

Welcome to the Judicial Clerkship Guide

Information for the Class of 2013

If you are interested in a judicial clerkship, chances are you have already identified courts of interest, approached faculty (and possibly employers) for letters of recommendation, and are now busy preparing your applications and applying for clerkships.

Federal judges who participate in the Federal Judges Law Clerk Hiring Plan began reviewing applications on Tuesday, September 4th at 12:00 pm noon. See link for further information on the Plan's critical dates. <http://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/lawclerk.nsf/Content/CriticalDates?OpenDocument>

The deadline for submitting your Excel spreadsheets containing the lists of judges is **JUNE 29, 2012**. See the section on Letters of Recommendation for more detailed information. *You may still submit spreadsheets after this date, however, your letters will be completed after all timely submissions and in the order in which your spreadsheets were received.*

- See the Application section for more information. Feel free to make an appointment with Margaret Talmers, Judicial Clerkship Advisor.
- Remember to register on Symplicity's online Judicial Clerkship registration page.

Information for the Class of 2014

It is never too soon to begin considering a judicial clerkship after graduation. Although the first application deadlines for the Class of 2014 are not until Spring 2013, it is helpful to familiarize yourself with the application process NOW. Start by reviewing this packet. After you review the materials, take out the Timeline in the Appendix. Note that there are things you can do now!

- **Letters of recommendation** are a standard part of judicial clerkship applications, and one must be from a law professor. If you don't know a professor well, take the time to cultivate a relationship with a professor.
- **Strengthen your legal research and writing skills** – take a course in advanced legal writing, enter a writing competition, participate in a journal, become a research assistant to a professor.
- Consider an **internship with a judge**, either through the Internship Program or on your own.
- Search for a summer opportunity (or part time job) that will give you legal research and writing experience.

The Preparation section of this guide has many more suggestions. Take advantage of the resources in the Career Development Office to assist you in finding work experiences which will professionally prepare you for the legal workplace and the competitive judicial clerkship application process.

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Judicial Clerkships	PAGE
Clerking	3
Overview	
• Why clerk?	
• How can I prepare?	
Responsibilities	
Research	4
State Courts	
Federal Courts	
• Intellectual Property Law Concentrators	
Administrative Law Judges	
Tribal Courts	
Preparation	6
First Year Day, First and Second Year Evening Students	
Second Year Day and Third Year Evening Students	
Evening Students (1LE/2LE/3LE)	
Third Year Day and Fourth Year Evening Students	
Alumni	
Application	8
Register	
Resume	
Transcript	
Cover Letter	
Letters of Recommendation	
Writing Sample	
Interview	12
The Offer	12
Appendix	13
Federal Court Overview	
Selected State Judicial Clerkship Deadlines	
Judicial Clerkship Resources	
Resources for Researching Administrative Law Clerkships	
Timeline: Applying for a Judicial Clerkship	
Checklist	

Clerking

Overview

Why clerk?

Working as a judicial clerk after graduation is a unique and exciting way to gain insight into the judicial decision-making process. Judicial clerkships are available in state and federal courts at both the trial and appellate levels. Generally, they are positions that last for one or two years. As a judicial clerk to a sitting judge, you will have the opportunity to participate in the development of the law, observe the various styles, strengths, and weaknesses that attorneys bring to the court setting, and develop a close and long-lasting relationship with the judge for whom you clerk. Many clerks develop a mentor/mentee relationship with their judge which lasts long after the clerkship ends. Former judicial clerks have noted that the experience enabled them to hone their research and writing skills, gain exposure to a wide range of legal issues and to the legal community, and bolster the strength of their candidacy for post-clerkship positions. Generally, legal employers hold judicial clerkships in the highest regard.

How can I prepare?

Students must be academically and professionally prepared in order to be considered for a clerkship. First and foremost, study! Most courts and judges place significant emphasis on academic achievement and class rank. Judicial clerks must be excellent researchers and writers, so participate in journals and writing competitions, and take courses in advanced legal writing. Expose yourself to challenging coursework and gain a well rounded education. If you see a clerkship in a court of limited jurisdiction, display your interest by taking relevant courses and pursue legal experiences in that area. Work at a law firm, government or public interest organization, intern for a judge and/or participate in clinical programs or internships – each of these gives you valuable exposure to the legal profession and the practice of law. A combination of these experiences not only prepares you for the competitive judicial clerkship application process, but is excellent preparation for any legal job you seek.

Responsibilities

The primary duties of a judicial clerk involve assisting a judge by conducting legal research, analyzing case law, discussing issues with the judge, and drafting bench memoranda, orders and opinions. While all clerkships primarily involve research and writing, trial and appellate clerkships have additional distinct duties.

Trial court clerks perform legal research, write bench memoranda and draft jury instructions, memoranda and orders. Often, trial court clerks spend a significant amount of time in the courtroom, observing trials, motion sessions, sentencings and hearings as well attending settlement conferences.

Appellate court clerks perform legal research and in-depth analysis, write bench memoranda and draft opinions and rulings on petitions for rehearing. They read appellate briefs, review the record of the proceedings in the court(s) below and help the judge prepare for oral argument. They may spend a few days of every other month observing oral arguments.

Research

State Courts

State courts offer a wide variety of clerking experiences, from the highest appellate courts to trial courts. Clerking in a state's highest appellate court can be very exciting, offering the opportunity to participate in making new state law. Some states have an intermediate appellate court, while others do not. Trial courts offer the opportunity to work on a variety of civil and criminal cases, observe a range of advocacy styles and learn about practice in that geographic area. Some state trial courts also offer the opportunity to focus directly on a particular area of interest, such as family law or juvenile law.

The Guide to State Judicial Clerkships by Vermont Law School (ID and password available in the CDO, print copy available in the CDO library) is a comprehensive resource that contains information on state court clerkship application procedures and deadlines for the fifty states. This is an excellent place to begin your research on application requirements, deadlines and salaries. The *Guide* also includes web links for each court. *BNA Directory of State and Federal Courts* (in CDO library) contains a chart of the court structure in every state. In addition to these resources, there are other print resources in the CDO library, including a binder listing Suffolk alumni who have completed state court clerkships. *Judicial Clerkship Resources* lists online and print resources.

Be aware that even within a state, there are no uniform deadlines or application requirements. Applications are due as early as the spring of your 2L/3LE year and as late as October of your 3L/4LE year, depending on the state and the court. Some courts have clerk pools, where law clerks work for a number of judges. In other states, individual judges hire one or two law clerks for the year to work exclusively for him/her. Some courts require a writing sample of previous work; some require applicants to research and analyze a hypothetical. **Be sure to do your research so you are not foreclosed from any opportunities because you were not aware of the requirements.**

Clerkships in the highest appellate court of any state are the most competitive within the state system, requiring at least a top 10% class standing and journal experience. Suffolk students have clerked in many states at both at the trial and appellate level, as well as in courts of limited jurisdiction, such as Probate and Family Court. Students have secured clerkships in Connecticut, District of Columbia,¹ Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont.

Federal Courts

The federal district courts, bankruptcy courts and courts of appeals provide more than 1,000 clerkships per year. There are significant benefits to be derived from working in these courts throughout the country. A federal clerkship greatly enhances your marketability everywhere and serves as an equalizer in your ability to compete with graduates of the most prestigious law schools. Obtaining a federal court clerkship is a very competitive process and typically requires at least a top 10% class standing and journal experience.

¹ The Superior Court of the District of Columbia is the trial court of general jurisdiction in the District of Columbia. Established by Congress, it serves the needs of the local community in a role similar to that of a state trial court. The Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia functions in a manner similar to that of a state's highest appellate court.

FEDERAL JUDGES LAW CLERK HIRING PLAN DATES FOR 2013-2014 TERM

- The application process for 3L/4LE students is governed by the Federal Judges Law Clerk Hiring Plan. Dates listed here: <http://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/lawclerk.nsf/Home?OpenForm>
- **Tuesday, September 4, 2012** at 12:00PM (EDT) Judges receive applications.
- **Friday, September 7, 2012** at 12:00PM (EDT) Judges may begin contacting applicants.
- **Thursday, September 13, 2012** at 10:00AM (EDT) Judges may begin conducting interviews and extending offers.

These deadlines do not apply to recent graduates or alumni.

OSCAR

Federal judges in the district courts, bankruptcy courts, courts of appeals as well as the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces and the U.S. Court of International Trade list their clerkship requirements on OSCAR (Online System for Clerkship Application and Review) at <https://oscar.uscourts.gov>. OSCAR also allows applicants to electronically file their federal clerkship application materials with participating judges. Other resources are listed in *Judicial Clerkship Resources*, which contains a variety of online and print resources. In addition, the CDO library has a binder listing Suffolk alumni who have completed federal court clerkships. Apply to a variety of judges in a large geographic region. Boston is an extremely competitive market. **Suffolk students who succeeded in securing federal clerkships submitted numerous applications around the country.** Students and recent graduates secured federal clerkships in Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Texas, Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

Intellectual Property Law Concentrators

Intellectual Property Law Concentrators with a particular interest in patent litigation should consider applying for clerkships in the federal system. Patent litigation takes place in federal district courts, and certain district courts around the country have become known for their large patent dockets. Among these courts are the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas and the United States District Court for the Northern District of California.

The **United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit** in Washington D.C. has exclusive appellate jurisdiction over patent disputes. Unlike the other courts of appeals, the residence of the litigants does not matter when determining whether the Federal Circuit has jurisdiction. In light of its exclusive jurisdiction, a significant portion of the Federal Circuit's caseload is comprised of patent appeals. Consequently, the judges on this court often seek clerks who have a technical or scientific background.

Administrative Law Judges

While the majority of clerkships are to judges who are members of the judicial branch of the state or federal government, some Suffolk graduates choose to clerk for an administrative law judge. Many federal and state administrative agencies have administrative law judges who conduct hearings on issues which fall under the jurisdiction of their agency. These clerkships tend to address a very particular area of the law, and students usually have taken coursework or had work experiences which show their commitment to that area. Administrative law judges who hire law clerks are located in agencies such as the Department of Justice, Executive Office of Immigration Review (United States Immigration Court) and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. *Researching a Clerkship with an Administrative Law Judge* contains resources to begin your research. [Federal Administrative Law Judge Post-Graduate Clerkships](#) lists federal agencies which have clerkship positions with administrative law judges.

Tribal Courts

There are currently 564 federally recognized Indian tribes. Approximately 300 Indian nations have tribal courts. While many of these courts are located in the central and western part of the country, there are opportunities for clerkships with tribal court judges in the eastern part of the country. For example, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Court, located in Mashantucket, Connecticut, hires law clerks and offers judicial internship opportunities to law students. A variety of resources to research these opportunities are located in the *Judicial Clerkship Resources* section on page 16.

Preparation

Give attention to your academic and professional preparation during law school. Both are essential to prepare for a clerkship and your legal career. Here is a year by year approach.

First Year Day, First and Second Year Evening Students

- **Study!** Strong academic performance is a prerequisite for obtaining a clerkship. The first year curriculum gives you a base upon which to build a well rounded legal education.
- **Develop a strong relationship with one or more of your professors;** clerkship applications require letters of recommendation and at least one letter should be from a law school professor.
- Courts look very favorably on **law review experience**. Eligibility to participate in the closed writing competition for the Suffolk University Law Review is based on academic performance.
- Participate in the **writing competitions that determine journal membership**. For specific information on eligibility for the various journals at Suffolk, refer to the Suffolk web site, under *Student Organizations/Honor Boards*.
- **Apply for a judicial internship** for the summer through the First Year Summer Internship Program. (This is only available to First Year Day and Second Year Evening Students.) Working as an intern for a judge is an excellent way to get valuable legal experience, however, the positions are not paid. Some judges will let students work part time, or, if you intern full time, you may consider a second job in the evenings for income.
- **Seek out a judicial internship** on your own. Meet with the judicial clerkship advisor to plan your strategy. These positions are not typically advertised.
- Find a job for your summer break that will provide you **with further legal research and writing** experience. If an evening student, begin to think about how to transition within your current position or move to a different position so that you can **start to get legal research and writing experience**.
- Begin researching **Suffolk's Internship Program**; it provides a terrific opportunity to gain experience and receive academic credit. Past interns have worked with judges during the school year.
- Take part in **competitions**.
- Plan to take **advanced research and writing courses** during your second and third years.
- **Attend CDO programs** on clerkships.

Second Year Day and Third Year Evening Students

- **Study! Academic achievement and a well rounded legal education** are important.
- **Cultivate relationships with professors-** you will ask for letters of recommendation.
- Intern for a **judge**.
- Consider participating in **Suffolk's Internship Program** to gain additional legal experience. Some Suffolk students work directly with a judge through this program.
- Become a **research assistant for a professor**. This will allow you to hone your research and writing skills, and develop a strong relationship with someone who could later write a letter of recommendation.

- **Participate in the writing competitions that determine journal membership.** For specific information on journal eligibility, go to the website and click on *Student Organizations/Honor Boards*.
- **Develop a writing sample** to use with your clerkship application, either in a class, a clinic, or through work experience.
- Consider participating in a **clinical program**.
- **Search for a summer job that will allow you to further develop your research and writing skills. If an evening student, transition to a position which involves legal research and writing.** You must obtain professional legal experience prior to graduation!
- **Take advanced research and writing** courses during your second and third years.
- **Attend CDO programs** on clerkships.
- **Meet with the judicial clerkship advisor.**
- **Consider working part time** during the school year to build legal research and writing skills.
- **Obtain advanced certification** from Westlaw® and Lexis®-Nexis®.

TIMELINE FOR 2L/3LE STUDENTS

- **By February, begin researching the judges and courts** where you wish to apply.
 1. **Review The Guide to State Judicial Clerkships** (ID and password available in the CDO) to identify state court clerkship application procedures and deadlines.
 2. **Review OSCAR** at <https://oscar.uscourts.gov> for information on federal clerkships.
- **Approach professors for letters of recommendation in late winter/early spring.**
- **Prepare your applications in the spring and apply to early deadline state courts.**
- **Prepare federal court applications. Continue to apply to state courts over the summer.**
- **Send federal court applications for arrival on September 6 and finalize OSCAR applications.**

Evening Students (1LE/2LE/3LE)

Many Suffolk evening students have obtained clerkships. If you are planning to apply for a clerkship, it is **critical** to gain legal research and writing experience during your first three years of law school.

- Read the CDO handout, *Career Planning for Evening Students* for further advice on obtaining legal experience.
- Meet with a career counselor to develop a strategic plan for gaining legal research and writing experience during your time in law school.

Third Year Day and Fourth Year Evening Students

- **Study!** Academic performance is still important.
- **Prepare and send your application materials** during the summer between your 2L/3LE and 3L/4LE year to those judges and courts whose deadlines have not yet passed. For judges who participate in the Federal Judges Law Clerk Hiring Plan, applications for federal courts are due in early September. Some state courts also have fall deadlines.
- **Interested in a second clerkship?** Start applying in the spring of your 3L/4LE year for both state and federal courts. The state deadlines apply to all students, but the federal deadlines do not apply to the graduating class, so watch the postings on OSCAR and apply as positions are posted.

Alumni

Recent graduates who are interested in second clerkships should be aware that the state deadlines are the same for all applicants. However, the federal hiring dates do not apply to alumni. Therefore, graduates are encouraged to apply for federal clerkships as early as late spring of their 3L/4LE year, but certainly by the summer immediately following graduation. Alumni are also welcome to make an appointment with the judicial clerkship advisor.

Application

Applying for a state or federal court clerkship requires planning and research. A complete application package may take a few months to prepare, and, because most judges conduct interviews on a rolling basis, always try to apply on the earliest date that a judge is accepting applications. Before sending your applications, spend time researching judges and courts that interest you, carefully considering the length of clerkships (1 or 2 years) and geographic locations. Keep in mind that you will pay for your callback expenses.²

DO NOT APPLY ANYWHERE YOU WOULD NOT GO FOR AN INTERVIEW.

Some judges call on short notice – you should be willing to accept any interview and be there at your own expense.

DO NOT APPLY IF YOU WOULD NOT ACCEPT AN OFFER FROM THAT JUDGE OR COURT.

Register

To begin, complete Symplicity's online Judicial Clerkship Registration page. *This step is required of all students applying for judicial clerkships.*

Resume

You should accentuate your academic qualifications and any scholarly activity when compiling a resume for judicial clerkship purposes. Be certain to emphasize your academic achievement, your membership on a journal (to include articles published or pending publication), and other professional experiences. When writing your job descriptions, highlight research and writing experience. Please see CDO's online handout, *Resume Writing*.

Transcript

A transcript is a standard part of a judicial clerkship application.

- Review the requirements of the judge and court – some require an official transcript with the initial application.
- Make certain that the Registrar has listed, if appropriate, Law Review, Transnational Law Journal, Journal of High Technology, Health and Biomedical Journal or Moot Court Board under "honors" on your transcript.
- If you will receive honors next year, such as an editorial position, be sure to list that position as well.

If you apply before second-year (or third-year evening) grades are available, you may have to supplement your applications in July after those grades are available.

You may select to have class rank listed on your transcript. However, once selected, it **cannot** be removed. Think carefully prior to making this selection. Some students elect to feature their class rank only on their resume.

Applications submitted through OSCAR require you to prepare a grade sheet instead of uploading a transcript. You should always take copies of your transcript with you to interviews.

² There is a 100 judge/court limit. If you wish to apply to more than 100 judges/courts, you must receive permission from the Clerkship Committee. Email Margaret Talmers for details at mtalmers@suffolk.edu.

Cover Letter

Your cover letter can significantly affect your chances of obtaining an interview.

- **Many judges and hiring coordinators eliminate applicants from consideration on the basis of the cover letter alone.**

Not only is it your first writing sample, it is an opportunity to convince the judge that your experiences have prepared you to be an outstanding law clerk. The cover letter is a bridge between your resume and the position you seek. You can highlight factors not apparent from your resume into a coherent argument in support of your candidacy. Use topic sentences to drive your paragraphs and highlight the skills you have to offer. Include a specific interest in the particular judge or court. The cover letters should be individually addressed and one page in length. Please see CDO's online handout, *Cover Letters*.

Addressee	Form of Address	Salutation
U.S. Supreme Court		
Chief Justice	The Honorable (full name) Chief Justice	Dear Chief Justice (last name):
Associate Justice	The Honorable (full name) Associate Justice	Dear Justice (last name):
Federal Court		
Chief Judge	The Honorable (full name) Chief Judge	Dear Chief Judge (last name):
Judge	The Honorable (full name)	Dear Judge (last name):
Magistrate	The Honorable (full name) United States Magistrate Judge	Dear Judge (last name):
Senior Judge	The Honorable (full name) Senior Judge	Dear Judge (last name):
State Court		
Chief Justice	The Honorable (full name) Chief Justice	Dear Chief Justice (last name):
Justice	The Honorable (full name) Justice	Dear Justice (last name):
Appellate Court	The Honorable (full name) Associate Justice (or other title)	Dear Justice (last name): (In Mass., "Dear Judge (last name):")
Trial Court	The Honorable (full name) (Title)	Dear Judge (last name):

Letters of Recommendation

These are a critical part of your application. Clerkship applications usually require 2-3 letters of recommendation, and almost always require at least one letter of recommendation from a law professor. Any other letters may come from past or present employers who are familiar with your legal work. Approach a faculty member who knows you and can speak to your abilities in detail. Meet with the professor and discuss the courts to which you plan to apply. Consider leaving a copy of your resume, your transcript and a writing sample for his/her convenience. Some professors ask for a personal statement as well.

- Don't wait! Some faculty members write only a discrete number of letters a year. Once you have identified a potential recommender, make an appointment to discuss your clerkship plans and ask if s/he will write a letter in support of your application.
- **DO NOT LEAVE FOR THE SUMMER WITHOUT MAKING THESE ARRANGMENTS!** Faculty members often have scholarship and other commitments and are not always available during the summer.

Up to Three Spreadsheets Needed

When requesting letters of recommendation from faculty, create an Excel spreadsheet listing the judges and/or courts. This spreadsheet is the data source for a mail merge. This way, each letter is personalized. You will need up to three separate spreadsheets:

- one for federal judges accepting applications online through OSCAR,
- one for federal judges accepting paper applications, and
- one for state courts/judges.

Create the Spreadsheet

FEDERAL JUDGES: Download information on federal judges into an Excel spreadsheet via the Clerkship Module on Symplicity.

STATE COURTS AND JUDGES: Create the state court/judges spreadsheet using the mail merge template for clerkship letters of recommendation. Research individual state court judges.

<http://www.law.suffolk.edu/offices/career/handouts/documents/MailMergeTemplate.xls>

Email the spreadsheets to

- your professor,
- Marie Fratto, faculty assistant (mfratto@suffolk.edu) OR if the recommender is a clinical professor to Emmanuel Tellez (etellez@suffolk.edu), and
- Margaret Talmers, Judicial Clerkship Advisor (mtalmers@suffolk.edu).

*The deadline is **June 29, 2012**. Spreadsheets submitted after this date will be completed after all timely submissions and in the order in which your spreadsheets were received.*

Make sure to specify whether you wish to pick up your letters. The faculty assistants will contact you when they are ready and hold your letters for pickup for one week. After that date, they will be automatically mailed out.

Unless otherwise indicated, we suggest you send out the required number of letters of recommendation with your initial application. Any letters sent separately should be in envelopes that are clearly marked:

Clerkship Recommendation for [Applicant Name]

Writing Sample

Check the particular judge's application requirements to determine how many writing samples are required. Here are some general guidelines.

- The length of your sample should be somewhere between 8-20 pages, depending on the court. Some courts have strict page limits, others do not.
- Your sample should show your ability to analyze legal issues, use cases effectively and clearly articulate arguments. It should be a sophisticated piece of legal writing. It should not be a paper for a class, but a piece of legal research.
- Your sample should be unedited. That means unedited by another. You are free to edit your own work! Your writing sample should be polished.
- Appropriate choices include:
 - Legal memorandum drafted for an employer (with permission of employer, most likely redacted);
 - Brief (or section of brief) from Advanced Legal Writing;
 - Brief (or section of brief) drafted for an employer (with permission of employer, most likely redacted);
 - Bench memorandum drafted for judge (with permission of judge, most likely redacted);
 - Draft memorandum and order for judge (with permission of judge, clearly stating it is a draft);
 - Legal writing piece used to write on to a journal; and
 - Unedited journal submission.

With a long brief, you can also submit the entire brief and direct the judge to the relevant 10-12 pages. (Some students have co-written sections of briefs with another, and may wish to submit only the section that they wrote – see above.) Your writing sample should have an explanatory cover sheet giving important facts and the general context. More information on this is available on the CDO's website under *Writing Samples*.

Interview

Judges want to hire motivated, intelligent students who possess strong research and writing skills and a deep interest in the law. The judge will most likely be seeking someone with whom a comfortable rapport can be established. The CDO has a **Tip Sheet** containing interviewing tips specifically oriented toward interviewing with judges.

Familiarize yourself with the judge. Review her or his professional biography from one of the judicial directories. Follow up with a search on Lexis®-Nexis® or WESTLAW®, or in a state Lawyers Weekly (for example, *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly*) to locate the judge's recent cases and decisions, as well as articles written by the judge that may have been published in a journal. Familiarizing yourself with the judge's opinions will provide you with the opportunity to discuss legal issues and may enable you to communicate your interest and resourcefulness.

The CDO keeps a binder containing a list of SULS alumni who have clerked at the federal and state levels. In addition to the binder, ask the judicial clerkship advisor or a recommender to identify faculty members who may know the judge. It is imperative that you do your homework before the interview.

Frequently, judges invite their current clerks to sit in on the interview or request that you meet with them before or after the judge meets with you. Clerks, as well as all of the members of the judge's staff, may have a significant effect on the judge's hiring decision, so keep in mind they will also be evaluating you.

Typical Questions a Judge Might Ask

Why are you interested in clerking?	What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
Why do you want to work with me/in this court?	Have you applied to other judges/courts?
What do you hope to gain from this experience?	What are your career goals and how does this job fit in?
What skills do you possess that make you an outstanding candidate for this job?	How would you approach a particular problem/case?
Describe the work you've done for your journal.	
Tell me about your grades/courses/professors.	

Some Questions You Might Ask the Judge

What is a typical work day?	What types of documents do clerks draft?
Do clerks sit with the Judge for criminal or civil trials?	How is work divided between the clerks?

Always go to the interview prepared with copies of your resume, cover letter, transcript, and writing sample.

Follow-up

Always send a thank you letter after meeting with a judge. You should also send thank you letters to the judge's clerks if you met with them. In your letters, reiterate your qualifications and interest or mention recent developments that may strengthen your candidacy (e.g., winning a moot court competition, securing a summer position with a particular law firm or government agency). For more information, see the CDO's online handout, *Thank You Notes*.

The Offer

Generally, one does not turn down an offer from a judge, unless it is to accept an offer from a different judge. Once you accept an offer, please notify all other courts that have open applications from you, as well as our office.

APPENDIX

Federal Court Overview

○ **The Supreme Court**

The Supreme Court of the United States consists of one Chief Justice and eight Associate Justices. Interested applicants may apply only after they have secured a clerkship, typically a clerkship in a federal court of appeals. <http://www.supremecourtus.gov>

○ **United States Court of Appeals**

There are twelve geographic judicial circuits, including the District of Columbia. Each state is assigned to a particular circuit. In addition, Puerto Rico is part of the First Circuit, the Virgin Islands are part of the Third Circuit and Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands are part of the Ninth Circuit. <http://www.uscourts.gov/courtlinks/#other>

The United States District Court for the Federal Circuit has a unique status. The jurisdiction of this court derives exclusively from the subject matter of the cases it hears, rather than from the geography of the parties. It hears appeals from district courts in patent cases and appeals of decisions from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and other administrative boards and agencies. It hears appeals from final decisions of the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, the U.S. Court of International Trade and the U. S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims as well as cases involving claims for money damages against the United States. <http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/about.html>

○ **United States District Courts**

Every state has at least one district, some have as many as four. There are also district courts in Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. Judges usually hire two law clerks for terms lasting one or two years. Law clerks to judges in these trial courts perform legal research and writing as well as observe trials and other court proceedings. <http://www.uscourts.gov/districtcourts.html>

○ **United States Bankruptcy Courts**

Federal courts have exclusive jurisdiction over bankruptcy matters. These trial courts hear a variety of bankruptcy-related matters ranging from individuals who can no longer afford to pay their creditors to large corporations that wish to reorganize. Law clerks have duties similar to that of district court law clerks. <http://www.uscourts.gov/bankruptcycourts.html>

○ **Other Courts**

- United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces <http://www.armfor.uscourts.gov>
- United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims <http://www.uscourts.cavc.gov>
- United States Court of Federal Claims <http://www.uscfc.uscourts.gov>
- United States Court of International Trade <http://www.cit.uscourts.gov>
- United States Tax Court <http://www.ustaxcourt.gov>

NOTE: All the above mentioned courts are listed on OSCAR, with the exception of the United States Supreme Court, the United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces and the United States Tax Court.

Selected State Judicial Clerkship Deadlines for the 2012-2013 Term

This is by no means a comprehensive list. Consider applying to other parts of the country! There are terrific opportunities in every state. Each state has its own deadlines – check the *Guide to State Judicial Clerkships* for more information.

COURT	DEADLINE
Connecticut	
Supreme Court	http://www.jud.ct.gov/external/supapp/lawclerkapps.html
Appellate Court	July 1, 2011 – August 19, 2011
Superior Court	July 1, 2011 – August 19, 2011 (Interviews held on Oct. 4 and 5 th .) Conducting interviews at OCI on Sept. 16. Online bids due on Aug. 24. (Only resume and transcript needed for OCI interview.)
Maine	
Supreme Court	Must be received by August 31, 2011 at 4pm (Interviews held in mid-September) http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/index.php?topic=Court_Jobs&id=227458&v=article
Superior Court	Must be received by September 2, 2011 at 4pm (Interviews held in early October and conducted en banc) http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/index.php?topic=Court_Jobs&id=227451&v=article
Business & Consumer Court	Must be received by September 2, 2011 at 4pm http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/index.php?topic=Court_Jobs&id=227451&v=article
District Court	Must be received by September 2, 2011 at 4pm http://www.maine.gov/tools/whatsnew/index.php?topic=Court_Jobs&id=244329&v=article
Massachusetts	
Supreme Judicial Court	August 22, 2011 – September 26, 2011 (Interviews & offers as early as Sept. 1) http://www.mass.gov/courts/sjc/law-clerk.html
Appeals Court	August 15, 2011 - September 30, 2011 (submit between these dates, interviews conducted on a rolling basis in September and October) http://www.mass.gov/courts/appealscourt/law_clerks.html
Superior Court	No application posted as of July 1, 2011
Land Court	No application posted as of July 1, 2011
Probate & Family Court	No application posted as of July 1, 2011
District Court	No application posted as of July 1, 2011
Juvenile Court	No application posted as of July 1, 2011
New Hampshire	
Supreme Court	March 14, 2011- August 1, 2011 (Interviews held in early September 2011) http://www.courts.state.nh.us/aoc/hr/clerkinfosupreme.htm
Superior Court	May 1, 2011 – August 15, 2011 (Interviews in early fall.) http://www.courts.state.nh.us/superior/sulawclerkprogram.htm
New Jersey	
	There are two application methods. 1) Beginning in April, email a cover letter and resume for inclusion in an electronic system for judges to search and review. Lawclerkresumes.mailbox@judiciary.state.nj.us 2) Apply individually to justices and judges. DO BOTH.
	The materials say apply directly to justices/judges beginning in early September. However, the appellate courts interview beginning in early September, so applications should be sent in July or early August. The trial court judges hire beginning in September, but some don't hire until the spring. For more information, see page 15 of state court clerkship insider's guide on our website.

<http://www.law.suffolk.edu/offices/career/handouts/documents/NALPStateCourtClerkshipsAnInsidersGuide.pdf>

Visit www.njcourts.com/lawclerks/ for up to date law clerk information.

For an excellent overview, see

<http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/lawclerks/LawClerkLetterWebApril2011.pdf>

Contains information on clerkships in the following courts:

**Supreme Court Appellate Division Assignment Judges (Trial Court)
Superior Court (Trial Court) Tax Court**

New York

Court of Appeals

Highest Appellate Court

<http://www.courts.state.ny.us/CTAPPS/clrkship.htm>

Two types of clerkships: Clerkships with individual judges- deadline varies by judge
Central Staff clerkships – apply between July 1 & Sept. 15
Interviews: August – November

Supreme Court, Appellate Division

Mid-level Appellate Court

<http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/appellatedivisions.shtml> Contact each division for application information.

First Division, Manhattan

<http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/ad1/index.shtml>

Second Division, Brooklyn

<http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/ad2/index.shtml>

Third Division, Albany

By September 21, 2011

<http://www.nycourts.gov/ad3/EmploymentOpportunities.htm>

<http://www.nycourts.gov/ad3/>

Fourth Division, Rochester

By October 15, 2011

<http://www.nycourts.gov/ad4/>

<http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/ad4/Clerk/Jobs/clerkship-2012.pdf>

Supreme Court

Trial Court

<http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/trialcourts.shtml>

Apply directly to Supreme Court and County court judges.

List of Judges Link: [http://www.nycourtsystem.com/Applications/JudicialDirectory/
www.nycourts.gov/careers/statewide/ComDivClerkshipProg.pdf](http://www.nycourtsystem.com/Applications/JudicialDirectory/www.nycourts.gov/careers/statewide/ComDivClerkshipProg.pdf)

Filed by January 31, 2011 last year's deadline, but ultimately not funded

<http://www.nycourts.gov/careers/statewide/specialprograms.shtml>

Legal Fellows Program

<http://www.nycourts.gov/careers/statewide/LegalFellows.pdf>

<http://www.nycourts.gov/careers/statewide/specialprograms.shtml>

Deadline February 19, 2011 last year's deadline, but ultimately not funded

Rhode Island

Supreme Court

March 2011 – Summer 2011

Justices interview on rolling basis, apply early. Interviews in summer, timing varies. <http://www.courts.ri.gov/Pages/Employment%20Opportunities.aspx>

Trial Court

<http://www.courts.ri.gov/PDF/lawclerk-posting.pdf>

Postmarked by October 14, 2011

Vermont

Supreme Court

<http://www.vermontjudiciary.org/JC/MasterPages/HR-Employment.aspx>

<http://www.vermontjudiciary.org/Employment/Supreme%20Judicial%20Clerkship%202011.pdf>

Deadline September 1, 2011 at 8:00am

Trial Court

Postmarked between September 1, 2011 – October 5, 2011, inclusive

<http://www.vermontjudiciary.org/Employment/Vt%20law%20clerk%20hiring%20info.2011.pdf>

Interviews for environmental court and trial court positions in November.

Judicial Clerkship Resources

**A cross section of resources and samples are available– the link appears on the Announcements page in Symplicity.*

Online:

Alliance for Justice, Judicial Selection Project www.afj.org

American Bar Association, Law Student Division

<http://www.abanet.org/lzd/studentlawyer/oct06/clerkships.shtml>

Clerkship Notification Blog <http://www.lawschoolclerkship.blogspot.com/>

Contains historical info only.

Federal Judges Law Clerk Hiring Plan

<http://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/lawclerk.nsf/Home?OpenForm>

Federal Judicial Center www.fjc.gov

(Click “Federal Judicial History,” then “Judges of the US Courts.”)

Federal Magistrate Judges : www.fedjudge.org

Guide to State Judicial Clerkships at <http://forms.vermontlaw.edu/career/guides>

user name/password (available from CDO)

Judicial Clerkships.Com <http://www.judicialclerkships.com>

Links to resources & forum/discussion list.

Judicial Nominations:<http://judiciary.senate.gov> (Click on “Nominations”)

<http://www.justice.gov/olp/judicialnominations112.htm>

Judicial Staff Directory available through Lexis®-Nexis®

Law Clerk Addict <http://www.lawclerkaddict.com/>

LEXIS®-NEXIS® www.lexisnexis.com Research judges, read opinions and news articles.

National Association for Law Placement (NALP) at www.nalp.org

National Center for State Courts <http://www.ncsc.org>

Links to state, federal, tribal, international court sites.

OSCAR (Online System for Clerkship Application and Review)

<https://oscar.uscourts.gov>

Lists federal clerkship vacancies and allows for online application for many but not all judges.

SULS Career Development Web page at www.law.suffolk.edu/offices/career

Click on Handouts/Resources and scroll to Judicial Clerkships

Tribal Courts

A Guide for Tribal Court Law Clerks and Judges

http://www.tribal-institute.org/download/Final_version_Guide.pdf

National American Indian Court Judges Association <http://naicja.org/>

National Indian Law Library <http://www.narf.org/nill/>

Tribal Courts <http://www.tribal-institute.org/lists/justice.htm>

Links to official tribal court websites.

Tribal Court Decisions <http://www.tribal-institute.org/lists/decision.htm>

Tribal Courts Resource Guide

<http://www.ncsc.org/Topics/Specialty-Courts/Tribal-Courts/Resource-Guide.aspx>

WESTLAW® www.westlaw.com Research judges, read opinions and articles.

Judicial Clerkship Resources (con.)

In the Career Development Library:

Almanac of the Federal Judiciary

The American Bench Judges of the Nation.

Behind the Bench: The Guide to Judicial Clerkships. Debra Strauss, 2002

Bureau of National Affairs Directory of State and Federal Courts, Judges and Clerks

Courting the Clerkship: Perspectives on the Opportunities and Obstacles for Judicial Clerkships 2000.NALP/ABA

Directory of State Court Clerks & County Courthouses

Federal Appellate Court Law Clerk Handbook. ABA Publishing

Federal-State Court Directory

The Guide to State Court Clerkships, Vermont Law School

Judging: A Book for Student Clerks, Louis J. Sirico, Jr., 2002

Judicial Yellow Book

The Legal Pages for Florida, Massachusetts, New York includes courts, maps, and judge biographies

New Jersey Directory of Minority Judges - New Jersey Judiciary

Suffolk Graduates who have done Federal Judicial Clerkships; State Clerkships

Suffolk University Law School Alumni in the Judiciary

United States Tribal Courts Directory, Third Ed. KF8224.C6 S39 2008

In law library, 6th floor, non-circulating

Resources for Researching Clerkships with Administrative Law Judges

For a list of agencies that have clerkships with Administrative Law Judges, go to

http://www.nalp.org/uploads/Federal_ALJ_Post_Graduate_Clerkships.xls

(link is also on the CDO website- click on Handouts/Resources and scroll down to the Judicial Clerkship Section)

Federal Administrative Resources

Alphabetical listing of **All U.S. departments and agencies**

http://www.usa.gov/Agencies/Federal/All_Agencies/F.shtml

Federal Administrative Law Contains links to federal agencies and resources.

<http://www.law.suffolk.edu/library/research/a-z/resguides/fedadminlaw.cfm>

Federal Agencies and Commissions (listed alphabetically)

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/independent-agencies.html>

LSU Libraries Federal Agencies Directory <http://www.lib.lsu.edu/gov/index.html>

Official US Executive Branch Web Sites <http://www.loc.gov/rr/news/fedgov.html>

The President's Cabinet <http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/cabinet.html>

United States Government Manual <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/gmanual/>

Lists the agencies of the legislative, judicial, and executive branches.

United States Government Print Material <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/>

University of Virginia Library: Government Information Resources

Administrative Decisions & Other Actions

http://www.lib.virginia.edu/govdocs/fed_decisions_agency.html

State Resources

Massachusetts Administrative Law Guide

<http://www.law.suffolk.edu/library/research/a-z/resguides/massadmin.cfm>

List of Massachusetts State Agencies

<http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=mg2subtopic&L=4&L0=Home&L1=State+Government&L2=Branches+%26+Departments&sid=massgov2&L3=All+Agencies>

Massachusetts Division of Administrative Law Appeals <http://www.mass.gov/dala>

The Division of Administrative Law Appeals (DALA) is an independent hearing agency which adjudicates appeals of decisions by state agencies.

State Administrative Procedure Act Mass. Gen. Laws ch.30A (2008)

Professional Associations

National Conference of the Administrative Law Judiciary (NCALJ), the voice of the administrative judiciary within the American Bar Association (ABA)

<http://www.abanet.org/jd/ncalj/home.html>

The **National Association of Administrative Law Judges** (NAALJ) is the largest private non-profit association of state, local and federal lawyer and non-lawyer Administrative Law Judges in the country. <http://www.naalj.org>.

American Bar Association, Section of Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice: Energy -- The Committee covers all aspects of energy law and practice.

<http://www.abanet.org/dch/committee.cfm?com=AL313000>

Adjudicatory Proceedings outside the Judicial Branch

Federal Judicial Center

http://www.fjc.gov/history/home.nsf/page/courts_special_fcotj.html

An additional resource is located on the website, in SULLS Community, the password protected section of the website.

<http://law.suffolk.edu/offices/career/search/login/joblist.cfm>

TIMELINE: Applying for a Judicial Clerkship

<p>Fall 2L/3LE</p> <p>Late winter 2L/3LE</p>	<p>You will need 2-3 letters of recommendation, at least one from a law professor. Build a strong relationship with at least one faculty member.</p> <p>Begin researching judicial clerkships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the resources in the Judicial Clerkship guide and CDO library. • Attend CDO programs on clerkships. • Meet with the judicial clerkship advisor. • Register on Symplicity's Judicial Clerkship Registration page.
<p>Early spring 2L/3LE</p> <p>May</p>	<p>Select writing sample and polish.</p> <p>Prepare application materials and review with judicial clerkship advisor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover letter • Resume • Transcript (check if official transcript needed) <p>Approach faculty member(s) for letters of recommendation. Consider approaching former employers for letters of recommendation.</p> <p>Begin building your application on OSCAR for federal clerkships.</p>
<p>Spring 2L/3LE</p> <p>Spreadsheet Deadline: June 29</p>	<p>Create Excel spreadsheets listing the judges/courts to which you are applying. You will need up to 3 separate spreadsheets:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. one for federal judges accepting applications through OSCAR, 2. one for federal judges accepting mailed applications, and 3. one for state judges/courts. <p>Email them to 1) the professor writing your recommendation letter, 2) Marie Fratto, faculty assistant (mfratto@suffolk.edu) or, if a clinical professor to Emmanuel Tellez (etellez@suffolk.edu), and 3) Margaret Talmers, Judicial Clerkship Advisor. (see n.1)</p>
<p>Spring 2L/3LE</p> <p>Late April/May</p> <p>Summer 2L/3LE</p>	<p>STATE COURT APPLICATIONS NOW DUE IN SOME STATES! Check deadlines.</p> <p>Approach faculty for letters of recommendation BEFORE you leave for the summer! Continue to apply to state courts during the summer- check the deadlines.</p>
<p>September 2</p>	<p>Mail any federal clerkship application packets to judges not accepting applications through OSCAR. Some students use an express mail service.</p> <p>Confirm that your OSCAR application is finalized so your materials will be submitted on time.</p>
<p>September 4, 2012 12:00PM (EDT)</p> <p>September 7, 2012 12:00PM (EDT)</p> <p>September 13, 2012 10:00AM (EDT)</p>	<p>Online federal applications submitted to the federal judges through OSCAR.</p> <p>First date and time that federal judges may begin scheduling interviews.</p> <p>First date and time that federal judges may conduct interviews and extend offers.</p>
<p>Fall 2012</p>	<p>Complete state court applications for courts with fall deadlines.</p>

Notes: 1. Letters of recommendation for spreadsheets submitted after the deadline will be completed after all timely submissions and in the order in which they were received. Spreadsheets containing information on state courts can continue to be submitted through the fall as their application deadlines approach.

Judicial Clerkship Application Checklist

RESEARCH

- Research state and federal court clerkship requirements and application deadlines.
- Research judges and courts, including Suffolk faculty and graduates who served as law clerks and graduates who are members of the judiciary.

APPROACH RECOMMENDERS

- Approach faculty members in spring for letters of recommendation. Ask for recommendations **BEFORE** you leave for the summer.
- Approach former employers as needed.
- Create up to three Excel spreadsheets containing information on each judge/court.
- Email the spreadsheets with your contact information to your professor, Marie Fratto, faculty assistant (mfratto@suffolk.edu) **or**, if a clinical professor to Emmanuel Tellez (etellez@suffolk.edu) and Margaret Talmers (mtalmers@suffolk.edu).

REGISTER

- Register on Symplicity's online Judicial Clerkship Registration page. *This step is required of all students applying for judicial clerkships.*

PREPARE APPLICATION MATERIALS

Resume

- Update your resume, highlighting research and writing experiences.
- Review with judicial clerkship advisor.

Cover Letter

- Draft cover letter(s) which expand upon relevant experiences and communicate your interest in clerking for the particular judge/court.
- Review with judicial clerkship advisor.

Letters of Recommendation

- Pick up letters of recommendation from faculty and employers for paper applications. Check to make sure electronic applications are uploaded, especially by employers.
- Include sealed letters with your application materials.

Transcript

- Check with Registrar so that appropriate honors are listed.
- Determine whether an official copy is needed.

Writing Sample

- Select a sample which shows your ability to analyze issues, use case law effectively and write clearly.
- Polish and prepare explanatory cover sheet.