

CAREER PLANNING AND JOB SEARCH TIMELINE

Please Note: this timeline should be considered a general framework by which to plan your activities.

First-Year Law Student (1L)

Ongoing and as your schedule permits:

- ☐ Keep abreast of the information distributed by the CSO by logging on to www.uwyo.edu/law on a daily or weekly basis for updates.
- ☐ Take advantage of your e-mail access and watch for CSO emails or subscribe to discussion groups.
- ☐ Read legal periodicals such as: Student Lawyer, The American Lawyer, The National Law Journal, Wyoming Lawyer, and the ABA Journal.
- ☐ Use on-line resources such as Lexis/Nexis, Westlaw, FindLaw, and Martindale-Hubbell to research employers, find job opportunities and read articles about legal careers.
- ☐ Assess your network of faculty, friends, family and peers to determine how they will be able to assist you with the career choice and job search process. Begin developing relationships with attorneys (including faculty and alumni).
- ☐ Set up informational interviews and/or take a new contact out for coffee or lunch. To learn more about informational interviews, read the handout in this section or contact the Director.
- ☐ Set up a spreadsheet and begin keeping track of all places you have lived and worked since the age of 18. Write down names and contact information for roommates and neighbors that knew you when you lived in that location. This information will come in handy when you fill out your Bar Application in your third-year of law school.
- ☐ Be sure to update your address, phone and e-mail with the front office regularly.

Between mid-August and mid-November:

- ☐ Attend fall career fair and career preparation programming hosted by the CSO.
- ☐ Meet with the Director to discuss any career-related concerns and learn more about networking and informational interviews. Find out “just what is it exactly that lawyers do?”

Between mid-November and mid-January:

- ☐ Attend fall CSO Orientation (attendance expected in order to utilize services and resources of the CSO).
- ☐ Draft resume and cover letter.

- ☐ Meet with the Director to review resume and cover letter and to discuss specific career plans and strategy.
- ☐ Continue building your network and schedule informational interviews with attorneys and faculty members. Send thank you letters if people have met with you; cultivate those relationships.
- ☐ Check the on-line job posting bank for employers accepting applications from first-year law students.
- ☐ Check the subscription services on the CSO website, e.g., BYU Intercollegiate Job Bank, the *Government Honors & Internship Handbook* and PSLawNet. On these sites, you will find additional job opportunities not posted in the CSO’s job posting bank. The *Government Honors & Internship Handbook* is frequently updated and lists deadlines on a year-round basis.
- ☐ Identify additional employers in which you are interested. Potential employers may include private law firms, courts, governmental agencies, private corporations and businesses and non-profit organizations. Some employers may not post on the CSO’s website or may not even have an “official” posting, but this does not mean they are “off-limits” as a potential employer. This is where networking is key. Talk with the Director to learn more.
- ☐ Consider volunteering for a couple of weeks at a firm or agency during the winter break. This can aid in your search for full time employment during the summer.
- ☐ Use the winter break to your advantage by researching career opportunities (using traditional and electronic methods) and conducting informational interviews and networking with attorneys (including faculty and alumni).
- ☐ If you have not completed your resume and cover letter, use this time to put these documents together.

Between mid-January and mid-May:

- ☐ Order law school transcript from the Registrar’s Office and make photocopies. (Note: Some employers do not require an official copy and, in that case, you can download your transcript from WyoWeb. If the employer does not specifically request an “official transcript” then, as a general rule, you

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may assume that an unofficial copy is acceptable.)

- ☐ Check the CSO calendar on the website and make note of any upcoming application deadlines.
- ☐ Attend spring professional development and career preparation programming hosted by the CSO.
- ☐ Continue to cultivate relationships with faculty, alumni and other attorneys.
- ☐ Secure employer and personal references.
- ☐ Identify a writing sample to use for those potential employers that require submission of a writing sample. Make sure that your writing sample is free from typographical errors and is an example of your best work.
- ☐ Refine resume and cover letter. The cover letter is the first thing that employers see and it is expected that it will be an example of your best work.
- ☐ Begin submitting application materials.
- ☐ Participate in spring on-campus interviews.
- ☐ Check your course schedule to be sure you can complete expected courses to qualify for working in one of the law school clinics, any

prerequisites for 3rd year classes, or externships.

- ☐ Consider applying for externships for the summer, second, and third year.
- ☐ Consider applying for a study abroad program.
- ☐ Complete CSO surveys.

Between mid-May and fall semester of second year:

- ☐ Continue to search for summer legal employment if you have not secured a position. Consider volunteering on a part-time basis to gain relevant legal experience. This will help you build your resume for the next round of your job search.
- ☐ If you do not secure a summer legal position, use the time to research your opportunities for the summer between your second and third year of law school.
- ☐ Continue to conduct informational interviews and cultivate your relationships with faculty, alumni and other attorneys.
- ☐ Update and improve your resume and cover letter.

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Second-Year Law Student (2L)

Ongoing and as your schedule permits:

- ☐ Schedule an appointment with the Director to talk about your career goals and to learn more about networking and job searching in the legal market.
- ☐ Keep abreast of the information distributed by the Career Services Office (CSO) by logging on to www.uwyo.edu/law on a daily or weekly basis for updates.
- ☐ Read legal periodicals such as: Student Lawyer, The American Lawyer, Wyoming Lawyer, The National Law Journal, and the ABA Journal.
- ☐ Use online resources such as Lexis/Nexis, Westlaw, FindLaw and Martindale-Hubbell.
- ☐ Take advantage of your email access to watch for CSO emails and subscribe to discussion groups.
- ☐ Continue to develop relationships with attorneys (including faculty and alumni). Set up informational interviews and/or take a new contact out for coffee or lunch. Make sure you write thank you notes to anyone with whom you meet.
- ☐ Check your courses to be sure you are covering prerequisites for 3rd year courses and externships.
- ☐ Consider applying for an externship.
- ☐ If you have not already done so, set up a spreadsheet and begin keeping track of all places you have lived and worked since the age of 18. Write down names of roommates and neighbors that knew you when you lived in that location. Update your spreadsheet as needed. This information will come in handy when you fill out your Bar Application in your third-year of law school.

Between mid-August and mid-November:

- ☐ Order law school transcript from Registrar's Office and make photocopies or download a copy from WyoWeb if an official copy is not required.
- ☐ Attend fall professional development and career preparation programming hosted by the CSO.
- ☐ Update resume, cover letter, writing sample and references.

- ☐ Identify additional employers (not listed in database) to which you are interested in applying.
- ☐ Participate in fall on-campus interviews.
- ☐ Consider registering for the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam. The MPRE is given three times a year (March, August and November). Registration deadline is 4-6 weeks in advance of test date. (Note: Not all jurisdictions require the MPRE. Check the requirements for the bar exam in the specific state in which you seek to practice.)

Between mid-November and mid-January:

- ☐ Use the winter break to your advantage by researching career opportunities (using traditional and electronic methods).
- ☐ Set up informational interviews or other networking opportunities with attorneys (including faculty and alumni). Remember to send your thank you notes.
- ☐ If you have not completed your resume and cover letter, use this time to put these documents together.

Between mid-January and mid-May:

- ☐ Order law transcript from the Registrar's Office and make photocopies or download a copy from WyoWeb if an official copy is not required.
- ☐ Attend spring professional development and career preparation programming hosted by the CSO.
- ☐ If you have not already done so, identify a writing sample to use for those employers who require it. Make sure it is free of typographical errors and is an example of your best work.
- ☐ Refine resume and cover letter. The cover letter is the first thing employers read and it is expected that it will be an example of your best work.
- ☐ Begin submitting application materials.
- ☐ Determine if a judicial clerkship after graduation is one of your career goals. If so, begin to identify the courts to which you are interested in applying and research hiring criteria and application process. Information is available online at:
www.nalp.org/schools/clerkship_guidelines.pdf

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www.judicialclerkships.com
<https://lawclerks.ao.uscourts.gov>
<http://www.uscourts.gov>
<http://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/lawclerk/>

- ☐ Also check the CSO website for helpful links, including one to the *Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures*.
- ☐ Many courts do not post notices, so you must be aware of the different opportunities available and knowledgeable about how to research and apply for them.
- ☐ Complete CSO surveys.

Between mid-May and fall semester of third year:

- ☐ Continue to search for summer legal employment if you have not secured a position. Consider volunteering on a part-time basis to gain relevant legal experience. This will help you build your resume for the next round of your job search.
- ☐ If you do not secure a summer legal position, use the time to schedule informational interviews, cultivate relationships and research opportunities for after graduation.
- ☐ Continue to conduct informational interviews and cultivate your relationships with faculty, alumni and other attorneys.
- ☐ Update and improve your resume and cover letter.

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Third-Year Law Student (3L)

Ongoing and as your schedule permits:

- ☐ Keep abreast of the information distributed by the CSO by logging on to www.uwyo.edu/law on a daily or weekly basis for updates.
- ☐ Read legal periodicals such as: Student Lawyer, The American Lawyer, The National Law Journal, and the ABA Journal.
- ☐ Use online resources such as Lexis/Nexis, Westlaw and the Internet.
- ☐ Take advantage of your email access and watch for CSO emails and subscribe to discussion groups.
- ☐ Be sure to keep your address, phone, and email current with the front office so you can be contacted about employment opportunities.
- ☐ Continue to develop relationships with attorneys (including faculty and alumni). Set up informational interviews and/or take a new contact out for coffee or lunch. Make sure you write thank you notes to anyone with whom you meet.
- ☐ If you have not already done so, this is your last chance to set up a spreadsheet (or other method of saving and organizing information) with a record of each address and place of employment you have had since the age of 18. You will also need the contact information for roommates and neighbors for each address. This information, along with information related to traffic violations, misdemeanors and/or felonies, and credit/financial information, will all have to be reported when you fill out your bar exam application and the portion related to character and fitness.

Between mid-August and mid-November:

- ☐ Most deadlines for judicial clerkships will fall into this time frame.
- ☐ Many employers also have September deadlines, so if you are able to, prepare your application materials before classes begin.
- ☐ Order law transcript from Registrar's Office and make photocopies or download copy from WyoWeb if an official copy is not required.
- ☐ Attend fall professional development and career preparation programming hosted by the CSO, including those geared toward bar exam preparation and funding the bar exam

application and preparation process after graduation.

- ☐ Update resume, cover letter, writing sample and references.
- ☐ Identify references. Make sure you check with a potential reference to ensure that he or she will, indeed, give you a positive reference.
- ☐ Meet with the Director and/or faculty member(s) to review resume and cover letter and to discuss specific career plans and strategy.
- ☐ Keep abreast of opportunities and deadlines on the CSO bulletin boards, the CSO website and subscription based sites.
- ☐ Identify additional employers (not listed in database) to which you are interested in applying. Set up informational interviews to learn more about the employer.
- ☐ Ask the Director for alumni contacts that may help you in your job search.
- ☐ Investigate bar exam procedures. Refer to each individual state bar's website (or the BAR/BRI digest or www.barbri.com) for application procedures, important deadlines and addresses, application fees, etc. Many deadlines occur in early spring.

Between mid-November and mid-January:

- ☐ Make contact with potential employers about job opportunities.
- ☐ Make a concerted effort to conduct informational interviews and to network with attorneys (including faculty and alumni) over the winter holiday period.

Between mid-January and mid-May:

- ☐ Order law transcript from the Registrar's Office and make photocopies or download a copy from WyoWeb if an official copy is not required.
- ☐ If you have not already done so, identify a writing sample to use for those potential employers that require submission of a writing sample. Make sure that the writing sample is free from typographical errors and is an example of your best work.
- ☐ Refine resume and cover letter. The cover letter is the first thing that employers see and it

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is expected that it will be an example of your best work.

- ☐ Begin submitting application materials.
- ☐ Complete Employment Survey and return to the CSO.
- ☐ Update your address, phone, and email with the front office before graduation and again after the bar exam if it changes.

After graduation:

- ☐ Study for the bar exam. Most exams are given in the months of July and February.
- ☐ Continue to search for legal employment if you have not secured a position. Consider volunteering on a part-time basis so you can gain relevant legal experience (this will help you build your resume for your job search).
- ☐ Join a section or committee of the bar association and ask to help with starting/finishing/helping with a project. This will give you immediate exposure.
- ☐ During the month of January, complete and return to the CSO the Employment Report and Salary Survey (ERSS).
- ☐ Keep in touch with the law school to let us know how you are doing and if we can be of continued assistance.
- ☐ Continue to cultivate and maintain those relationships with other attorneys that you began in law school, including those with your peers. You and your peers are now in the legal world side-by-side. Send a congratulatory note to a fellow student on their new job or send other notes and cards on occasion. This is your network!
- ☐ You may continue to use the services of the CSO as needed, including the password protected portion of the website and subscription based sites. The Director is also available to continue to assist you in your job search and/or job transition.
- ☐ Volunteer to speak at the law school to share your experience with new students.
- ☐ Join the alumni association and volunteer for the UW National Ambassador's Program (a network of UW alumni).

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All Students (1Ls, 2Ls and 3Ls)

During your three years in law school, build up your resume and increase your opportunities by doing the following:

- ☐ Concentrate on your grades.
- ☐ Become involved in one of the law school's clinical programs: Defender Aid, Prosecution, Domestic Violence or Legal Services.
- ☐ Get involved in student and volunteer activities, including student organizations. Some of the clubs at UW College of Law include the Potter Law Club, Equal Access to Justice Club, Christian Legal Society, Delta Theta Phi Legal Fraternity, Federalist Society for Law and Public Policy Studies, Intellectual Property Club, International Law Students Association, Minority Law Students Association, Natural Resources & Environmental Law Club, Phi Alpha Delta Legal Fraternity, Phi Delta Phi, Women's Law Forum and the Wyoming Trial Lawyers Association.
- ☐ Apply for an externship.
- ☐ Apply to be a Research Assistant for a Professor.
- ☐ Seek out opportunities to improve your research and writing skills, such as participating in Writing Competitions or writing for Law Review.
- ☐ Apply for part-time and full-time legal positions.
- ☐ Work during your summers (full-time) and possibly during the school year (part-time) after your first year if your schedule will allow.
- ☐ Participate in competitions. Some of the intra-school competitions offered by UW College of Law include the Pence & McMillan Client Counseling Competition, the Rothgerber, Johnson & Lyons Trial Advocacy Competition, PACE Environmental Moot Court Competition, and the Brown, Drew & Massey Moot Court Competition.
- ☐ Join the Board of Advocates and help to organize competitions at the law school.
- ☐ Join the American Bar Association (ABA) as a student member. Become involved with the Wyoming State Bar Association. Attend section or committee meetings in the areas of law you are interested in practicing.
- ☐ Join an Inn of Court: The American Inns of Court is a national organization whose members include judges, lawyers and a few law students. Inns meet once a month for dinner to hold programs and discuss matters of professionalism, ethics and skills. It is modeled after the English apprenticeship system for barristers. *Please see www.innsofcourt.org for more information.*
- ☐ Interview an attorney about an interesting case or area of expertise; submit the resulting article to the Career Services Office for publication in *Counsel* or *The Docket*.
- ☐ Write an article on a current legal issue and submit it to the appropriate bar committee for publication
- ☐ Join a chapter of Toastmasters to improve public speaking abilities
- ☐ Attend bar sponsored continuing legal education (CLE) programs to meet local attorneys practicing in areas of interest.
- ☐ Attend national conferences in your particular area of interest in order to develop contacts and learn more about that specific area of law.
- ☐ Conduct informational interviews with faculty, alumni and other attorneys. Ask them about what they do and how they got to where they are now. Cultivate those relationships.
- ☐ Attend all CSO events. Talk with invited speakers afterward & ask for a business card. Follow up.