

III. TIMING RECOMMENDATIONS – WHEN YOU SHOULD BE DOING WHAT?

These recommendations are only intended as guidelines to give you an idea of the job search process as you progress through law school. Each student is encouraged to consult with the CSO staff to discuss his/her particular situation.

A. First Year, First Semester (1D/1E/1PTD) - during your first semester of law school, you **MUST** focus exclusively on your course work and on becoming acclimated to law school. Grades will influence future employment opportunities, so work hard to get off to a good start academically.

All first year students are encouraged to attend any of the CSO's workshops and seminars, but in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the National Association for Law Placement, the CSO does not offer individual counseling to full-time first semester students until after November 1. In November, the CSO will hold a Career Services Orientation meeting for all first year students. During this meeting we will introduce you to the CSO, our resource materials, and the services we provide. All first years **MUST** attend this orientation meeting before they can schedule individual consultations, resume preparation sessions, mock interviews, etc. After attending this meeting, first years are welcome to use all of the CSO's services and resources. First years should begin to think about putting together a professional resume and a working cover letter.

B. First Year, Second Semester (1D/1E/1PTD/2E/2PTD) - now is the time (if you have not already done so) to draft a resume and cover letter and to compile a list of references that you will supply to potential employers. During the spring of the first year is when most first year law students obtain their summer jobs. But not all law students obtain legal positions the summer after their first year. This is especially true if you expect to find a paying legal job - opportunities for first years are limited. And although a legal job after your first year is not essential to your future career success, any legal experiences that you can add to your resume will make you more attractive and more marketable when seeking that crucial summer legal job after your second year of law school. Working in some sort of legal job will also help you in building your network of contacts. Many Duquesne law students participate in the Law School's Clinical Program the summer after their first year. The Clinical Program allows you to earn academic credit while working for a non-profit organization such as a judge, government agency, or legal services association. The Clinical Program only requires 140 hours (10 hours per week for 14 weeks); therefore, you may do an externship and have another job to earn money for your expenses. As mentioned above, another option is to volunteer some time to a non-profit entity to gain some experience.

C. Second Year, First Semester (2D/3E/3PTD) - over the summer between your first and second years of law school, you will receive a letter that explains the On-Campus Interview (OCI) Program that takes place from September through November. If you intend to participate in the OCI process, you should be prepared with an updated resume, a writing sample, a copy of your transcript, and a list of references. You also will have to carefully read *The Common Plea* and be aware of the OCI deadlines and procedures. The first deadline for resume submission via eAttorney will be sometime in August.

Part-time work during the school year, OCI, off-campus interview trips, job fairs, networking and individual job search efforts are all tools to be utilized in obtaining a position that may lead to full-time employment upon graduation. During the second year of law school, your job search requires a significant amount of time. There are ways to reduce the amount of time required to perform an efficient and successful job search. All students should: know how to access Westlaw and LEXIS job search databases; know the various deadlines and application procedures of employers in which you are interested; pick up *The Common Plea* every week; attend CSO workshops and presentations; consider working part-time during the school year; nurture your network of contacts; and participate in informational interviewing.

If you plan on practicing patent law, consider taking the patent bar while in law school. Having passed the exam makes you much more marketable.

D. Second Year, Second Semester (2D/3E/3PTD) - this is when most second year students line up their summer jobs. Take the time to evaluate what you are learning in your job search. What have you done to locate employment? What strategies have worked? Which ones have not?

In January, start applying for summer positions with small and medium-size law firms and other employers. Revise your resume. Review your cover letter and brush up on your interview skills. Continue to read *The Common Plea* and keep in touch with the CSO staff.

E. Third Year, First Semester (3D/4E/4PTD) - over the summer you will receive a letter that explains the On-Campus Interview (OCI) Program that takes place from September through November. If you intend to participate in the OCI process, you should return to school with an updated resume, writing sample, copy of your transcript, and list of references. Also, regularly read *The Common Plea* so you are aware of the OCI deadlines and procedures. Deadlines for resume submission for OCI via eAttorney will be in August. But you should be aware that, historically, fewer OCI employers interview third year students than they do second year students. Consider getting a part-time job; this will help to expand your network and will make you more marketable.

If you plan on applying for a federal judicial clerkship, now is the time. Also, if you would like to work for the federal government, many agencies' deadlines are in September and October.

F. Third Year, Second Semester (3D/4E/4PTD) - implement a specific plan for obtaining a permanent position. Make sure that you are really doing something about your career prospects and not just worrying abstractly about employment prospects. Job seekers often underestimate the real effort and time required to perform an effective job search.

Maintain a positive attitude and take responsibility for your situation. Obtain a part-time law clerk position, continue to network, attend local bar association functions (as a graduating student you can join the local bar association), contact any job leads that you learn about, and keep in touch with the Career Services Office staff. Continue to read *The Common Plea* and use the *Alumni Jobs Bulletin* to track down job leads.

Complete an Employment Status Form before you graduate. This will help us serve you better when you graduate. After graduation, you must concentrate on passing the bar exam. Resume your job search after the bar exam. As a rule, 25% - 35% of Duquesne Law School graduates find their first full-time jobs after the bar exam. After passing the bar, you will become much more marketable to small and medium size firms and to certain public interest employers who cannot afford to hire a new graduate who has not yet passed the bar exam.