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# Table of Contents

I) Why Clerk? ............................................................................................................................. 4  
   A) General Information ........................................................................................................ 4  
      1) The Function and Role of a Law Clerk ........................................................................... 4  
      2) Benefits of a Judicial Clerkship .................................................................................. 5  
      3) Common Myths Dispelled .......................................................................................... 5  

II) Types of Courts .................................................................................................................. 7  
   A) Appellate vs. Trial Courts ............................................................................................... 7  
   B) Federal Courts ................................................................................................................. 7  
      1) Supreme Court of the United States ........................................................................... 7  
      2) United States Circuit Courts of Appeals ................................................................... 7  
      3) United States District Courts ...................................................................................... 8  
      4) United States Magistrate Judges .............................................................................. 8  
   C) Federal Specialty Courts .................................................................................................. 8  
      1) United States Bankruptcy Court ............................................................................... 8  
      2) United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces .............................................. 8  
      3) United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit ........................................... 8  
      4) United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims .............................................. 9  
      5) United States Court of Federal Claims ...................................................................... 9  
      6) United States Court of International Trade .............................................................. 9  
      7) United States Tax Court ............................................................................................. 9  
      8) Administrative Law Judges ....................................................................................... 9  
   D) Arizona State Courts ....................................................................................................... 9  
      1) Arizona Supreme Court ............................................................................................. 10  
      2) Arizona Court of Appeals ......................................................................................... 10  
      3) Arizona Superior Courts ........................................................................................... 10  
   E) Other State Courts ......................................................................................................... 10  

III) Choosing Which Clerkship to Pursue ........................................................................... 11  
   A) Assessing Your Strengths/Qualifications ..................................................................... 11  
   B) Judicial Externships ....................................................................................................... 12  

IV) Researching Clerkship Opportunities and Judges ........................................................ 13  
   A) The Hearsay Book ........................................................................................................ 13  
   B) The Judicial Yellow Book ............................................................................................. 13  
   C) Career Center Judicial Clerkship Tables ..................................................................... 13  
   D) Shared/Online Resources ............................................................................................. 14  
      1) National Center for State Courts .............................................................................. 14  
      2) Vermont Law School Judicial Clerkship Guide ...................................................... 14  
      3) National Association of Legal Professionals Judicial Clerkships Page .................. 14  
      4) Brigham Young University Career Services Guidebook ....................................... 14
V) The Application Process ........................................................................................................... 15
   A) Preparing Your Application ............................................................................................... 15
      1) Cover Letter ..................................................................................................................... 15
      2) Resume ............................................................................................................................ 16
      3) Letters of Recommendation ........................................................................................... 17
      4) Writing Sample .................................................................................................................. 18
      5) Transcript .......................................................................................................................... 19
   B) Applying ............................................................................................................................. 19
      1) OSCAR .............................................................................................................................. 19
      2) Paper Applications ............................................................................................................ 20

VI) Preparing for the Interview .................................................................................................. 21
   A) Research ............................................................................................................................. 21
   B) InterviewStream ................................................................................................................. 21

VII) The Interview ..................................................................................................................... 22

VIII) Offers and Acceptance ...................................................................................................... 23
   A) Offers .................................................................................................................................... 23
   B) Exploding Offers ................................................................................................................... 23

IX) Appendix ................................................................................................................................ 24
   A) How to Address Justices and Judges in Your Correspondence .......................................... 25
   B) Cover Letter Outline ........................................................................................................... 27
   C) Sample Cover Letter .......................................................................................................... 28
   D) Sample Resume I .................................................................................................................. 29
   E) Sample Resume II .................................................................................................................. 30
   F) Outline of a Request for a Letter of Recommendation ....................................................... 31
   G) Sample Writing Sample Cover Page I .................................................................................. 33
   H) Sample Writing Sample Cover Page II ............................................................................... 34
   I) Questions You May Encounter During Interviews ............................................................ 35
   J) Sample Questions ................................................................................................................ 36
      1) For a Judge .......................................................................................................................... 36
      2) For a Current Clerk .......................................................................................................... 36
   K) ASU Law Faculty and Alumni Judicial Clerkships ............................................................... 37
I. WHY CLERK?

Judicial clerkships are some of the most prestigious and sought-after positions available to recent law graduates. Nationally, approximately 10% of all law graduates get placed as local, state or federal clerks. Here at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, that percentage has ranged from 9% to 16% of the graduating class over the past several years.

Clerking at the state or federal level has immediate- and long-term career benefits, regardless of what area of law the attorney wants to practice in, and even if the clerkship is in a different region from where the clerk eventually wants to practice. Clerks are sought after by law firms and other employers, and clerks often make connections that lead to future employment opportunities through their judges. Clerks gain valuable insight into the judicial mindset, particularly what is and what is not persuasive to a judge. Clerks also tend to have stronger research and writing skills, as well as a good understanding of persuasive oral advocacy.

Depending on the firm and the level of the clerkship, occasionally clerks are offered a hiring bonus (recent figures from out-of-state firms include $70,000 for a State Supreme Court Clerk and $300,000 for a U.S. Supreme Court Clerk, although bonuses are NOT the norm, and currently NO Phoenix firms are offering bonuses.) It is common for large firm employers to hold an associate offer open during a clerkship and to give the associates credit for their time clerking towards a partnership track. Sometimes firms will also pay a stipend to make up for the difference in salary during the clerkship period; however, this also is not the general rule in the Phoenix market.

A. General Information

1) The Function and Role of a Law Clerk

A law clerk is a law school graduate or licensed attorney that assists a judge with research, writing, administrative, and clerical tasks, which leaves the judge more time for presiding in court and critical decision-making. A law clerk has no statutorily defined duties, and a clerk’s responsibilities may differ from judge to judge. Clerks are usually assigned to do legal research, prepare bench memos, draft orders and opinions, edit and proofread the judge's orders and opinions, and verify citations. Many judges permit clerks to attend chambers conferences with attorneys, discuss pending cases with their clerks, and confer with them about decisions. Frequently, clerks also maintain the library, assemble documents, serve as the courtroom bailiff, and run errands for the judge. Clerks also attend hearings, oral arguments, and trials.

Generally, an appellate judge employs three law clerks and two secretaries. A district judge generally has two law clerks, a secretary, a courtroom deputy, and a court reporter. Bankruptcy judges usually have one law clerk and a secretary. Magistrates tend to have a clerical assistant and a secretary, although they may employ a law clerk instead.

Typically, judicial clerkships last one or two years. Some judges, however, employ “career clerks,” who work for the judge on a permanent basis. Most clerks are hired to assist a specific judge, although some courts employ “floating clerks” to assist multiple judges.
Although the application process is not complicated, it takes thought and thorough planning. The Career Center can advise you on the application process and direct you to several useful resources.

2) **Benefits of a Judicial Clerkship**
There are many rewards to a judicial clerkship. Although the experiences that a clerk has and where a clerk spends the majority of his or her time will vary depending on the level of the clerkship and the individual judge, clerkships almost universally offer:

- An impressive addition to one’s resume
- Lifelong relationships with at least one, and sometimes several judges
- Exposure to many different attorneys and judges which often leads to future employment opportunities
- Extensive research and writing experience coupled with personal feedback from an expert in the field
- A hands-on look at how a judge makes decisions and conducts litigation
- The opportunity to see what arguments persuade a judge and what policy concerns influence the law
- The ability to see what arguments fail to persuade a judge
- An opportunity to see and experience a wide variety of legal areas
- Increased legal knowledge and confidence in your decision-making abilities

3) **Common Myths Dispelled**
There are many misconceptions about judicial clerkships, and the benefits that they offer. Often times well-meaning attorneys and mentors pass along the same inaccurate information that they had been taught in law school. The best way to learn about what a clerkship is really like and how it can benefit your career in the short- and long-term is to talk to former clerks or members of the Career Center. Some of the most frequently-seen myths are addressed below:

**Myth:** I need to be in the top 10% to even be considered for a clerkship.

**Fact:** While many judges target or specify a certain class ranking. Many others look at the student or applicant as a whole. Although not as common, lower-ranking students have secured clerkships. Often times externing with a judge can lead to a clerkship, regardless of class ranking.
Judges frequently look at life experience, knowledge of a specific practice area, maturity, the ability to be a team player, good judgment, organizational skills, and a sense of inquisitiveness and collegiality in addition to grades and activities such as Law Journal.

**Myth:** As a judicial clerk, I will be stuck at a desk researching and writing.

**Fact:** Although researching and writing are a clerk’s main duties, they also attend judicial proceedings, settlement conferences, pre-trial conferences, oral arguments and other interesting and valuable activities. Many judges also like to discuss cases with their clerks and seek input from them, resulting in the clerk having an influence in the judge’s decision. Previous clerks have said that observing arguments and other hearings (and discussing them with the judge afterwards) was one of the most valuable aspects of their clerkship.

**Myth:** Clerking will be a waste of time because I [don’t want to be a litigator]; [want to pursue government practice]; [want to “begin my legal career right away”].

**Fact:** The fact is that clerkships can be valuable to any legal career because clerks learn to review and thoroughly analyze complex facts and laws. Both government agencies and firms view judicial clerkships as significant achievements. The prestige and experience associated with service as a law clerk broadens almost any attorney’s future employment opportunities. Furthermore, the skills gained from clerking are useful to attorneys across the board: the ability to issue-spot in an efficient manor is paramount to success in any practice area. Likewise, the ability to quickly and efficiently research an issue is universally beneficial, as are strong writing skills. Transactional attorneys can see the consequences of litigation and learn from the mistakes of others, and litigation attorneys can see what is and is not persuasive.

**Myth:** It takes way too much time to apply for a judicial clerkship.

**Fact:** While it is true that the most successful job applicants spend time tailoring and preparing their materials for any job prospect, applying for a clerkship is not as onerous as one might think. You probably already have many of the most-frequently requested documents for applying for a clerkship: your resume, undergraduate and law school transcripts, a writing sample, and a list of references. Usually the only additional preparation required is to draft cover letters and request letters of recommendation.
II. TYPES OF COURTS

A. Appellate vs. Trial Courts
Many appellate opinions are published, and become the law of the land within that particular jurisdiction for years or decades to come. As such, appellate clerks spend most of their time researching and writing. These clerks research statutory and case law, review factual issues, and work closely with judges in drafting, editing, and cite-checking opinions. They also assist judges in preparing for oral arguments. Appellate court clerkships are very beneficial to those who want to do appellate work.

Trial courts, on the other hand, primarily focus on fact-finding. Clerks will spend more of their time dealing with evidentiary issues, pretrial motions, discovery issues, settlement conferences, trials (and issues that arise during trial), judgments, and sentencing. As a result, trial court clerks have substantially more day-to-day interaction with attorneys and spend more time in the courtroom. As most trial court opinions are not published, and have limited precedential effect, the researching and writing component is less than it would be in an appellate clerkship. Trial court clerkships are very beneficial to those seeking a career in litigation and to those looking to network with a broad range of attorneys.

B. Federal Courts
There are many different options for clerking at the federal level. All federal clerkships tend to be competitive, with the Supreme Court and Circuit Courts of Appeals being the most competitive.

1) Supreme Court of the United States
The U.S. Supreme Court has ultimate (and largely discretionary) jurisdiction over all Federal Courts, as well as state court issues involving federal law. The Supreme Court also has original jurisdiction in a narrow range of cases.

U.S. Supreme Court clerkships are the most competitive, and clerks are almost never hired directly out of law school; U.S. Supreme Court Clerks almost always complete a Federal Court of Appeals Clerkship first. Certain courts (“feeder courts”) such as the Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, are considered more likely to lead to a U.S. Supreme Court clerkship. Only two Arizona State University alumni have clerked for a United States Supreme Court Judge. For more information on the U.S. Supreme Court, visit its website at www.supremecourts.gov.

2) United States Circuit Courts of Appeals
There are thirteen federal appellate courts: the First through Eleventh Circuits, the D.C. Circuit, and the Federal Circuit (hears appeals from the U.S. Claims Court, Patent, and Trademark Office, U.S. Court of International Trade, and U.S. District Court in patent infringement cases.) Each Circuit Court hears appeals from the District Courts within its jurisdiction, and appeals from federal administrative agencies. Appellate opinions are frequently published and become the precedent for all District Courts within the Circuit. The decisions of the Federal Circuit Courts of Appeals are often conclusive, as the U.S. Supreme Court only grants certiorari for a small percentage of the cases before it.
Keep in mind that although Circuit Courts are headquartered in one city, many judges’ chambers are in other cities and states throughout the Circuit. For example, while the Ninth Circuit mainly sits in San Francisco, several judges work out of the Federal Courthouse in downtown Phoenix.

These clerkships are also very competitive. The D.C. Circuit, the Second Circuit and the Ninth Circuit are generally considered to be the most competitive. For a map of circuits and links to circuit court websites, visit http://www.uscourts.gov/FederalCourts.aspx.

3) United States District Courts
The district courts are the federal court system’s trial courts, and hear civil and criminal federal law matters. There are ninety-four judicial districts across the country, with several hundred active judges. The District of Arizona courthouses are located in Phoenix and Tucson.

4) United States Magistrate Judges
Magistrates are appointed by a majority of district court judges, and serve either four- (part-time) or eight-year (full-time) terms. Magistrates handle pretrial matters including bond hearings and pretrial motions, issue search and arrest warrants, conduct settlements, and occasionally conduct minor trials. While some magistrates hire term clerks, most magistrates in Arizona employ career clerks. Arizona magistrates are mainly located in Phoenix and Tucson, although there are satellite offices in Yuma and Flagstaff as well.

C. Federal Specialty Courts
While clerking at any court has immediate and long-term career benefits, specialty court clerkships are most to attorneys who will practice in that court’s field. For applicants not planning to practice in a specialty field, a District Court or appellate court clerkship may be a better fit for their career goals.

1) United States Bankruptcy Court
The U.S. Bankruptcy Court has exclusive jurisdiction over bankruptcy cases. Bankruptcy Court Clerks review cases, draft memoranda of law and answer attorney questions regarding court procedures and policies. For more information, visit www.uscourts.gov/FederalCourts/Bankruptcy.aspx.

2) United States Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces
The Armed Forces Court of Appeals has worldwide jurisdiction over active-duty members of the armed forces, and anyone else subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

There are five civilian judges, who are appointed to 15-year terms by the President. The Court sits in Washington, D.C.

3) United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit
The Federal Circuit Court of Appeals has jurisdiction over international trade, government contracts, and patents. It also hears appeals from the Federal Claims, International Trade, and
Veterans’ Claims Appellate Courts. The majority of its cases involve administrative law, intellectual property, and monetary damages against the United States Government.

The Federal Circuit Court of Appeals sits in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit http://www.cafc.uscourts.gov/.

4) United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims
The Veterans Claims Court of Appeals reviews decisions by the Board of Veterans’ Appeals.

This court seats seven permanent judges, and two temporary expansion judges. It is headquartered in Washington, D.C., but is authorized to sit anywhere in the United States.

5) United States Court of Federal Claims
The Court of Federal Claims hears primarily money claims founded upon the Constitution, federal statutes, executive regulations or contracts with the United States.

There are currently 17 judges on the Federal Claims bench, which sits in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit www.uscfc.uscourts.gov.

6) United States Court of International Trade
The Court of International Trade hears civil actions arising out of United States customs and international trade laws.

There are currently 14 judges on the International Trade bench, which is located in downtown Manhattan, New York City. For more information, visit www.cit.uscourts.gov.

7) United States Tax Court
The Tax Court addresses suits regarding disputes in tax deficiency, as well as estate and gift taxes, and other tax-related issues. There are 19 judges appointed to the tax court, and each judge usually employs three clerks. These clerks receive the experience of a trial court within the specialized field of tax. The Tax Court usually seeks applicants that are within the top third of their class, and who have taken and excelled in tax-related courses. Many clerks are hired while enrolled in an LL.M. Tax Program. For more information, visit www.ustaxcourt.gov.

8) Administrative Law Judges
The federal government employs over 1,000 judges in various administrative agencies who hear cases pertaining to their particular agency. Some of these judges employ law clerks.

D. Arizona State Courts
Many Arizona Judges actively seek out Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law and have a close working relationship with the Law School.

In recent years, the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals have been going back and forth as to who makes their offers to students first. There is currently discussion of a single hiring period
for the Arizona District Court, Supreme Court, and Courts of Appeals, but no agreement has been reached to date.

1) **Arizona Supreme Court**
There are five Justices on the Arizona Supreme Court, which sits in Phoenix. For information on the court, visit [www.supreme.state.az.us](http://www.supreme.state.az.us). For information on the Justices, visit [www.supreme.state.az.us/azsupreme/justices.htm](http://www.supreme.state.az.us/azsupreme/justices.htm).

2) **Arizona Court of Appeals**
There are 22 judges on the Arizona Court of Appeals: sixteen judges are located in Phoenix (Division 1) and six in Tucson (Division 2). For more information on the Arizona Court of Appeals, Division 1, visit [www.azcourts.gov/coa1/Home.aspx](http://www.azcourts.gov/coa1/Home.aspx). For information on Division 2, visit [www.appeals2.az.gov](http://www.appeals2.az.gov).

3) **Arizona Superior Courts**
Generally the Arizona Superior Courts do not offer traditional judicial law clerk positions; some courts may hire “Law Clerks” or “Law Trained Bailiffs,” but most of these positions are filled by recent graduates who are planning on applying for that county’s prosecution or indigent defense offices as soon as openings come available. These positions do not offer the prestige or research and writing experience that higher-level courts do.

E. **Other State Courts**
ASU Law students can clerk at any state court in the country and are not limited to the Arizona state court system. The deadlines and procedures for individual state courts vary widely. To learn more about state courts across the country, visit the website for the National Center for State Courts at [http://www.ncsc.org/Information-and-Resources/Browse-by-State/State-Court-Websites.aspx](http://www.ncsc.org/Information-and-Resources/Browse-by-State/State-Court-Websites.aspx), or the National Association of Legal Professionals (NALP) Judicial Clerkship Page at [www.nalp.org/judicialclerkships](http://www.nalp.org/judicialclerkships). You can also research the timing guidelines for various state courts by visiting the Vermont Judicial Clerkship Guide, a password-protected website that can be accessed through Symplicity.
III. CHOOSING WHICH CLERKSHIP TO PURSUE

When choosing a court, applicants should consider two main factors: the type and location of the court. It is important to carefully research courts before applying. Applicants should apply to clerkships unless are certain that they will accept the clerkship if offered. Unless an applicant has already accepted another offer, turning down a clerkship offer reflects poorly on both the applicant and the applicant’s law school. Rejecting a clerkship offer can not only hurt future applicants applying to that judge, but also the applicant, who may not be considered by other judges in the future.

One of your first tasks should be to identify those clerkships that you think would best fit your needs and interests. There are hundreds of judicial clerkship opportunities varying by geographical location and type of court. It is up to you to narrow down the field to the ones that would work for you. The Career Center can assist you with the process.

In order to target the clerkship that is best for you, you may want to consider the following three questions:

- What kind of court would most interest me? State or federal? Trial or appellate? Specialty court (e.g. tax, bankruptcy)?
- What geographical area should I target?
- What are my qualifications/strengths?

Your odds are increased when you target your applications to courts that best match your interest areas, and for which you are the most qualified. For example, an applicant with a strong financial background is more likely to be considered for a Bankruptcy Court Clerkship. Similarly, an applicant interested in appellate work would be better served by applying to a State Supreme Court or Court of Appeals, as opposed to a Federal District (trial) Court.

A. Assessing Your Strengths/Qualifications

While there is no penalty for applying to courts that look for higher qualifications than you possess, targeting your efforts can save valuable time needed for academics, current internships/externships, and clinics.

While a strong GPA or class ranking increases your chances for a clerkship, many judges look at applicants as a whole. In other words, don’t think you cannot apply simply because you are not at the top of your class. Participation in extracurricular activities, life experience, specialized knowledge of specific practice, previous experience as a judicial intern/extern, maturity as an individual, ability to be a team player and exercise good judgment, strong organizational skills and a sense of inquisitiveness and collegiality are all considered along with grades and journal experience.

**Bottom line: consider applying for a clerkship, even if you are not at the top of your class!**
B. Judicial Externships

One of the best ways to research a particular court (which also increases your chances of securing a judicial clerkship later) is to extern for a judge during the school year or over the summer. Externs often perform the same duties that clerks do, including legal research, preparing memos and drafting orders, writing draft opinions and stipulations, assembling documents, and reviewing motions, memoranda, briefs, and other documents submitted to the court. Externships give students the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities to and build a relationship with a judge prior to applying for a clerkship. Externs sometimes work for multiple judges, and often times meet most of the judges sitting on a certain bench.

Externship applications are accepted through the Student Services Office early in the spring and fall semesters. Consult the externship handbook or externship website (www.law.asu.edu/centersprograms/CentersPrograms/ExternshipProgram.aspx) for additional information.
IV. RESEARCHING CLERKSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND JUDGES

Although research is necessary for any job application, it is particularly important due to the unique nature of judicial clerkships and their application process. Not only do applicants need to fully understand the duties of the position (which can be vary greatly between judges on the same court), but they need to research the judge as well. The close working relationship between the judge and clerk demands a good “fit,” not only in working styles but in ideology. A clerk who strongly opposes a judge’s legal and world view will find it difficult or impossible to work well in that position.

In addition to the Career Center website (www.law.asu.edu/careerservices/CareerServices.aspx), the following resources may prove useful:

A. The Hearsay Book
The Hearsay Book is a collection of information and intelligence that has been gathered about specific judges. Because of the nature of the information and how it is collected, there may be a lot of information about a judge, or none at all. The information included may include surveys from former clerks and applicants, media articles, and publications. As with any independent resource, the sources of this information and their perspectives should be considered. The Hearsay Book is located in the Career Center, and can be viewed by making an appointment with any Career Center Staff Member.

B. The Judicial Yellow Book
The Judicial Yellow Book is a directory of federal and state judges, law clerks, judicial assistants, and staff members. It is updated on a semi-annual basis, and includes information such as a judge’s date of birth, education, career history, appointment information, and professional memberships. The Judicial Yellow Book is located in the Career Center Library and can be viewed by making an appointment with any Career Center Staff Member.

C. Career Center Judicial Clerkship Tables
The Career Center maintains two different Judicial Clerkship tables: The Arizona Federal Courts Contact Information Table, which has general contact information for the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Judges based in Arizona, as well as the Judges that sit on the United States District and Bankruptcy Courts for the District of Arizona, and the Annual Hiring Information Table, which provides detailed information about the Arizona Supreme Court’s and Court of Appeals’ hiring information. The Hiring Information Table will be updated each year once the Courts release their hiring information, which usually occurs in the spring.

Please note that while every effort is made to ensure that the Judicial Clerkship Tables contain up-to-date and accurate information, some errors may occur if judges do not release updated information about opportunities or changes in their requirements. Double-check all information, and please alert the Career Center of any changes.
D. **Shared/Online Resources**

1) **National Center for State Courts**

   Contains links to various judicial branches, including administrative offices of the courts. Not every court is included, and some links may be out-of-date.

   The NCSC also contains links to clerkship openings for each state:

   As well as various legal and quasi-legal job openings:

2) **Vermont Law School Judicial Clerkship Guide**
   www.vermontlaw.edu/careers/judicial-clerkship-guide

   The Vermont Law School publishes a guide with application guidelines and hiring timetables for state courts across the country. This password-protected site can be accessed at www.forms.vermontlaw.edu/careerguides/. The password is available on the Career Center webpage:

3) **National Association of Legal Professionals Judicial Clerkships Page**
   www.nalp.org/judicialclerkships

   The NALP website contains information for various state clerkships, as well as information about hiring practices and tips on preparing for a clerkship application.

4) **Brigham Young University Career Services Guidebook**
   www.law2.byu.edu/site/career-services/judicial-clerkships-guidebook

   BYU’s Career Services guide for clerkship applications; contains similar information to this handbook.
V. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Recognize that applying for a clerkship is different from applying to any other legal employer. Understanding these differences can play a major role in an applicant’s success. Also note that this Handbook is an overview of the clerkship position and hiring process. Individual judges may differ significantly in the duties they expect their clerks to perform and as to the hiring process they follow. Should information in the Handbook differ from the instructions given by a particular judge, always follow the judge’s specific instruction. Apply the same rule to information you obtain from previous clerks, internet searches, the Hearsay Book, and any other research resource that you may utilize.

Judges are seeking law clerks with strong research and writing skills. All application materials must be of professional quality, and impeccably proofread. Likewise, your resume and cover letter will also be examples of your writing ability, not just your writing sample. Because judges receive so many applications from highly qualified students, any mistakes will likely result in your application being discarded without further review.

A. Preparing Your Application

Typically, a judicial clerkship application requires a resume, cover letter, transcript(s), writing sample, and letters of recommendation. Preparing/obtaining each item in advance will make it easier to assemble your application packet once a position opens, particularly since a position may only be posted for as little as one week.

Although the Career Center has excellent handbooks (available in hard copy at the Career Center, or online at www.law.asu.edu/careerservices/CareerServices/Resources.aspx) which discuss cover letters and resumes in-depth, this book will go over the basics and issues specific to judicial clerkship applications.

When submitting hard copies of application materials, the resume, cover letter, and any other documents should be printed on high quality paper, and checked to ensure they printed cleanly and properly.

1) Cover Letter

A cover letter is the judge’s first impression of your writing ability. It should be no longer than one page, and should:

1) Demonstrate your interest in the clerkship and your reasons for wanting to clerk

2) Explain why you are applying to a particular court/judge/geographical region

3) Expand upon your qualifications and experiences listed in your resume

4) Demonstrate how your skills fit the requirements of the clerkship
Avoid conclusory sentences such as “I have excellent research and writing skills” which do nothing to demonstrate your abilities. Instead, provide examples of experiences that demonstrate that you have developed the skills in question. A better example would be “As a Gotham District Attorney Law Clerk, I researched and drafted hundreds of motions, responses, memos to the court, and internal memoranda for felony criminal cases. Oftentimes attorneys dropped off assignments right before the deadline, and only briefly reviewed the content before filing them with the Court.” The objective of a cover letter is to show, not tell.

Take special care to properly address cover letters using the correct salutation (Justice/Judge/Magistrate.) For more information see the “How to Address Justices and Judges in Your Correspondence” appendix which is included on page 25 of this Handbook. An outline of the proper cover letter format can be found on page 27.

2) Resume
The purpose of a resume is to outline your previous experience and demonstrate that your skill-set matches the requirements for the position you are applying for. Consider keeping a “master resume” that describes all of your education, experience, and activities in full detail, even if it’s five or six pages long. You can then cut out the irrelevant portions, and emphasize what is most applicable to the job for which you are applying. The resume may be longer than one page, but should not go over two pages. Judicial clerkship resumes should also include:

1. An emphasis on research/writing experience

2. Journal membership and/or moot court participation in the “Honors” section

3. Research Assistant/Teaching Assistant positions in the “Experience” section

4. Any judicial externship experiences, even if you have been accepted for a position but have not started it
   a. If describing an upcoming position, make sure you use future tense in describing the duties
   b. For upcoming positions, often times it is best to use the job description from the job posting

5. GPA, class rank (if beneficial—you might not emphasize a lower GPA or ranking), and an A- or above Legal Research Writing Grade

6. Descriptions that showcase skills valuable to the job you are applying for

7. With every piece of information you include in a resume, ask yourself “How does this help me get the job I’m applying for?” If the answer is “It doesn’t,” take that piece of information out and replace it with something that does.

8. An interests section. Because of how closely judges and clerks work together, most judges are as interested in “fit” as they are in credentials. Interests can serve as an
icebreaker during an interview, and show the applicant’s human side. Make sure that interests:

a. Are something that can spark conversation
b. That you are legitimately knowledgeable and passionate about
c. Are not polarizing, or if they are, are used appropriately given the audience

Sample resumes can be found on pages 29 and 30 of this Handbook.

3) **Letters of Recommendation**
Start gathering letters of recommendation during the spring semester of your second year. A good rule of thumb is to have at least two faculty recommenders, and if possible your legal writing professor. Also, if you extern for a judge, that judge’s letter will carry a great deal of weight. Additionally, an externship judge can discuss your performance in a position with duties that are similar or identical to a clerk’s duties.

Ask each recommender if they feel that they know you well enough to write a strong letter of recommendation. This gives the recommender an “out” when they might otherwise write a lukewarm letter because they feel obligated. You should have some sort of relationship with the recommender—getting a good grade in a class isn’t enough. Work on building these relationships with professors through interaction during office hours or at events, taking a small seminar or clinical class, writing a paper for the professor, or working as a Research/Teaching Assistant.

Discuss your law school performance with each recommender, and provide them with a copy of your resume so that they know your full background and experience. If your GPA or class rank is not as high as you would like, your recommenders can highlight other experiences—such as moot court or a clinic—to show that you are a strong candidate. Give your recommenders a copy of your resume and writing sample to review.

Other attributes that can be emphasized in a letter of recommendation:

I. Critical reasoning
II. Issue spotting and legal analysis
III. Oral and written communication
IV. Punctuality and time management
V. Teamwork and contribution to group working environments
VI. Ability to understand and articulate complex concepts and minute distinctions
VII. Multitasking skills and the ability to shift from one project to the next
VIII. Ability to work well under pressure
Letters should be addressed individually to each judge, as opposed to “To whom it may concern.”

A guide to requesting a letter of recommendation is included on 31 of this Handbook.

4) **Writing Sample**
Most judges require a writing sample as part of the initial application. The sample should showcase your ability to analyze a case from all perspectives, to understand and explain complex legal issues, and to reach and defend a logical conclusion. If possible, use a sample that addresses both legal and factual questions. The best samples tend to be real-world documents from an externship or summer job, as opposed to a writing class assignment—these assignments should only be used if no other samples are available.

The average writing sample is between 5 and 10 pages. Use this as a general rule unless the judge specifies a minimum/maximum/specific page length. If a writing sample is too long, you may choose to submit a portion of the original.

Consider your audience when choosing between writing samples. You may choose a sample that addresses issues that the Court has recently or regularly deals with or that the judge has strong feelings about. Memos, motions, or responses written for an externship or summer positions can showcase your legal reasoning and analysis of real-world situations (make sure you get your employer’s permission to use work product, even if it has been made public, and that any confidential or privileged information is redacted.) Journal articles can highlight your intellectual side and promote the fact that your work has been published.

Your legal writing professor may be helpful when deciding which sample to use. However your professor will not edit your writing sample for you. Some courts will not accept journal articles or other materials that have been edited by others, or may require that you describe any edits or revisions that have been made.

A writing sample should include a cover page, which may include:

- Your name and contact information (you can use the same header as your resume and cover letter)
- A description of the work submitted
- A *very* brief summary of the facts (if you omit the statement of facts in order to meet a page limit, you may expand this summary somewhat, but be concise)
- A description of any edits/modifications done by others, or, if the potential employer requires that the sample be unedited, a statement indicating that it is unedited
- If applicable, a statement that you have an employer’s/client’s permission to use the sample, and that any confidential or privileged information has been redacted
Sample writing sample cover pages can be found on pages 33 and 34 of this Handbook.

5) Transcript
Most clerkship applications require a law school transcript, and some require undergraduate transcripts. Unofficial transcripts may be used unless a judge requires official transcripts. Transcripts can be requested by logging into your My ASU account (www.my.asu.edu). Unofficial transcripts may be printed directly, and official transcripts can be sent electronically, mailed to the student/graduate, sent directly to a selected recipient, or picked up in-person. Transcripts picked up in-person must be picked up at University Registrar Services, located in the Student Services Building (SSV), room 140. Transcripts will be available after 11:30 a.m., one business day after they are requested. There is a $15.00 fee for official transcripts.

B. Applying
Judges will either accept online applications, paper applications, or both. Online applications for federal judges can be submitted through the Online System for Clerkship Application and Review (OSCAR), or hard copies can be sent directly to the judge’s chambers. For Arizona judges, the Career Center oftentimes will assist in submitting application materials. Check each clerkship’s posting for instructions on how to submit your materials for that position.

1) OSCAR
www.oscar.uscourts.gov/

OSCAR is an application tool used by federal judges for posting clerkship vacancies and reviewing applications. Note that OSCAR only contains information on federal judges, and only includes those judges who opt-in to the OSCAR hiring system. Judges may use OSCAR to accept applications online for clerkship or staff attorney openings, to inform applicants of openings requiring paper applications, or to inform clerkship-seekers that they are not currently accepting applications. Currently, rising 2Ls can register for OSCAR with read-only access, and second year students can have full access.

OSCAR is a tool geared more towards judges than applicants, which results in some inefficiencies and user-unfriendliness. Issues such as automatic and random password resets and difficulties in uploading letters of recommendation are common. If you cannot resolve an issue through the website or by contacting OSCAR support, contact the Career Center Judicial Clerkship Director.

Judges who have posted openings at any time will have their last name as a hyperlink to a hiring information page; this does not mean that they have current openings, though. Often times positions will appear open and even list that they are accepting applications, but once you open the judge’s page, you will find that the position is “filled” or “expired.” Using the “available” checkbox as a search option can help weed out closed listings that otherwise appear to be open.

Submitted applications are immediately released to judges, many of whom review applications on a rolling basis. Even though an application period may be nine months to a year long, judges often close the vacancy if they find a good applicant. Unless there is a specific reason to wait, it is better to apply early.
OSCAR requires recommenders to create a separate account in order to upload their letters of recommendation. Many members of the ASU faculty and staff are registered, but some are not. Outside recommenders will need to register for an account.

2) **Paper Applications**
Paper applications must be mailed or delivered directly to a judge’s chambers. Make sure that you use high quality paper, and that you check each page carefully for printing errors, smudges, etc. If you mail your materials, get a tracking number so that you can confirm the materials arrived, and make sure you send them early enough to avoid shipping delays.

For certain applications, the Career Center will assist you in printing and mailing your materials. Contact the Career Center if you have any questions about submitting your materials in hard copy.
VI. PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

A. Research
Research both the judge with whom you are you are interviewing and the court where the judge sits. You should be able to intelligently discuss the judge’s past work, as well as current and recent issues before the court. Make sure to search for:

- The judge’s published opinions, with an emphasis on high-profile decisions and cases within the last year
- The judge’s dissenting opinions, which often showcase the judge’s views, philosophy, and what issues are important to him/her
- Articles or speeches by or about the judge
- Recent opinions (within the last year) published by the court you are applying to
- Current/upcoming cases, which can often be found on a court’s website

Talk to former clerks or externs, who will have information about the interview and selection process, the judge’s relationship with his/her clerks, and the workplace environment.

Review the Hearsay Book, which may contain information including surveys from past clerks, published articles, and other information. The Hearsay Book may be reviewed by making an appointment with any counselor.

B. InterviewStream
InterviewStream (www.law-asu.interviewstream.com) gives a series of interview questions, and records you while answering. You can then distribute this interview for review and critique. Your career counselor can review your mock interview, and in the past applicants have gone a step further and reached out to alumni and former clerks for additional feedback.
VII. THE INTERVIEW

The interview is your opportunity to convince the judge that, of all the qualified applicants, you are the one who should be selected for the clerkship. Interviews vary widely from court-to-court, and from judge-to-judge. Interviews may be anywhere from an hour to a half-day long. There may be separate interviews with current clerks and the judge.

Because of the nature of clerkship offers, try to schedule your interviews in order of interest if possible. This increases the likelihood that you will receive an offer from your first-choice judges before interviewing or receiving offers from judges who are lower in your rankings.

As with any interview, arrive appropriately early, dress professionally and conservatively, and be polite and professional with everyone that you meet. Everyone you encounter as a part of the hiring/interview process will weigh in on the hiring decision. Highly-qualified (and front-running) candidates have been rejected because they weren’t respectful to receptionists or other staff members.

You should prepare an agenda of points that you want to convey to the judge, and integrate those points into your answers. For example, if the judge asks you about your law school experiences, you can discuss a research project as a way to highlight your research and writing skills.

A list of commonly-seen interview questions can be found on page 35 of this Handbook.

At the end of the interview, you should have several questions prepared for the judge and the clerks. One of the biggest red flags for an interviewer is an interviewee having no intelligent questions when asked. Even if you ask questions throughout your discussion, hold one or two in reserve for the very end. Suggested questions to ask during a clerkship interview can be found on page 36 of this handbook.

After your interview, send hand-written thank you notes to everyone present at the interview.

If, after an interview, you decide that you are no longer interested in clerking for a judge, contact that judge and withdraw your name for consideration.

For additional information on interviewing, see the Interview Handbook, available in hard copy at the Career Center, or online at: www.law.asu.edu/careerservices/CareerServices/Resources.aspx
VIII. OFFERS AND ACCEPTANCE

Judicial clerkships differ drastically from other legal jobs when it comes to making and accepting job offers. As such, applicants should have a plan in place for different contingencies as they apply and interview. You should decide which clerkship(s) you would accept, what your order of preference is, and have any discussions with significant others before an offer is made. It is better to withdraw your application than to reject an offer.

| As a rule of thumb, don’t apply to a clerkship unless you are willing to accept it if offered. |
| Rejecting an offer should almost always be reserved for a change in circumstances. |

A. Offers

Judges may extend offers at the end of an interview, or within a day of the interview. Frequently the applicant may only be given a brief amount of time to consider an offer, or the judge may ask for an immediate response. Typically a judge will only give an applicant 24 to 48 hours at most to consider an offer. You may request additional time, but be prepared to explain the reasons for your request. It is not appropriate to request more time because you are hoping to receive a better offer.

While you are not required to accept the first offer you receive, many applicants do so rather than risk not receiving subsequent offers.

B. Exploding Offers

Some judges will make an offer to one applicant that will be rescinded if, during the time that the applicant is considering the position, the judge interviews and makes an offer to another candidate. Such offers are known as “exploding offers” because they can lapse at any time. An exploding offer requires a prompt (if not immediate) response.
IX. APPENDIX

A. How to Address Justices and Judges in Your Correspondence
B. Cover Letter Outline
C. Sample Cover Letter
D. Sample Resume I
E. Sample Resume II
F. Outline of a Request for a Letter of Recommendation
G. Sample Writing Sample Cover Page I
H. Sample Writing Sample Cover Page II
I. Questions You May Encounter During Interviews
J. Sample Questions
   1) For a Judge
   2) For a Current Clerk
K. ASU Law Faculty and Alumni Judicial Clerkships
A. How to Address Justices and Judges in Your Correspondence

When addressing letters to a judge, the most frequent mistakes are confusing “Judge” and “Justice,” and failing to address a Chief Judge/Justice as such.

The format you should use is as follows:

The Honorabl[e \[First Name Middle Initial Last Name\]]
[Chief Judge/Justice (if applicable),] [Name of Court]
[Name of Courthouse (if applicable)]
[Street Address]
[City, State, Zip]

Dear [Chief] Judge/Justice/Magistrate [Last Name]:

For example:
The Honorable John G. Roberts, Jr. The Honorable Antonin Scalia
Chief Justice, Supreme Court of the United States Supreme Court of the United States
1 First Street, NE 1 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20543 Washington, DC 20543

Dear Chief Justice Roberts:

Most courts’ website includes a contact page where they list each judge’s address. Consult the court’s website or job posting to make sure that you are using the correct title for the court, that the judge’s contact information is up-to-date, and that you include all relevant information that may not be listed in other sources, such as suite/office numbers.

- United States Supreme Court:
  www.supremecourt.gov/contact/contactus.aspx

- United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit:
  www.ca9.uscourts.gov/library/directory/

- United States District Court for the District of Arizona

- Arizona Supreme Court

- Arizona Court of Appeals, Division One

- Arizona Court of Appeals, Division Two
  www.apppeals2.az.gov/courtInformation.cfm
The following table provides a reference guide for Courts that Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law students frequently apply to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ADDRESS</th>
<th>SALUTATION</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEDERAL COURTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States Courts of Appeals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Chief Judge            | The Honorable Sidney R. Thomas  
Chief Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit  
P.O. Box 31478  
Billings, MT 59107 | Dear Chief Judge Thomas:                                               |
| Circuit Judge          | The Honorable Mary H. Murguia  
United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit  
401 West Washington Street  
Phoenix, AZ 85003 | Dear Judge Murguia:                                                   |
| **United States District Courts** |                                                                      |                                 |
| Chief Judge            | The Honorable Raner C. Collins  
Chief Judge, United States District Court  
Evo A. DeConcini U.S. Courthouse  
405 West Congress Street, Suite 5190  
Tucson, AZ 85701 | Dear Chief Judge Collins:                                             |
| District Judge         | The Honorable Susan R. Bolton  
United States District Court  
Sandra Day O’Connor U.S. Courthouse, Suite 522  
401 West Washington Street, SPC 50  
Phoenix, AZ 85003 | Dear Judge Bolton:                                                    |
| **ARIZONA COURTS**     |                                                                          |                                 |
| Arizona Supreme Court  |                                                                          |                                 |
| Chief Justice          | The Honorable Scott Bales  
Chief Justice, Arizona Supreme Court  
1501 W. Washington St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85007 | Dear Chief Justice Bales:                                            |
| Justice                | The Honorable Justice Robert M. Brutinel  
Arizona Supreme Court  
1501 W. Washington St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85007 | Dear Justice Brutinel:                                               |
| Arizona Court of Appeals |                                                                      |                                 |
| Chief Judge            | The Honorable Diane M. Johnsen  
Chief Judge, Arizona Court of Appeals, Division One  
1501 W. Washington St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85007 | Dear Chief Judge Johnsen                                              |
| Judge                  | The Honorable Kent E. Cattani  
Arizona Court of Appeals, Division One  
1501 W. Washington St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85007 | Dear Judge Cattani:                                                   |
B. Cover Letter Outline

[Date]

The Honorable [Name]
[Court Name]
[Street Address]
[City, State Zip]

Dear [Judge/Justice/Magistrate Last Name]:

The first paragraph introduces you to the judge and explains your interest in the clerkship. You should explain why you are interested in clerking with the judge’s court, and for this judge specifically. If you are applying out of state, explain your interest in the geographic area and any connections.

The second paragraph establishes your value to the judge. Demonstrate how your education and work experiences make you a good fit for the position. Do not just repeat your resume, and do not just make conclusory statements; instead, expand upon your experiences in a way that shows the judge that you are the best candidate for the clerkship. Instead of saying “I have excellent research and writing skills,” give an example: “As an Intern with the Smallville District Attorney’s Office, I researched obscure nuisances in Kansas’s concealed weapons statute—specifically whether concealing a butcher knife in public requires a concealed weapons permit. As a result of the Response that I drafted, the Court ruled in the State’s favor, allowing crucial evidence to be admitted at trial.”

The third paragraph lists your references, states what you want to happen next, and thanks the judge for his/her consideration. Let the judge know that you are available for an interview at his/her convenience. If you are applying to an out-of-town clerkship, let the judge know specific dates that you are available or that you will be in the area.

Sincerely,

Clerkship Applicant

Clerkship Applicant

Enclosures
C. Sample Cover Letter

January 26, 2015

The Honorable Rebecca Berch  
Arizona Supreme Court  
1501 W. Washington St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Justice Berch:

Last March I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to hear you speak at a Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law Judicial Clerkship Panel. Your presentation reaffirmed my desire to clerk at the Arizona Supreme Court. I am a lifelong resident of Arizona, and plan to take the Arizona Bar and practice in the Phoenix area in the field of commercial litigation.

Not only have I excelled academically, but I have been an active participant in a number of extracurricular activities, both within and outside of law school. I am currently volunteering with the Arizona State University’s Victim’s Assistance Program, where I have spent hours interacting with and advising victims of crime. This has given me a real sense of satisfaction and the feeling that I have contributed to our legal community. In addition to my extracurricular activities, I have developed strong research and writing skills. As the current Editor of the Arizona Law Journal, I am responsible for the final manuscript review and for personnel management. This past summer, I worked as a Summer Associate for Smith & Jones, where I researched commercial litigation issues and drafted memorandums regarding my findings. My academic training and the skills I have gained will allow me to make an immediate contribution to your chambers.

You will be receiving letters of reference on my behalf from Professors Johnson and Richards, as well as John Smith, my supervising attorney at Smith & Jones. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I hope to have the opportunity to speak with you further about my qualifications.

Respectfully,

John Doe

John Doe

Enclosures
D. Sample Resume I

NAME
Street Address · City, State and Zip Code · Telephone · Email

EDUCATION
Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
Candidate for J.D., May 20__
GPA: __ Rank: Top 15%

Honors: Jurimetrics: The Journal of Law, Science, and Technology
Winner, Jenckes Cup Closing Argument
Willard H. Pedrick Scholar

Activities: President, Women’s Law Student Association
Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity

Northwestern University, Chicago, IL
B.S. Communication Studies, May 20__
G.P.A. 3.5

Honors: George M. Sergeant Award, Recipient chosen by faculty for excellence in Communication Studies

EXPERIENCE
Smith & Jones, Phoenix, AZ
Law Clerk
September 20__-Present
Research and write memoranda in areas of personal injury, medical malpractice and family law. Attend client and interoffice conferences and depositions. Assist attorneys at trial.

State Farm Insurance, Phoenix, AZ
Law Intern
Summer 20__
Negotiated and settled bodily injury and property damage claims, interviewed clients and witnesses, and evaluated coverage issues.

The Gap, Chicago, IL
Assistant Manager
1995-1999
Managed the daily operations of the store. Supervised a staff of ten. Directed training sessions on customer relations and sales techniques. Scheduled, interviewed and hired staff. Created marketing and motivational programs designed to increase company business.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE
Fluently speak, read and write Spanish; learned language while living in South America.

INTERESTS
Competitive golf, jazz music, travel, and crime novels.
E. Sample Resume II

JOHN DOE
55555 N. 5th St. Tempe, AZ 85555
(555) 555-5555 john.doe@asu.edu

EDUCATION
Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
J.D. Candidate, May 2012
Honors: CALI Award, Top Student in Torts
Activities: Homeless Legal Assistance Project
Muslim Law Students Association

Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS
B.S. Political Science, Minor Biology, May 2009
Honors: National Model United Nations Delegate
Activities: Student Ambassador
Hiking Club

EXPERIENCE
Law Offices of Jane Doe, Phoenix, AZ
Intern (Commercial Litigation and Family Law)
• Conducted legal research and drafted memoranda regarding whether court may award attorneys’ fees pursuant to A.R.S. § 12-341.01 on breach of contract claim
• Drafted Rule 26 Initial Disclosure Statement regarding breach of contract claim
• Attended expert witness deposition and drafted deposition summary

Fake Attorney General, Consumer Law Division, Phoenix, AZ
Legal Intern
1) Conducted legal research regarding identity theft laws and protections for senior citizens
2) Gave presentation regarding identity theft prevention at senior centers

Yummy Restaurant, Manhattan, KS
Assistant Manager / Server
A. Trained new servers in product knowledge, wine and food pairing, and steps of service
B. Created and oversaw schedules of 50 employees

Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS
Resident Assistant
A. Oversaw all aspects of dorm life including discipline, socializing, and safety

INTERESTS
Hiking, scuba diving, and collecting baseball cards
F. Outline of a Request for a Letter of Recommendation

Dear [Mr./Ms.] [Professor] [Judge/Justice] [Last Name]:

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me regarding my judicial clerkship application. I appreciate your willingness to write a letter of recommendation for me. As you requested, I have attached a copy of my resume and transcript for your reference.

I would appreciate it if you could specifically discuss…

If the recommender is a professor:
   B. The grade that you received and how it corresponds to the rest of the class (highest grade, 3rd highest, top 5%, etc.)
   C. Your writing skills
   D. The quality of your class comments and interactions with the professor
   E. The professor’s perception of how you interacted with classmates

If the recommender is an attorney or an employer:
   A. The quality of your writing skills
   B. Your ability to analyze legal issues
   C. How you interacted with co-workers, opposing counsel, judges, and clients
   D. Your work habits and work ethic

If you are applying to an Arizona judge:
I am applying to Judge[s] [NAME(S)]. This/these application(s) will be submitted through the Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law Career Center, and all letters of recommendation must be received by the Career Center by [date]. Letters may be:
   • E-mailed in PDF format to the Career Center (preferred):
     lawcareerservices@asu.edu
     Files must be saved in the following format:
     student last name_judge last name_recommender last name
   • Mailed to the Career Center at:
     College of Law
     Attn: Career Center, Judicial Clerkship Director
     P.O. Box 877906
     Tempe, AZ 85287
   • Dropped off at the Career Center:
     Armstrong Hall
     1100 S. McAllister Avenue Room 102
     Tempe, AZ 85287
If you are applying to a federal judge through OSCAR
I am applying to Judge[s] [NAME(S)]. This/these application(s) will be submitted through the OSCAR online application system. You will receive an e-mail invitation from OSCAR with a password for you to login to OSCAR and upload your letters of recommendation. **For ASU Faculty:** Most Faculty Assistants are familiar with the OSCAR system, or the Judicial Clerkship Director at the Career Center can answer any questions or provide assistance if needed.

**For non-ASU recommenders:** If you need any assistance, please contact the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law Judicial Clerkship Director at lawcareerservices@asu.edu if you have any questions or need assistance.

Again, I appreciate your time and assistance. If you need anything else from me or have any questions, please don’t hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

**Signature**

[FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME]
As an Intern at the Gotham City Public Defender’s Office, I drafted the attached Motion to Suppress, which was filed without revision in a felony Misconduct Involving Weapons case. The Motion asks that evidence, (a concealed handgun) be suppressed as a “fruit of the poisonous tree.” The basis for the motion was that the arresting officer lacked reasonable suspicion to detain our client for jaywalking because the Gotham City jaywalking statute only prohibits individuals from crossing the street mid-block if the intersections on either side have either marked crosswalk or a traffic control device.

After an evidentiary hearing, the Gotham Superior Court granted the Motion to Suppress. Afterwards, the Gotham District Attorney’s Office dismissed all charges against our client.

To preserve client confidentiality, all names, identifying information, and locations have been changed or redacted. I received permission from both the Gotham City Public Defender’s Office and our client to use this Motion as a writing sample.
As a Summer Associate with the Richards & Richards Law Firm, I prepared the attached memorandum for a Partner in the Litigation Department. The following is an excerpt that includes the relevant law and analysis portions. The facts section has been omitted in order to meet the application page limit. The facts are summarized below:

John Smith owns a 24-karat gold-plated 1980 DeLorean DMC-12. Only three such cars exist in the world, and Smith’s DeLorean was appraised in 2011 at $250,000.

On June 1, 2012, Smith was driving his DeLorean in Tempe, Arizona when Richard Jones ran a red light in his 1974 AMC Gremlin and collided with Smith. It is undisputed that Smith ran the red light because the collision was captured on a photo radar camera. Jones was cited for a red light violation, but Smith, who was intoxicated, was arrested for Extreme DUI, and later pled guilty.

The repairs to Smith’s DeLorean were covered by Jones’s insurance company. However, an appraiser now values the DeLorean’s value at $105,000 due to the major collision. Smith filed a civil suit seeking damages for the diminishment in value.

I was instructed to address the following issues:

1) Is a driver who was not at fault in a collision, but was unlawfully operating a motor vehicle at the time of a collision, eligible for diminished value damages under Arizona law?

2) If Smith is eligible for diminished value damages, which of the three most-common methods of calculation should be used to determine damages?

To preserve client confidentiality, all names, identifying information, and locations have been changed or redacted. Portions revised by the Litigation Partner are indicated by brackets. I received permission from Richards & Richards to use this as a writing sample.
I. Questions You May Encounter During Interviews

The following is a basic list of commonly-encountered questions in clerkship interviews. For more insight into questions that a specific judge may ask, consider reaching out to former clerks, students who have applied to that judge, or consulting the Hearsay Book to see if it has any information. The Career Center Library also has a selection of books dedicated solely to interviewing and/or potential questions.

- Why do you want to clerk?
- Why did you apply to this particular court? Why did you apply to me specifically?
- What do you hope to learn or gain from a clerkship?
- Why do you want to clerk in this city/state/region?
- What other judges or courts have you applied to?
- What are your short-term and long-term career goals?
- Where do you plan to practice? In what field?
- What qualities do you have that will make you a valuable law clerk?
- Describe the work you performed while on Law Journal.
- What did you learn from participating in Law Review/Moot Court/Clinical Program.
- Why aren’t you on Law Journal?
- A hypothetical questions about legal, ethical, or workplace issues.
- How do you feel about the long hours and low pay associated with a judicial clerkship?
- If you and I disagree about an issue or a case, how would you handle it?
- What would you do if asked to draft an opinion that went against your views of how a case should be resolved or your personal values?
- What is your greatest strength? What is your greatest weakness?
- What interests do you have outside of law school?
- Why should I select you over the other highly-qualified applicants for this clerkship?
- Do you have any questions?

As with any interview, the best advice is to be prepared for anything, and to have done your research on the job, the employer, and in the case of clerkships, the judge.
J. Sample Questions

Almost universally, interviewers consider it to be a major red flag if an applicant does not ask questions at the end of an interview. Even if an interview turns into a conversation and you are asking questions throughout, hold several in reserve for the very end. Some applicants even write a list questions on the notepad in their leather folder to make sure that they remember to address everything.

1) **For a Judge:**
- What criteria do you use in selecting a law clerk?
- What is the nature of your docket?
- What is your timetable in making a decision?
- How much contact do your clerks have with the attorneys who practice in your courtroom?
- Describe your legal philosophy?
- What do you see as the primary role of this court?
- How would my time be broken up between legal research, drafting bench memos or opinions, court observation, and other duties?

2) **For a Current Clerk**
- Describe a typical week as a clerk in this court.
- How is your time broken up between legal research, drafting bench memos or opinions, court observation, and other duties?
- What responsibilities do you have?
- Describe your relationship with the judge.
- How much interaction do you have with the judge?
- How much feedback do you receive from the judge?
- What are the judge’s greatest strengths? What are the judge’s greatest weaknesses?
- What contact do you have with other clerks/attorneys?
- Tell me about living in [city/state/region].
- How has this clerkship helped you in your post-clerkship job search?
K. ASU Law Faculty and Alumni Judicial Clerkships

**United States Supreme Court**
Justice William O. Douglas (deceased)  Ira Mark Ellman (faculty) – 1973 term
Justice Felix Frankfurter (deceased)  Paul Bender (faculty) – 1960 term

**United States Circuit Courts of Appeals**

**Federal Circuit**
Judge Kathleen O’Malley  Ben Herbert (2010) – 2011 term

**D.C. Circuit**
Judge Carl McGowan (deceased)  Milton R. Schroeder (faculty) – 1965 term

**2nd Circuit**
Judge Billings Learned Hand (deceased)  Paul Bender (faculty) – 1959 term
Richard C. Wesley  Zachary Gubler (faculty) – 2005 term

**5th Circuit**
Judge E. Grady Jolly  Karen Bradshaw Schulz (faculty) – 2010 term

**6th Circuit**
Judge Damon Keith  Myles V. Lynk (faculty) – 1976-1978

**8th Circuit**
Judge Martin D. Van Oosterhout (dec’d)  Dale Furnish (faculty) – 1965 term

**9th Circuit**
Office of Central Staff Attorneys  Charles Calleros (faculty) – 1978-1979
Catherine Gage O’Grady (faculty) – 1987 term
Judge Betty Binns Fletcher (deceased)  Patty Ferguson-Bohnee (faculty) – 2002 term
David Gartner (faculty) – unknown term
Judge Alfred T. Goodwin    David H. Kaye (faculty) – 1972 term
                          Charles Calleros (faculty) – 1979-1981
Judge Mary Schroeder      Hayleigh Crafword (2014) – 2014 term
                          Melissa Bogden (2011) – 2011 term

11th Circuit
Frank M. Johnson, Jr. (deceased)  Betsy J. Grey (faculty) – 1979 term

United States District Courts
District of Arizona
                          Nathan Arrowsmith (2013) – 2013 term
                          Sara Cummings (2011) – 2011 term
Judge Steven Logan         Kim Chamberlain (2014) – 2014 term
Judge Roslyn O. Silver     Mary Sigler (faculty) – 2001 term
                          Seth G. Schuknect (2012) – 2012 term
                          Kristi Miller-Beaver (2011) – 2011 term

Southern District of Florida

Northern District of Ohio
Judge Kathleen O’Malley    Ben Herbert (2010) – 2010 term

Eastern District of Texas
Northern District of Texas
Judge Jerry Buchmeyer (deceased) Carrie Sperling (faculty) – 2006 term
Magistrate Judge Paul D. Stickney Carrie Sperling (faculty) – 1998 term

United States Bankruptcy Courts
District of Arizona

Southern District of New York
Judge Robert D. Drain Mark Lightner (2007) – 2008 term

District of Utah
Chief Judge William Thurman Sarah Olson (2011) – 2011 term

United States Tax Court
Judge Joseph H. Gale Adam Chodorow (faculty) – 2003 term

Arizona Supreme Court
Megan Scanlon (2011) – 2011 term
Jared Sutton (2011) – 2011 term
Alison Atwater (2010) – 2010 term
Mark Lightner (2007) – 2007 term
Vail Cloar (2014) – 2014 term
Alice Jones (2010) – 2010 term
Justice Stanley G. Feldman (retired) Sigmund Popko (faculty)
Rebecca A. Tsosie (faculty) – 1990 term
Heather Horrocks (2011) – 2011 term


David Jackson (2012) – 2012 term

Taylor Clark (2012) – 2012 term
Amy Powell (2012) – 2012 term

**California Supreme Court**
Associate Justice Matthew Tobriner (dec’d)  Ira Mark Ellman (faculty) – 1972 term

**Nevada Supreme Court**

**Idaho Supreme Court**

**Utah Supreme Court**
Assoc. Chf. Justice Michael Wilkins (ret’d)  Joshua Abbott (faculty) – 2006 term

**Washington Supreme Court**
Justice Robert E. Utter (deceased)  David Kader (faculty)

**Arizona Court of Appeals**
**Division I**
Judge Daniel Barker (retired)  Jillian Tse (2011) – 2011 term
Todd Erb (2008) – 2008 term
Cheryl Kane (2008) – 2008 term
Vice-Chief Judge Michael Brown  
Mary Curtin (2014) – 2014 term  
Chase Bales (2012) – 2012 term  
Shannon Mataele (2011) – 2011 term  
Anne Warren (Orcutt) (2011) – 2011 term  
Victoria Ames (faculty) – 2009 term  

Judge Margaret Downie  
J.P. Schroeder (2014) – 2014 term  

Judge John C. Gemmill  
Katherine Nikas (2013) – 2013 term  
Ryan McCarthy (2012) – 2012 term  

Judge Phillip Hall (retired)  
Michael Tunink (2009) – 2009 term  

Judge Randall Howe  

Vice Chief Judge Patrick Irvine (retired)  
Jeff Silence (2011) – 2011 term  
Angela Kebric (2009) – 2009 term  
Matthew Campbell (2008) – 2008 term  

Judge Diane Johnsen  
Chase Haslam (2014) – 2014 term  
Mark Molique (2012) – 2012 term  
Amy Powell (2012) – 2012 term  
Larry Curry (2011) – 2011 term  
Michelle Guina (2011) – 2011 term  
Patrick Cunningham (2010) – 2010 term  

Judge Donn Kessler  
Lauren Nageotte (2014) – 2014 term  
Kyle La Rose (2013) – 2013 term  
Karen Stafford (2011) – 2012 term  
Anya Piotrowski (2011) – 2011 term  
Angela Walker (2010) – 2010 term  

Judge Patricia Norris  
Cassidy Crossen (2013) – 2013 term
Sarah O'Keefe (2012) – 2012 term  
Stefanie Anderson (2012) – 2012 term  
Kimberly McIntier (2010) – 2010 term  
Paige Pataky (2011) – 2011 term  
Lauren Crawford (2009) – 2009 term  
Martin Quezada (2008) – 2008 term |
| Judge Maurice Portley | Elizabeth Garcia (2014) – 2015 term  
Khanrat (Kwan) Piensook (2013) – 2013 term  
Molly Lynch (2012) – 2012 term  
Natalya Ter-Grigoryan (2011) – 2011 term  
Madeline Vera (2009) – 2009 term  
| Judge Peter Swann | Lauren Hill (2015) – 2015 term  
Emma Isakson (2014) – 2014 term  
James Hanson (2011) – 2011 term  
Laura Ciancanelli (2008) – 2008 term |
| Judge Lawrence Winthrop | Laura Anderson (2014) – 2014 term |

**Arizona Court of Military Appeals**

Unknown Judge  

**Pinal County Superior Court**

Judge Robert Carter Olson  

**Superior Court of Alaska**

Unknown Judge  
Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation (Connecticut)
Unknown Judge Andrew Sarcinella (2009) – 2009 term

Circuit Court of the First Circuit – Hawaii

Circuit Court of the (unknown) Circuit – Hawaii
Unknown Judge Seth Patek (2012)
Unknown Judge Timmany Ige (2009) – 2009 term

Blaine County (Idaho) Superior Court
Unknown Judge Victoria Trotta (2008)

Nevada Fourth Judicial District Court