

Applying for Federal Judicial Clerkships

Let the Career Services Office know about your interest in applying for clerkships. The following information pertains to federal clerkships only. If you are interested in pursuing state clerkships as well, the process will vary by state, and deadlines will most likely be earlier than the federal process. **Individual advising is highly encouraged so that applicants fully understand the process and timeline.**

Summer '09

Notify Career Services if you are applying for federal clerkships. We will maintain a group email list and communicate information and updates with you.

Review the Judicial Clerkship Handbook, available on the web at http://www.law.msu.edu/career/clerkship_handbook.html (PDF, MSU NetID required)

Become familiar with the resources that are listed in the handbook and begin your research. It is important to develop a list of judges and courts that you are interested in applying to.

Applicants will utilize the Online System for Clerkship Application and Review (OSCAR) to locate information about judges, available clerkships, and application methods. This is located at <https://oscar.symplcity.com>. A new version (5.0) is expected to launch in May, 2009. We do not recommend saving any materials or information prior to the launch, or the information may be lost.

By mid-June

Identify your recommenders.

Most judges will require at least three letters of recommendation. Contact potential recommenders and ask if they will be willing to draft letters for your applications. It is highly recommended that at least two of the letters come from faculty members.

It is very important that you stay in communication with these people throughout the summer, to ensure that your recommenders have the information that they need, and that you will be able to receive your letters on time.

By mid-July

Identify the judges and courts with whom you wish to apply.

After discussion with a faculty member or a career services advisor, begin to build applications within OSCAR, and to identify courts that will require paper applications. The information in OSCAR will be your main resource for current information. You can supplement your choices by contacting additional judges.

If you find that you will be mailing applications in addition to the OSCAR versions, Career Services can make recommendations to make the process easier for all parties involved. Contact the office early in the summer if you need to.

By August 1

Resumes and cover letters should be submitted to CS for review.

You may schedule an appointment or email your materials. A writing sample no larger than 15 pages should be reviewed as well, and in perfect condition. Ask a faculty member to look at this for you.

You should be collecting letters of reference by this time.

Encourage your recommenders to complete their letters early, and individualize any they are able to. Make sure that your recommenders know the deadlines you are under.

By August 24

All application materials should be ready

Either for OSCAR applications or for hard-copy applications - this includes your resume, cover letters, transcripts, writing sample, and any outside letters of reference.

This is a time-consuming task; do not wait until the last minute.

If you are mailing any packets, they could potentially be mailed on or around Sept 1 or 2. Career Services will mail up to 50 packets per student free of charge. Any additional packets must be mailed by individuals.

Critical Dates Under the Law Clerk Hiring Plan for 2009

Event	Fall 2009
First date when applications may be received:	Tuesday, September 8, 2009 (OSCAR release: 10:00 a.m. (EDT))
First date and time when judges may contact applicants to schedule interviews:	10:00 a.m. (EDT), Friday, September 11, 2009
First date and time when interviews may be held and offers made:	8:00 a.m. (EDT) Thursday, September 17, 2009