

Job Search Strategies

The key to your job search is to make it as much a part of your law school experience as preparing for and attending class. This means you must plan ahead, research, network, and utilize every resource available to you. Other keys to a successful job search are:

1. Familiarize yourself with the Career Center resources **before** you need them.
2. Get to know the staff at the Office of Career Services.
3. Assess your interests, strengths, personal values, and career goals.
4. Consider all your options, but be realistic about your options.
5. Participate in on-campus interviews; be very selective after the job offers start arriving.
6. Obtain hands-on experience through paid or volunteer positions during the academic year, summer break, holiday breaks, or weekends.
7. Join a student or professional organization in the area of law you wish to pursue as a career.
8. Network with faculty, alums, family, friends, and attorneys you meet through work or social events (personal contacts result in more job opportunities than advertisements).
9. Utilize the computer (Westlaw, LEXIS, and Internet Searches).
10. Read legal publications for information on current law issues in the field you are pursuing and possible firm/organization contact information.
11. Continually review job information, resources and job binders in the Career Center and at our web site: www.law.siu.edu.
12. Continually update your résumé and have it and all cover letters critiqued at Office of Career Services.
13. Attend workshops and career fairs.
14. Participate in writing competitions; develop great writing samples to use with application materials.
15. Participate in anything that simulates the practice of law; clinics, Moot Court, elective classes.
16. Budget 3-4 hours per week for your job search, even more at certain times of the year.
17. Research each firm/organization before sending application materials.
18. Keep application records of where/when/who.
19. Write thank you letters within 24 hours after each interview.
20. Believe in yourself and your skills; if you don't believe, no one else will believe.

21. Remember no one can decide what job is best for you except you.
22. Write step-by-step plans to achieve career goals; written goals result in realized goals.

Job Search Calendar

First Year

August - October

- Focus on class preparation only; do not think about career options at this time.
- Under NALP (National Association of Legal Career Professionals) Principles and Standards discussed at Career Orientation, career services staff are not allowed to talk to 1L students until after November 1 because good grades are important; grades can affect the career opportunities available to you. Employers are not allowed to contact 1L students until December 1.

November

- Attend mandatory 1L Career Orientation meeting to learn about programs, policies and procedures, obtain job search and internship program passwords, and complete Career Service survey forms.
- Thoroughly read the Office of Career Services web site at www.law.siu.edu.
- Have your résumé critiqued at the Office of Career Services.
- Begin researching and compiling a list of potential employers for summer employment or volunteer opportunities.
- Develop writing sample during Lawyering Skills classes to use as part of application materials.
- Research and join student clubs and organizations on campus.
- Review 'Career Planning information' at the JD Job Seekers link at www.nalp.org.
- Familiarize yourself with Career Center materials.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

December

- Finalize list of summer employers to whom you wish to submit résumés.

- Send cover letters and résumés; the first law related job you get will give you hands-on experience, not determine which employer will pay you retirement benefits. Be open to all opportunities at this point, explore all options. Don't wait until on-campus interviews scheduled during spring semester to begin applying for summer jobs.
- Look for holiday break paid or volunteer opportunities, learn to develop connections with organizations in your community....these skills will be valuable later when cultivating client contacts. Network with alums and potential employers.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

January

- Update your résumé, add paid or volunteer legal work from holiday break.
- Continue to send cover letters and résumés to potential employers, including summer volunteer opportunities.
- View spring recruiting program information and application deadlines at www.law.siu.edu.
- Attend career related workshops.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

February

- Send résumés to employers, including paid or volunteer opportunities.
- Participate in on-campus interviews.
- Send thank you letters within 24 hours to employers that interviewed you.
- Attend career related workshops.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

March

- Continue to send cover letters and résumés to employers.
- Participate in on-campus interviews.
- Send thank you letters within 24 hours to employers that interviewed you.
- Conduct informational telephone interviews during Spring Break.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

- April**
- Continue seeking summer paid or volunteer opportunities.
 - Attain a leadership position in a student club or organization.
 - Choose fall elective courses to help explore career opportunities.
 - Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.
- May**
- Submit copies of résumés, writing samples, and a completed Transcript Release Form to the Office of Career Services for summer off-campus and fall on-campus interviews.
 - View student positions available with faculty/clinics at www.law.siu.edu.
 - Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.
 - Start summer job or volunteer position.
- June**
- Start summer school.
 - View summer off-campus and fall on-campus interviews and application deadlines at www.law.siu.edu.
 - Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.
- July**
- Use summer to network with alums and employers.
 - Prepare a database of employers to whom you wish to send applications for next summer's employment. Don't wait until on-campus interviews scheduled during fall semester to begin applying for next summer's job.
 - Identify which employers participating in the off-campus interview program you want application materials sent to; give list of employers and any additional application materials required by employers to Office of Career Services by published deadlines.
 - Identify which employers participating in the on-campus interview program you want application materials sent to; give list of employers and any additional application materials required by employers to Office of Career Services by published deadlines.
 - View student positions available with faculty/clinics at www.law.siu.edu.
 - Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

Second Year

- August**
- Identify which employers participating in the off-campus interview program you want application materials sent to; give list of employers and any additional application materials required by employers to Office of Career Services by published deadlines.
 - Update your résumé to add paid or volunteer legal work done during summer break; have your résumé critiqued at the Office of Career Services.
 - Submit cover letters and résumés to potential employers, including summer volunteer opportunities.
 - Attend mandatory 2L Career Orientation meeting to learn about any new programs, policies or procedures, and obtain new job search and internship program passwords.
 - Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
 - Identify which employers participating in the on-campus interview program you want application materials sent to; give list of employers and any additional application materials required by employers to Office of Career Services by published deadlines.
 - Review interview preparation and sample questions section of the Career Services web site.
 - Research employers before interviewing with them.
 - Send thank-you letters within 24 hours to employers who interviewed you.
 - Attend career workshops.
 - Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.
- September**
- Research employers before interviewing with them.
 - Participate in on-campus interviews.
 - Send thank-you letters within 24 hours to employers who interviewed you.
 - Follow NALP Principles and Standards for job offer acceptance/rejection decisions.
 - Continue to send résumés and cover letters to employers.

- Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
- Think of career workshops or discussion panels your student club or organization would like to co-sponsor with the Office of Career Services.
- Research and participate in writing competitions.
- Research and apply for special interest and national scholarships and awards.
- Attend career workshops.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

October

- Participate in on-campus interviews.
- Send thank-you letters within 24 hours to employers who interviewed you.
- Follow NALP Principles and Standards for job offer acceptance/rejection decisions.
- Continue to send cover letters and résumés to potential employers, include summer volunteer opportunities.
- Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
- Make sure to contact alums from Alumni Mentor Program for advice and networking. Develop new alumni contacts from information in Career Center.
- Attend career workshops.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

November

- If considering a summer externship, be sure to register for prerequisite courses.
- Continue to send out résumés and cover letters; include applications for winter break paid or volunteer opportunities.
- Follow NALP Principles and Standards for job offer acceptance/rejection decisions.
- Choose spring elective courses to help explore career opportunities.
- Attend career workshops.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

December

- Research study abroad opportunities for summer break. Great experience if considering international law practice.

- Follow NALP Principles and Standards for job offer acceptance/rejection decisions.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.
- Use winter break to network, volunteer and schedule informational interviews.

January

- Use winter break to network, volunteer and schedule informational interviews.
- Update your résumé, add paid or volunteer legal work from holiday break.
- View spring recruiting program information and application deadlines at www.law.siu.edu.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

February

- Participate in on-campus interviews.
- Send thank you letters within 24 hours to employers that interviewed you.
- Make applications for externships and get stipend application from Dean's Office.
- Continue to send résumés and cover letters, especially to small and medium-sized firms.
- Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
- Attend career workshops.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

March

- Participate in on-campus interviews.
- Send thank you letters within 24 hours to employers that interviewed you.
- Continue to send cover letters and résumés to potential employers, including summer volunteer opportunities.
- Conduct informational interviews during Spring Break.
- Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
- Attend career workshops.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

April

- Continue seeking summer paid or volunteer opportunities.

- Finalize externship site for summer.
- Attend career workshops.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.
- Attain a leadership position in a student club or organization.
- Choose fall elective courses that simulate the practice of law.

May

- Start summer job, externship or volunteer service.
- If interested in a federal judicial clerkship after graduation, begin compiling information about the judges and prepare application materials. Register at www.dcd.uscourts.gov/OSCAR.html for the OSCAR system (Online System for Clerkship Application and Review) which electronically centralizes the application process for federal judicial clerkships, including résumé, writing sample, letters of recommendation, and transcripts. Ask faculty for letters of recommendation now so they have the summer break to write the letters. They often receive dozens of requests; give them time to write the letters.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.
- Submit copies of résumés, writing samples, and a completed Transcript Release Form to the Office of Career Services for summer off-campus and fall on-campus interviews.
- View student positions available with faculty/clinics at www.law.siu.edu.

June

- Begin summer school.
- Continue research of federal judges and clerkships available at www.dcd.uscourts.gov/OSCAR.html.
- View summer off-campus and fall on-campus interviews and application deadlines at www.law.siu.edu.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site..

July

- Use the summer to network with alums and employers.
- View student positions available with faculty/clinics at www.law.siu.edu.
- Prepare a database of employers to whom you wish to send application for full-

time employment. Don't wait until on-campus interviews scheduled during fall semester to begin applying for full-time jobs.

- Submit application materials for résumé collection packets sent by Office of Career Services.
- Continue research of federal judges and clerkships available at www.dcd.uscourts.gov/OSCAR.html.
- Identify which employers participating in the off-campus interview program you want application materials sent to; give list of employers and any additional application materials required by employers to Office of Career Services by published deadlines.
- Identify which employers participating in the on-campus interview program you want application materials sent to; give list of employers and any additional application materials required by employers to Office of Career Services by published deadlines.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

Third-Year

August

- Identify which employers participating in the off-campus interview program you want application materials sent to; give list of employers and any additional application materials required by employers to Office of Career Services by published deadlines.
- Identify which employers participating in the on-campus interview program you want application materials sent to; give list of employers and any additional application materials required by employers to Office of Career Services by published deadlines.
- Update your résumé to add paid or volunteer legal work done during summer break; have your résumé critiqued at the Office of Career Services.
- Attend mandatory 3L Career Orientation meeting to learn about any new programs, policies or procedures, and obtain any new job search and internship program passwords.

- Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
- Review interview preparation and sample questions section of the Career Services web site.
- Research firms before interviewing with them.
- Participate in on-campus interviews.
- Send thank-you letters within 24 hours to employers who interviewed you.
- Attend career workshops.
- Submit application materials for résumé collection packets sent by Office of Career Services.
- Finalize list of federal judicial clerkships and submit in OSCAR system at www.dcd.uscourts/OSCAR.html by September deadline.
- Submit cover letters and résumés to potential employers.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

September

- Research firms before interviewing with them.
- Participate in on-campus interviews.
- Send thank-you letters within 24 hours to firms who interviewed you.
- Follow NALP Principles and Standards for job offer acceptance/rejection decisions.
- Submit application materials for résumé collection packets sent by Office of Career Services.
- Finalize list of federal judicial clerkships and submit in OSCAR system at www.dcd.uscourts/OSCAR.html by September deadline.
- Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
- Continue to send résumés and cover letters to employers.
- Attend career workshops.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

October

- Continue to send out résumés and cover letters to employers.
- Participate in on-campus interview.
- Send thank you letters within 24 hours to employers that interviewed you.

- Follow NALP Principles and Standards for job offer acceptance/rejection decisions.
- Submit application materials for résumé collection packets sent by Office of Career Services.
- Be sure to contact alums from Alumni Mentor Program for advice and networking.
- Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
- Attend career workshops.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

November

- Continue to send out résumés and cover letters; include applications for winter break paid or volunteer opportunities.
- Follow NALP Principles and Standards for job offer acceptance/rejection decisions.
- Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
- Attend career workshops.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

December

- Follow NALP Principles and Standards for job offer acceptance/rejection decisions.
- Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
- Continue to submit résumés, especially to small and medium-sized firms.
- Use winter break to network, volunteer and schedule informational interviews.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

January

- Use winter break to network and schedule informational interviews.
- Update your résumé, add paid or volunteer legal work from winter break.
- Continue to submit résumés, especially to small and medium-sized firms.
- Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
- Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.

- February**
- Participate in on-campus interviews.
 - Send thank you letters within 24 hours to employers that interviewed you.
 - Continue to submit résumés, especially to small and medium-sized firms.
 - Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
 - Attend career workshops.
 - Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.
- March**
- Continue to submit résumés and cover letters.
 - Check e-mail daily for Career Services information.
 - Participate in on-campus interviews.
 - Send thank you letters within 24 hours to employers that interviewed you.
 - Conduct informational interviews during Spring Break.
 - Attend career workshops.
 - Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.
- April**
- Send cover letters and résumés to potential employers.
 - Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
 - Attend career workshops.
 - Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site..
- May**
- Send cover letters and résumés to potential employers.
 - Complete NALP employment survey and return it to the Dean's Office.
 - Check e-mail often for Career Services information.
 - Check the job binders in the Career Center and vacancy bulletin on the web site.
 - Submit a new non-siu.edu e-mail address to your law class listserv (siulawXXXX-L@siu.edu) so you will continue to receive career information about jobs and interviews during the first year after graduation.
 - Register with Alumni Services Office to get on mailing list for activities/events.