judicial database and serves as the OSCAR administrator for the Law School, oversees the Career Planning Resource Library, and develops and maintains the Careers website.
Katie Ulivi, Senior Assistant
Katie Ulivi joined the office in November 2006. She received her BA in General Management from Michigan State University in 2001. Katie facilitates career planning events and handles administrative tasks for OCP.

Annie Poling, Assistant
Annie Poling joined our staff in February, 2012. After receiving a BA in Psychology from University of Michigan in 2008, she began her career at an e-Commerce Service Provider Start-up in Ann Arbor specializing in client services and people operations. Annie manages Student and Alumni job opportunities and counseling appointments with Attorney-Counselors and Dean Guindi.

Chapter 2
The Legal Profession: What Lawyers Do
As discussed above, one of the most important things that you can do for yourself and your career while in law school is to learn about the wide variety of employment opportunities available to law graduates. This section describes some of the most traditional kinds of positions for attorneys, but keep in mind that there are countless possibilities for using your legal education in creative ways. In addition to this short overview, the Career Planning Library contains dozens of books that explore various types and areas of practice, as well as career alternatives for lawyers. Please consult the list of publications available on our web site or make an appointment to discuss these options.

A. Private Sector
   1. Law Firms
Lawyers who are employed in the private sector are found in a variety of settings, the most common of which is the law firm. A law office can be that of a solo practitioner, or a small, medium or large firm. Many firms have more than one office and an increasing number are multi-national. Because many of the nation’s largest firms will interview on campus, students often have a distorted perception that most lawyers practice in large firms. However, the majority of lawyers in this country practice in either a solo practice or in a small firm.

Small firms, those with 2-10 lawyers, can be quite varied though they commonly handle either civil or criminal matters but not both. Some of these firms will specialize further into specific transactional or litigation practice areas. Some new graduates will join small firms right after law school; others will join or form small firms after working at a larger firm. Often, students find that smaller law firms enable them to take on more responsibility for cases and have more client contact early on than some larger firms are able to do.

Medium sized law firms account for about 20% of the attorneys in private practice with about half of them in firms with 11-20 attorneys and the other half in firms of 21-50 attorneys. Firms of this size may be involved in a wide variety of matters though they often have a specialized niche. Firms in the 11-20 and 21-50 ranges are sometimes “boutique” firms, which have highly sophisticated and specialized practices. Some of these firms may have been started by a group of attorneys who broke
away from a large firm and so their specialty and their office procedures will be very much like those of a large firm.

Large firms are defined here as firms with more than 50 lawyers, though this will vary depending on the geographic area in which the firm is located. A 50-lawyer firm in New York City will be considered mid-sized at best, while the same firm in a more rural area may be the largest firm in the county. While large firms appear to most law students to be a disproportionate part of the market for lawyers, the fact is that firms with over 51 lawyers do not represent the environment in which most attorneys work. Because these firms recruit primarily from top law schools, you will see more of them and more of you will work for them than the average. Do not, however, think that they are the only employers worth considering or feel pressured to pursue this practice setting if you do not think that a large firm is the right place for you.

Large firms will typically have many different departments though they usually do not do much, if any, criminal or family law, unless these cases are undertaken as pro bono projects. These firms are usually structured rather hierarchically, with partners supervising senior associates, who supervise junior associates. Their lawyers are often encouraged to specialize quite early in their careers. Teams of attorneys often handle cases and clients tend to be organizations rather than individuals. Many lawyers are attracted to the complexity of large firm, legal work, the sophistication of the clients, and the ability to call on colleagues with expertise in a wide variety of areas when they have questions, as well as the relatively high level of compensation these jobs afford.

Hiring practices among law firms differ, much as the firms themselves differ. For example, the largest firms, being able to predict their hiring needs well in advance, tend to recruit graduates every year on a regular basis using a very formalized process, and use summer associate positions as a recruiting device for post-graduate positions. Lawyers from many of these firms regularly come to Ann Arbor to interview prospective associates. At the other extreme are solo practitioners and the small partnerships whose need for another lawyer arises only occasionally. The employment practices of these legal employers may seem rather casual and haphazard, particularly to students acquainted with the highly structured on-campus interviewing process. Small firms often want lawyers who will be eligible to practice as soon as possible, so graduates who have already passed the bar, and third-year students who are approaching graduation generally have the best chance to obtain these positions. If your goal is to practice in a smaller community or in a small firm in a larger community, your employment plans may not be settled as early as those of students who choose to participate in on-campus interviewing, and more initiative may be required on your part to seek out firms that might be hiring at the time you expect to be available.

2. Business
Businesses, including corporations, banks, accounting firms, insurance companies, publishing companies and consulting groups all employ lawyers. Additionally, hospitals, libraries and academic institutions at various levels will have attorneys on their staffs.

For many years, most corporations had a very small legal staff and rarely hired new graduates, preferring instead to hire attorneys who had at least a few years of law firm experience. In recent
years the trend has been to increase the size of the in-house staff, although still relatively few companies hire attorneys right out of law school. Some in-house lawyers function exclusively as lawyers, that is, as legal consultants to management. In this capacity, they perform some of the company’s legal work themselves, and they manage relationships with the company’s outside counsel, whom they call in for work that cannot reasonably be done in-house. Unlike law firm attorneys, in-house corporate attorneys have only one client and they generally do a variety of work for that client. In some cases, legal responsibilities are only a part of the lawyer's role in an organization. A lawyer may take on some management responsibilities, even becoming an officer of the corporation.

**CPA firms** engage in the general practice of public accounting, including auditing, tax planning and management services. They typically handle matters including foreign taxation, estate planning, merger and acquisition problems, executive compensation programs and corporate reorganization, as well as personal and corporate tax problems at the state and federal levels. Most openings for lawyers will be in the tax departments of the big accounting firms and many will require a background in accounting as well as a law degree. Regional accounting firms may also employ attorneys.

**Investment Banks** act as an intermediary between entities seeking capital and potential investors, including individuals and institutions. Capital can be raised through a variety of transactions. Investment bankers analyze potential investments and negotiate purchases and sales on behalf of clients. Investment banks are hiring an increasing number of attorneys these days, some at quite high salaries, although some lawyers who have moved from law firm practice to investment banking stress that the job emphasizes sales more than many attorneys might expect.

**Bank Trust Departments** provide trust and investment advisory services. This includes probate, personal trust, pension and profit sharing trusts, and corporation trusts.

**Management Consulting Firms** help top management in business, government and other organizations in solving management problems. Management consulting firms offer opportunities to new law school graduates. As student interest in these jobs has increased, OCP has added new directories and resources for students who are seeking them.

Many **hospitals, health maintenance organizations** and other large **health care providers** and **insurers** will have a legal staff to deal with issues that arise. These issues vary greatly and include everything from physician malpractice to general legal matters such as contract disputes with vendors, suppliers, or labor organizations; corporate filings; and tax problems.

**Universities and other educational employers**, both public and private, hire lawyers to represent them and manage their corporate affairs. Lawyers are often found in the General Counsel's office, advising the administration on matters involving labor and employment, freedom of information, and student rights and responsibilities. They can also be found in the medical center’s office (if the institution has one), as well as in an intellectual property office dealing with patent, trademark and copyright issues for the institution. Lawyers are also hired for professional and administrative positions, as you will notice during your years here at the Law School.
3. **Teaching / Academia**
Teaching opportunities exist in law schools instructing substantive and clinical courses as well as legal research and writing. Opportunities also exist in business schools, in departments lecturing to graduate and undergraduate students, in continuing legal education courses, and in paralegal and adult education programs. Positions in education may be full or part time. Many full time positions teaching at the college or graduate level are “tenure track” and include substantial publishing requirements in addition to teaching responsibilities.

4. **Other Legal Employers**
Law libraries, particularly law school libraries, also hire lawyers, although generally they will require an information science degree as well. Bar associations often have lawyer administrators who plan functions and oversee the association's library. Opportunities exist in writing, publishing and teaching/training for lawyers who work with legal journals and other periodicals as well as law book and software publishers such as West Publishing or Lexis-Nexis. Continuing legal education institutes also employ lawyers as both authors and editors. Look around at the service providers to lawyers and you will also find job opportunities. Law firms also sometimes hire lawyers to perform marketing, recruitment and management functions for their firms.

5. **Non-Legal Employers**
Lawyers may use their legal background in many positions not filled strictly by lawyers. These include management positions with business entities, sales for insurance companies and legal publishers, search consultants, and legal recruiters. Think about your interests, previous experience, and undergraduate training for clues as to other fields that you may want to investigate.

### B. Public Sector
The public sector opportunities discussed here are primarily legal, but keep in mind there are also non-legal positions available.

1. **Government**
At every level of government, from the local unit to the national, there are opportunities for lawyers. Small local government units will frequently be represented by a private firm rather than having their own city or county attorney, but as the size of the governmental unit grows so does the likelihood that there will be positions available for lawyers. Governmental units include school districts, cities, counties, states, and other service units as well as the federal government.

The **federal government** hires lawyers for a wide variety of tasks and in a wide variety of agencies and departments. Federal attorneys may be involved in administrative, regulatory and advisory processes; in brief and opinion writing; in legislative drafting; in research and review of special problems in contract, tort, criminal and constitutional law cases, in taxation, labor relations, or antitrust regulation; and may practice at the administrative, trial court and appellate levels. The federal government offers career opportunities in a broad range of legal specialty fields. The Department of Justice, dubbed by some the “Nation’s Law Firm,” is the largest federal employer of attorneys, but attorneys are present in dozens of other government agencies as well.
Opportunities in **state government** vary. Each of the fifty states maintains a staff of lawyers under its Attorney General, the attorney for the state, to litigate suits for and against the state. This is usually the largest legal office at the state level. There may also be legal positions with state agencies. Non-legal positions may exist in many state agencies for which a law degree is helpful but not required.

Beginning with **local government**, many local units will have a city attorney and, as mentioned above, the larger the city the more likely that there will be a department rather than a single attorney. This office will represent the city in lawsuits or work with outside counsel much like a corporate legal department does. It will advise the other city departments and personnel on legal matters and draft ordinances when necessary.

Positions in local government for recent law school graduates are often available in public defenders’ and prosecutors’ offices. Generally, public defenders are local or state funded offices that provide representation in criminal cases to accused persons who are financially unable to retain their own lawyer. Because case loads are high, these positions provide a unique opportunity for young lawyers to get a great deal of experience, particularly trial experience, very quickly. Most jurisdictions separate trial and appellate criminal defense and opportunities often exist in both divisions.

Like the public defenders, prosecutors handle criminal cases but represent the state or “the people” in these matters. Prosecutor offices also provide a new attorney with a tremendous amount of trial experience in a very short period of time.

For more information about what government lawyers do and the various practice settings for government lawyers read *Making a Difference: A Law Student’s Guide to Public Service—Volume II: Government Careers* and other resources located on the OCP website.

2. **Public Interest Organizations**

Public service legal opportunities exist in a variety of legal settings and practice areas. Nonprofit organizations include two types of organizations, those that are issue-oriented and those that are client-oriented. **Issue-oriented groups** often conduct impact litigation -- taking cases with the intention of creating legal policy and precedents that will affect large numbers of people on a particular issue. Often such offices supplement impact litigation with other forms of advocacy including lobbying, grassroots organizing, and community-based education. Examples of such organizations include the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Amnesty International, and Earthjustice.

**Client-oriented** organizations provide direct legal aid to poor people or other underrepresented groups. This type of organization includes offices that receive support from the Legal Services Corporation, a federally-funded program that awards grants to organizations across the country to provide basic legal services to lower income people. There are neighborhood offices located in cities and counties throughout the country. The practice areas of legal services offices vary from office to office, but may include family law, consumer law, public benefits, bankruptcy, and housing law. There are also client-oriented organizations that do not receive funding from the Legal Services Corporation but that provide similar basic legal services to targeted populations. Examples of client-oriented
organizations include the Atlanta Legal Aid Society, Gay Men’s Health Crisis, and Michigan Migrant Legal Assistance Project.

Each non-profit organization is distinctive, with its own legal agenda, blend of advocacy types, and practice style. This diversity affords unique opportunities to work on legal issues close to one’s heart and in a setting tailored to one’s preferences and/or strengths. Eventually, you may be part of developing a public interest organization or project yourself. As a means of further educating yourself about the broad range of public service organizations, we urge you to read *Making a Difference: A Law Student’s Guide to Public Service—Volume I: Public Interest Careers* and other resources located on the OCP website.

3. **Judicial Clerkships**

Judicial clerkships are usually one- to two-year appointments for recent law graduates, although some judges do hire permanent clerks called “career clerks.” Judicial law clerks serve essentially as legal counsel to their judges, researching the law and advising the judge how it might apply in the cases before the court. Typically, law clerks analyze cases, discuss them with the judge and draft and edit judicial opinions. These positions represent an unparalleled opportunity for a lawyer to spend an extended period of time seeing cases from the judge’s point of view. As such, these experiences are particularly valued by legal employers, including law firms, government agencies and universities and law schools. Many law firms will grant second-year associate status to individuals who have completed a one year clerkship, and will defer a graduate’s start date to allow him or her to complete the appointment. In addition to the excellent professional training associated with judicial clerkships, many judges remain mentors and friends to their clerks for years to come.

While it is commonly thought that all judicial clerkships require unusually high scholastic standing, this is not the case. You should not be discouraged from applying for these positions if you are interested in clerking. In addition to the U.S Circuit Courts of Appeal, U.S. District Courts and some state supreme courts (the courts most often targeted by Michigan Law students), U.S. Magistrates and Bankruptcy judges, judges on the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, the U.S. Tax Court and the U.S. Court of International Trade also hire clerks, as do many state intermediate appellate and trial courts. Any clerkship can be an extremely valuable experience.

Chapter 3

**Gaining Legal Experience**

Summer and part-time positions during the academic year provide students with opportunities to learn more about the practice of law, to meet practitioners and to begin making contacts to develop a professional network.

A. **The Summer After Your First Year**

First-year students at the University of Michigan Law School typically accept a variety of paying and non-paying volunteer jobs during their first summer, sometimes combining the two. The important thing to keep in mind is that the object is simply to gain legal experience. Subsequent legal employers
will not be concerned about whether a student was paid for his or her first summer legal job; any position in which a student had the opportunity to observe practitioners and to apply some of the legal principles learned during the year will be valued. Because many students will work in a large law firm after their second year, we encourage students to work in their first summer for a non-profit, government office, or a small firm, as it is useful to experience different kinds of work settings. Moreover, students should be aware that, while opportunities in law firms are certainly available for first-year students, there are many fewer positions open to first-year students than there are to second-years. Therefore, students are advised not to limit themselves only to the largest firms in the largest geographical areas. In addition, students should follow up on any personal contacts they may have and contact legal employers located in their hometowns or in the communities where they went to undergraduate school. In addition to law firm jobs, professors also hire research assistants each summer (a great way to get an excellent letter of recommendation!) as does the Law Library. These can be great opportunities to hone your research skills, something that will be prized when you leave law school.

Summer volunteer opportunities for first-year students abound. The most common positions are with judges, public interest organizations and government agencies. All of these provide good opportunities to learn about the law, meet people, check out a geographic area, sharpen your skills and get a letter of recommendation from a legal employer. Students who wish to work in government will find few paying positions for first-years because the positions with funding generally require the completion of two full years of law school. However, Student Funded Fellowships are available to first-year MLS students each year for some government and public interest work (NOT for judicial internships), though the number of fellowships and amount of funding will vary. A meeting concerning “SFF's” will be held in the winter term.

A small group of employers will come to campus during the winter term to interview first-year students. Others will contact the Office of Career Planning to have a position posted, so be sure to check Symplicity regularly for more information. Be prepared to write letters and to follow up on personal contacts, however. Most first-year jobs will be found as a result of contacts you initiated rather than employers coming to you.

B. The Summer After Your Second Year
There are many more paid opportunities available to second year students than there were during their first year. In considering whether or not to participate in on-campus interviewing, students should note that OCI offers certain advantages and disadvantages. It frequently provides an opportunity to talk with employers representing various locations without the expense and difficulty of visiting each location. However, most of the employers coming to campus have similar practices and are the largest firms in their respective markets.

While many students get jobs through the on-campus interviewing program, primarily with large law firms, many other second-year students choose to conduct mailing and networking campaigns to help them find jobs with smaller firms, government or public interest organizations. If you find that you need or want to pursue employment outside of the OCI process, be assured that OCP has a wealth of resources to help you.
C. Work During Academic Terms
The Office of Career Planning occasionally receives notices from employers looking for part-time help during the school year. First-year students are actively discouraged from pursuing such employment, however. Second- and third-year students who wish to work during the school year should be aware of the ABA/AALS requirement that limits remunerative work to twenty hours each week including employment in and out of the Law School.

D. Externships, Clinics, and Pro Bono Opportunities
In addition to the paid opportunities discussed above, students have other options that provide experience and credit. These include externships and clinics. Externships allow students to work for a semester and to receive credit by writing a paper on the experience. Students interested in learning more about externships should see Professor Amy Sankaran, 303 Hutchins Hall, 734-764-7787.

Clinics provide hands on training in handling cases and usually enable students to gain actual courtroom experience. Students may also wish to do pro bono work during the school year, as many volunteer opportunities exist for those interested in gaining experience without the necessity of receiving payment or credit.

E. Post-Graduation
There was a time when post-graduation employment was accurately described as “permanent.” In the past, lawyers went to work with one employer, made a career there, and stayed for their entire professional careers. The trend now, however, is for lawyers to work in several jobs over their legal careers, sometimes moving among employers of the same type, i.e., from one firm to another and in some cases moving between different types of employers - - from private firms to government, public interest employers to firms, etc.

The majority of Michigan graduates begin their post-graduate careers in the private sector, generally with law firms. Second on the list is a judicial clerkship, followed by government offices, public interest organizations, and corporations. Geographically, many Michigan graduates have gone to big cities for their first jobs, with Chicago, New York, Washington DC, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Detroit being among the favorites. Michigan graduates can, however, be found in all fifty states, large and small cities, and many foreign countries.

Post-graduation positions are found in a variety of ways. Some are the result of offers made at the end of the summer experience between second and third year. Others will be the result of on-campus interviewing that takes place during a student’s third year. Some students find positions through posted jobs and others by writing or contacting employers directly in response to jobs listed on the web or discovered through word of mouth or targeted mailings.
Chapter 4

Beyond Law School: The Bar Examination

When you graduate from law school, there is still one major hurdle left to jump: the bar exam. Before a law school graduate can practice law, he or she must be admitted to practice in at least one state or the District of Columbia. Admission is permitted once the candidate passes the Bar Examination given by that jurisdiction. You may sit for the bar exam in July or February. The rules and procedures vary for each state and it is the responsibility of each student to be certain that he or she has signed up for the bar exam he or she intends to take. Students must also request that the Records Office of the Law School send certification of graduation to that State Bar. Be sure to check application deadlines for the jurisdictions that may interest you, since they are sometimes relatively early and on occasion may change.

Some states provide for first-year students’ pre-registration for the exam (at a reduced rate) shortly after they begin the study of law. Registration is still possible later, though additional fees are charged. Students interested in practicing in the following states as well as others should be sure to check pre-registration requirements: Alabama, California, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Mississippi, North Dakota, Ohio, and Oklahoma.

Information and addresses for all state bar websites are available through the Office of Student Records. In general, a student must write to the Board of Law Examiners in the appropriate jurisdiction for an application. The exception is Michigan, for which you may pick up an application from the Office of Student Records.

All but three U.S. jurisdictions require the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (“MPRE”). The MPRE tests your knowledge and understanding of the ethical standards of the legal profession. Most jurisdictions require passage of the MPRE in order to be admitted to practice. The vast majority of states allow students to take the MPRE before graduation from law school. The exam is offered nationwide each March or April, August, and November, and most students take the exam sometime after their second year of law school. More information regarding the MPRE can be found at: http://www.ncbex.org/multistate-tests/mpre.
Part 2: The Job Search

Chapter 1

The Timeline

The National Association for Law Placement has issued the following guidelines concerning the timing of offers and decisions. These guidelines can be found on the web. Students should direct any questions they have about the guidelines to the Office of Career Planning.

PART V: GENERAL STANDARDS FOR THE TIMING OF OFFERS AND DECISIONS

To promote fair and ethical practices for the interviewing and decision-making process, NALP offers the following standards for the timing of offers and decisions:

A. General Provisions

1. All offers to law student candidates (“candidates”) should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the offer letter unless the offers are made pursuant to Sections B and C below, in which case the later response date should apply.
2. Candidates are expected to accept or release offers or request an extension by the applicable deadline. Offers that are not accepted by the offer deadline expire.
3. A candidate should not hold open more than five offers of employment at any one time. For each offer received that places a candidate over the offer limit, the candidate should, within one week of receipt of the excess offer, release an offer.
4. Employers offering part-time or temporary positions for the school term are exempted from the requirements of Paragraphs B and C below.
5. Practices inconsistent with these guidelines should be reported to the candidate’s career services office.

B. Full-Time Employment Provisions

1. Employers offering full-time positions to commence following graduation to candidates not previously employed by them should leave those offers open for at least 28 days following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first. Offers made after December 15 for full-time positions to commence following graduation should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the offer letter.
2. Candidates may request that an employer extend the deadline to accept the employer’s offer until as late as April 1 if the candidate is actively pursuing positions with public interest or government organizations. Candidates may hold open only one offer in such circumstances. Employers are encouraged to grant such requests.
3. Employers offering full-time positions to commence following graduation to candidates previously employed by them should leave those offers open until at least November 1 of the candidate’s final year of law school. Candidates should reaffirm these offers within thirty days from the date of the offer letter. Employers may retract any offer that is not reaffirmed within the 30 day period.
4. Employers offering candidates full-time positions to commence following graduation and having a total of 40 attorneys or fewer in all offices are exempted from Paragraphs 1-3 of this Section. Instead, offers made on or before December 15 should remain open for at least three weeks following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first, and offers made after December 15 should remain open for at least two weeks.
C. Summer Employment Provisions for Second and Third Year Students

1. Employers offering positions for the following summer to candidates not previously employed by them should leave those offers open for at least 28 days following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first. Offers made after December 15 for the following summer should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the offer letter.

2. Candidates may request that an employer extend the deadline to accept the employer’s offer until as late as April 1 if the candidate is actively pursuing positions with public interest or government organizations. Candidates may hold open only one offer in such circumstances. Employers are encouraged to grant such requests.

3. Employers offering positions for the following summer to candidates previously employed by them should leave those offers open until at least November 1. Candidates should reaffirm these offers within thirty days from the date of the offer letter. Employers may retract any offer that is not reaffirmed within the 30 day period.

4. Employers offering candidates positions for the following summer and having a total of 40 attorneys or fewer in all offices are exempted from Paragraphs 1-3 of this Section. Instead, offers made on or before December 15 should remain open for at least three weeks following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first, and offers made after December 15 should remain open for at least two weeks.

D. Summer Employment Provisions for First Year Students

1. Law schools should not offer career services to first-semester first year law students prior to November 1 except in the case of part-time students who may be given assistance in seeking positions during the school term.

2. Prospective employers and first year law students should not initiate contact with one another and employers should not interview or make offers to first year students before December 1.*

3. All offers to first year students for summer employment should remain open for at least two weeks after the date made.

*December 1 is the date that students can begin contacting employers if they choose. This is not to suggest that all students should contact all employers to whom they wish to apply on that date or shortly thereafter, as many employers do not begin their 1L job search in earnest until January or later.

Summary – Student Response Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATUS OF STUDENT</th>
<th>RESPONSE DATE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2L/3L previously employed by employer</td>
<td>November 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2L/3L not previously employed by employer</td>
<td>28 days after date offer made or December 30, whichever comes first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1L</td>
<td>Two weeks after date offer made (no earlier than December 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information regarding the time frame for accepting an offer of summer employment, see the handout covering this topic on the Career Planning web page.

E. Positions Following Judicial Clerkships

When a student plans to clerk after graduation, the status of post-graduate offers of employment vary greatly by both employer and judge. Some employers may hold a post-graduate offer of employment open during the term of a clerkship, other employers will not. In addition, an increasing number of judges prohibit employment commitments until the completion of the clerkship to avoid conflict of
interest complications. In such cases employers may maintain contact with candidates as appropriate and encourage them to make employment inquiries at the conclusion of the judicial clerkship. If you are planning to clerk after graduation, please contact the Office of Career Planning to discuss your specific circumstance.

Chapter 2
The Research Phase: Defining the Search and Locating Employers

Finding employment -- whether a summer internship or a post-graduate position -- is a test of your skills as an advocate. Effective job hunting requires that you bring to the job search process techniques similar to those used by a skilled lawyer: thorough research, good writing, and persuasive oral advocacy. You must incorporate these qualities in the three steps of a job search: research, writing a resume and cover letter, and interviewing. No competent lawyer would start writing a brief without identifying the issues and conducting research. Similarly, before you start writing an effective resume and cover letter that signals your value to a prospective employer, you must identify employers compatible with your interests and background, and then research those employers.

You will want to start with the Office of Career Planning web site. The Career Planning library contains many helpful resources including books, newsletters, and the New York Times. In addition, students also use the National Association for Law Placement (“NALP”) Directory (and print copies in 1100 South Hall); Martindale Hubbell attorney directories; Lexis-Nexis; and Westlaw to identify and research employers. Beyond the print and online opportunities for identifying prospective employers, you will also make personal contacts. Do not overlook your classmates as sources of information. Talk with other students who are familiar with the cities and employers that interest you. The names and e-mail addresses of students who have worked in various cities with various employers are available on our web site in the Student Summer Employment List. In addition, once you have identified the cities and practice areas in which you are interested, we can show you how to get in touch with alumni who are eager to help students and offer advice.

Employers of all types send job postings to our office throughout the year. Current postings are updated frequently on Symplicity. It is worthwhile to check the postings regularly. In addition, OCP exchanges job newsletters with over 100 law schools via the BYU Intercollegiate Job Bank. Most of these contain postings for permanent positions, but there are occasional internships posted and it is a good way to learn about smaller employers that you may want to apply to.

A. Law Firm Employment
Students who are seeking law firm employment will generally begin their search with the NALP Directory of Legal Employers. We also have print copies of the NALP Directory in Suite 1100 South Hall. This Directory provides information on most of the employers that come to campus to recruit students, as well as many others. The Directory is primarily for larger firm employers; consequently, students should not confine their job search to only those employers listed in this publication. The Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory is a comprehensive listing of lawyers and law firms of all sizes across the
country. For small and medium-sized firms in our major markets, check the online directory: Non-OCI Law Firm Database on the Career Planning website.

Also, alumni contacts are an excellent source of information on small- and medium-sized law firms to find out who is doing what in their areas of practice. When talking with alumni, listen and ask questions about the firms’ “personality,” their clients, and the kinds of cases they handle.

In general, with all firms it is important to learn as much as possible about the firm and its attorneys by checking the firm’s website, talking to practitioners, and researching the firm and attorneys using the online and print research resources.

B. Public Interest and Government Employment
Students looking for employment with public interest organizations or government should begin their research with the MAD Guides (Making a Difference: A Law Student’s Guide to Public Service). These resources provide an overview of public interest careers (Volume I) and government careers (Volume II). The guides will walk you through the various job search resources as well. Another resource that will be useful is the Practice Area section of the OCP website. The Practice Area pages have links to organizations, programs, and job search resources broken down by practice area. Another valuable resource is PSJD. Start with “Resources” and then click on the “Career Central” link. There you’ll find information on public interest careers, careers in government, careers as a prosecutor or public defender as well as information on for-profit public interest law firms. PSJD also contains a directory of public service organizations nationwide and job postings, too.

C. Judicial Clerkships
Students who are seeking a post-graduation judicial clerkship, should review the Judicial Clerkship section of the OCP website. The hiring guidelines and time frames differ for federal judges and state judges, and students interested in a post-graduation clerkship should make an appointment with an attorney-counselor to discuss these criteria. In addition, students can use our Judicial Clerkship database or the directories in Suite 1100 South Hall to compile a list of judges to whom they wish to apply.

Unfortunately, there is no centralized list of judges who accept first-year summer interns in any given year. However, students can review the list showing where students worked for the past two summers to see which judges took judicial interns. The list is found online on the Student Career Toolkit page under “Summer Employment List.” Students desiring a first-year summer internship with a judge may just send their applications to, or call, each of the chambers individually for application requirements and timing.

D. Other Employers
Students who are interested in working for corporations, investment banks, CPA firms, or management consulting firms may want to begin their legal job searches with the In House Directory. Another resource for permanent employment is the job bank on the website of the Association of Corporate Counsel. In addition, because of increasing student interest in these jobs, the Career Planning Library has added books that students might find helpful along these lines.
Students who are interested in teaching positions should participate in a journal, get an article published, and demonstrate a strong interest in scholarship while in school and while practicing. Judicial clerkships also provide a strong background to those interested in teaching law. Read the biographies of the professors here and talk to the faculty law teaching advisor early on in your law school career if you are interested in this career path. The Office of Career Planning also has a handout available to students on the OCP website.

Chapter 3

The Oral Advocacy Phase: Interviewing

If writing a cover letter and resume correspond to the briefing stage, the job interview corresponds to oral argument because it is the occasion to answer the questions of the prospective employer and to highlight certain points about yourself. Successful interviewers understand that an employment interview is not a one-way monologue in which your only role is to answer the questions asked. It is also an exercise in advocacy in which you must show how your strengths relate to the skills required for the position.

A. Preparation: Know the Position, The Employer, and Yourself

Preparation is the key to a successful interview. Prior to telling the interviewer about what you have to offer, you must know the needs of the organization and understand the aptitudes you possess that are relevant to those needs.

1. Know the Position

Based on your research, you should be able to identify several success factors for the position you are seeking. For example, some key success factors for public defenders are strong interpersonal skills and unflappability; law firms will look for evidence of good research, writing, and analytical skills. If you are able to discern the position’s requisite skills, you will be able to focus your answers to reflect these skills.

2. Know the Employer

More or less contemporaneously, learn as much as you can about the organization. Meeting practitioners in the field will provide you with valuable information about the organization. In addition, there are on-line resources that can assist you. Check Lexis and Westlaw for news articles that have been written about the organization and some of its cases. Most organizations have web sites, so do a search on the Internet. You might discover, for instance, that the office recently won a big case and you may want to mention it in the interview.

3. Know Yourself

After identifying the key success factors for the position, you must show that you possess them. Returning to the public defender example, it is not enough in an interview to claim that you possess strong interpersonal and communication skills. Be prepared to support each claim by at least one experience that demonstrates to the employer that you do indeed possess this skill or ability. For
example, if you were selected to become a crisis intervention counselor in college or successfully competed on the debate team, these experiences obviously correspond to the above success factors.

However, do not become discouraged if your background seems unrelated to the position. The challenge is to translate your experiences into relevant skills. For example, and as demonstrated in the sample resumes and cover letters, if you have ever worked in a business setting that provides services to the public, you probably placated difficult customers. If you did, this experience is relevant to demonstrating interpersonal skills. Similarly, have you ever motivated a group of individuals, whether store employees or fraternity members, to undertake a project? This experience could demonstrate your communication and leadership abilities.

At the end of this process, you should create a list of several success factors for the position together with a list of the experiences that illustrate that you possess these factors.

B. The Likely Questions

You are now ready to enter that final phase of preparation: determining likely questions and rehearsing (but not over-rehearsing) responses. If you are prepared to discuss effectively and specifically the questions below, using concrete examples from your experience, you should be able to demonstrate your professional fit. As you answer these questions, keep in mind the list of success factors and relevant personal experiences that you devised. Try to focus your answers on these factors and experiences because they are the most relevant to the employer.

• “Tell me about yourself.” This maddeningly open-ended question is asked frequently enough that you should have a ready answer. The idea here is to establish a theme about yourself. If you were asked to describe yourself in five adjectives, what would they be? Try to focus your answer on some of the success factors for the job. Keep your response limited to two minutes.

• “Why did you decide to go to law school?” Discuss previous academic or employment experiences in positive terms and how these led you to focus on law as a career.

• “How are you doing academically?” If you are participating in the on-campus interview program, interviewers will not see your transcript until after your interview. However, an interviewer may still inquire about your grades. Present your grades in positive terms. If your grade point average is not as you would like it to be, nonetheless stress the positive. Perhaps you succeeded in courses that are relevant to the position for which you are applying, or your grades have continued to improve since your first year. In any event, do not sound defensive and do not dwell on your grades: provide an answer and move on to another topic. If you can find nothing positive to say about your grades, simply acknowledge in one sentence that while you’re not happy with them, you feel that other factors in your background are more indicative of success in this position and go to those factors immediately. If an employer will see your transcript and you believe that your grades may be a negative factor, then you should bring them up to address them even if the employer does not.
• “Why are you interested in this position?” This is a good opportunity to discuss what you have learned researching and networking with other professionals in the field. Stress how these experiences have heightened your interest in pursuing this position and reinforced your conclusion that you would perform well in it.

• “Why do want to work for us?” Show that you know how the organization differs from others in the field. Also, emphasize the organization’s reputation and your desire to work with talented lawyers.

• “What are your strengths?” Here is your opportunity to discuss in more detail the skills that you possess that correspond to the success factors of the position. Remember, illustrate these skills with experiences in which you used them successfully.

• “What three accomplishments are you most proud of?” Use the accomplishments that illustrate your relevant skills.

• “What are your weaknesses?” These must not be critical skills. Demonstrate your maturity by discussing areas that you want to strengthen and the steps you have taken to accomplish this.

• “Discuss a significant failure.” What happened? How did you “grow” from this experience? Perhaps you may wish to discuss how the setback helped you acquire new skills or hone existing ones.

• “What questions do you have for me?” Always be prepared to ask a few questions that show your insight into the employer’s work and needs. For example, you may ask what qualifications the organization is looking for in a candidate. Listen carefully to the qualities the interviewer mentions, and then tell him or her how your skills and experiences meet those qualifications.

If you are prepared to answer these questions, the interview should go smoothly. The important thing to remember is that you must be both responsive and proactive. If the interviewer does not ask questions that allow you to show how your skills relate to the success factors of the position, then you should address this matter yourself, even if unprompted. At the end of the interview, you can ask what qualifications the organization is looking for in a candidate, and then make your case.

Much has been written about how to present oneself interpersonally in an interview. One truth stands out: employers want to hire persons who are self-confident. The most important impression to make in an interview is that of a prepared and confident lawyer. If you take the steps described above you will be prepared, and with preparation you will feel confident and your assets will manifest themselves.

Having mentioned the importance of being proactive and stating your case in an interview, we must also stress that it is vitally important to be a good listener. Listen to the interviewer’s questions and gauge his or her responses. The questions that are posed to you can suggest concerns, and body language and facial expressions can indicate that the interviewer is bored or confused. Be alert to
these clues and modulate your presentation accordingly. Remember an interview is both an exercise in advocacy and a conversation between professionals. Finally, just as experienced lawyers have mock oral arguments to rehearse their presentation, you should consider having a mock interview to rehearse yours. Mock interviews can be scheduled in Suite 1100 South Hall or by calling 734-764-0546.

C. Telephone Interviews
A few words about telephone interviews are in order. At some point in your job search an organization may want to interview you over the telephone. Do not panic. The ingredients of a successful telephone interview are largely the same as those of an in-person interview: research and preparation. With respect to telephone interviews, however, keep these additional thoughts in mind.

You will usually have advance notice of the interview. In setting it up, make sure you will be in a quiet, comfortable location during the interview. A major advantage of a phone interview is that you can use notes. Have a list of common questions with outlined responses and notes about your skills.

Perhaps the most unnerving aspect of a phone interview is the inability of the parties to read each other’s facial expressions, gestures, and body language. Compensate for this by using your voice to convey your energy level and enthusiasm. At the same time, do not allow silence to make you uncomfortable. If the interviewer asks a tough question, it is perfectly acceptable to say “I’d like to think about this for a minute.”

A word of caution about conducting interviews over cell phones: if your cell phone reception is not completely reliable, we highly recommend that you find a land-line to conduct your phone interview. The Office of Career Planning has phone lines in our interview rooms that students may request to use for phone interviews – we ask for 24 hours’ advance notice for phone interview requests to ensure availability.