

JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP HANDBOOK



Prepared by the Office of Career Services

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A. What is a Clerkship?¹

The law clerk is an assistant to the judge and performs a broad range of functions that include performing legal research, drafting memoranda and opinions, editing, proofreading and verifying citations. Clerks often attend conferences in chambers with the attorneys in a case and also engage in conferences and discussions with the judge regarding pending cases. There is no narrow job description for a law clerk. The clerk may be called upon to perform many of the numerous tasks assigned to the judge and his/her staff in order to aid in the administration of the judge's docket.

The trial court clerk performs a wider variety of functions than the appellate court clerk. The difference lies primarily in the different functions of trial and appellate courts. The trial court is involved in fact-finding and the details of the daily processing of litigation, including motion practice, discovery disputes and settlement conferences. As a result, trial court clerks have substantially more contact with attorneys and witnesses and are involved in the decisions made at every stage of each case.

Appellate courts review the decisions of the trial courts. The appellate court clerk's function is to research the issues of law and fact in an appeal and to draft a working opinion for the judge, pursuant to his/her directions. Appellate decisions are usually published and become precedent for all district courts in the respective circuit. As a result, they require comprehensive review and coordination of the relevant existing decisions. The work is more isolating, and the pace is generally slower, than trial court work. There are high expectations for the level of the written work product.

The opportunity to work closely with a judge and carefully observe and analyze the judicial process is a particularly valuable experience for a new lawyer. The clerkship experience helps new lawyers further develop and refine their skills in legal research, writing and analysis. In addition, clerks have the opportunity to observe the challenging roles that judges and lawyers play in the resolution of controversies. As a result, clerks develop an understanding of the social, economic, and practical implications of legal problem-solving and gain invaluable insight into the judicial process.

B. Types of Clerkships Available

Law school graduates accept a variety of clerkships with federal and state courts. Most clerkships involve working one-on-one with a judge. A clerk may be assigned to one judge for his/her entire clerkship or may be part of a pool of clerks who rotate, working one-on-one, among a group of judges.

A staff attorney is another type of clerkship. Staff attorneys work for an entire court, usually a federal appellate court. Staff attorneys generally have less individual contact with judges and their functions include administrative duties, such as reviewing appeals and correspondence, assisting in case management and handling settlement matters. The responsibilities, timing of applications, and requirements vary circuit by circuit for these staff attorney positions. A pro se clerk is a specialized kind of staff attorney position. They handle pro se matters, which typically include prisoner habeas corpus petitions and civil rights complaints, employment discrimination complaints, social security disability appeals and any other civil proceeding instituted without an attorney. The pro se clerks often screen cases and draft proposed orders of dismissal. They also assist pro se litigants by providing them with forms and information and guidance about procedure.

Most law clerk positions are "term" positions in that they are for a limited or fixed period of time. There are also "permanent" or "career" clerk positions. Some federal trial court judges hire "career" clerks

¹ This section is adapted from "Function and Role of the Clerk," Law Clerk Handbook, Federal Judicial Center, pp. 1-3 (September 1989) and Behind the Bench. The Guide to Judicial Clerkships, Debra M. Strauss, 2002.

and in some states, for example California and New York, career clerk positions are more prevalent than term positions.

Law clerk positions are available in most federal, state, international and specialty courts.

The federal courts who hire clerks include the appellate circuit courts (e.g., the U.S. Court of Appeals for each circuit, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit) and trial courts (e.g., the U.S. District Court for the District of MA). The specialized federal courts, which have limited jurisdiction, (e.g., the U.S. Bankruptcy Courts, the U.S. Tax Court, U.S. Court of Federal Claims, U.S. Court of Veteran Appeals and U.S. Court of International Trade) also hire judicial clerks. Although the Justices of the U.S. Supreme Court hire law clerks, as a practical matter they offer clerkships to graduates who first clerk for judges in lower level courts, generally in federal appellate courts. Most federal court of appeals and district court judges hire two or three law clerks each. Magistrate judges generally hire one clerk. Federal clerks generally serve either one-year or two-year terms. The salary of most recent law school graduates doing federal court clerkships is the low to upper \$50's (upward adjustments are made depending upon geographical location). One year of post-graduate legal experience and bar membership can qualify a federal law clerk for a higher annual salary.

State appellate courts (e.g., the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court and Court of Appeals), and in some states, trial courts (e.g., the Massachusetts Superior Court and District Court) also hire law clerks. In other states, trial court judges either hire no law clerks or hire clerks only as long-term employees. Most state appellate court judges hire one or two clerks, while the state trial courts that hire clerks often hire a pool of clerks to serve several judges or hire just one clerk for each judge. Salaries for recent state law clerks vary greatly, from the low to high \$40's, with most in the mid to high \$40's.

There are also clerkship opportunities available in entities outside of the judicial branch, such as working for administrative agencies. Over 30 federal departments and agencies use Administrative Law Judges (ALJs), some of whom hire law clerks for either term or permanent positions. For additional information about clerkships with ALJs and other regulatory agency clerkships, See, <http://www.northeastern.edu/law/pdfs/career-services/app-aljclerkship.pdf> and *Behind the Bench: the Guide to Judicial Clerkship*.

C. Selecting Courts/Judges

Some of the factors to consider in selecting a court or judge include geographical considerations (some cities, such as Boston, New York, and San Francisco are more competitive than other cities and more rural areas), the level of court (appellate/trial), the type of court (federal, state, other - some of the clerkships are considered a bit more prestigious than others), the length of the clerkship (one year vs. two years), and connection(s) to a particular judge (does a faculty member with whom you have a relationship have a connection to a judge, does the judge know your references, did he/she attend the same college, same law school, hire any previous Northeastern clerks). Also, when people are selecting specific judges with whom to apply, some consider factors such as race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability status. This is because applicants may feel that a judge who shares a background similar to their own may be a particularly good mentor or may be someone with whom they may be more personally comfortable. Some applicants try to pick a judge who shares their political ideology. This is sometimes based on the politics of the president who appointed that judge. Applicants should be cautious when considering this strategy, however, because graduates generally report that what makes an experience a positive one has much more to do with the personality and working style of the judge (how the judge treats the law clerk, the expectations with respect to hours, etc.) than shared political views/ideology.

D. Soliciting Assistance from Faculty

The faculty is committed to increasing the number of our students who obtain post-graduate judicial clerkships, in particular for federal judges and the justices of the highest state courts. Many faculty members are former judicial clerks (See Appendix B) and have relationships to sitting judges who hire clerks (see MyLaw, Career Services Department Page, Clerkships, for a list of federal and state highest court judges known by faculty). Since judges receive so many clerkship applications, a strong personal recommendation from a faculty member they know and respect is extremely valuable. Faculty can help by writing letters of recommendation for you and/or making a personal phonecall to a judge on your behalf.

If a student has a relationship with a faculty member because she did particularly well in their class, worked for them in some capacity, served on a committee together, etc., the student may want to ask that faculty member what judges they know personally and whether they would be willing to make a call to a judge on the student's behalf. Students might also ask a faculty member who they know to help connect them to another faculty member who has a personal relationship with a judge to whom they are interested in applying. Asking a faculty member to make a call or send an e-mail on your behalf is in addition to asking for a letter of recommendation. Faculty are generally only willing to do this for students for whom they can give a very strong endorsement based on first-hand knowledge of the student's academic and other strengths.

You should know that faculty may, if they wish, recommend more than one student to a particular judge. For clerkships with early September application deadlines, we suggest you contact faculty for their assistance by mid-August, the latest.

E. The Application Process

Once a student has selected the judges or courts for which he or she wishes to clerk, the student must determine when to apply and what to include in the application.

1. Application Deadlines. Generally, federal trial and appellate judges will begin accepting clerkship applications from current students on September 7, 2010 (in the fall of a student's third year of law school). Interviews can be scheduled by these judges beginning on September 10, 2010 and the first date that interviews can be held is September 16, 2010. For more detailed information about federal law clerk application deadline and requirements, check the OSCAR website - <https://oscar.uscourts.gov> or call the chambers of the judges in whom you are interested. The OSCAR website will be available to review beginning May 17, 2010. You should be aware that there are sometimes federal clerkship opportunities that become available outside of the regular hiring process, for example, when judges are newly appointed.

Most state courts accept applications and hire clerks in the fall of a student's third year of law school. Within some state court systems, the highest level courts may hire clerks before the intermediate appellate and trial courts. There are some state courts which begin the hiring process during the spring of a student's second year. Deadline information on state court clerkship can be found on the Career Services section of the law school webpage (www.northeastern.edu/law), Click on Career Services, Click on Internet Sites for Job Hunters (bottom left hand corner of page), Click on legal job listings, Click on clerkships, Click on Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures. Note the user id and password before you click on the link. A list of state courts/judges with early application deadlines (prior to the fall of a student's third year of law school), is at: <http://www.northeastern.edu/law/pdfs/career-services/earlycourtdeadlines.pdf>

Students should view clerkship application deadlines with caution. Some judges may start reviewing applications and interviewing candidates before the application deadlines they have set. Therefore it is essential to know when a judge will **begin reviewing** applications as well as the application deadline. If a court or judge does not specify when applications will begin being reviewed and the application deadline, students should contact the court directly to obtain this information. It is advisable to submit application materials towards the beginning of the application period rather than waiting until the deadline. Students should start researching clerkship deadlines in the spring and summer of their second year.

2. Application Procedures: Although each judge has a different application and selection process, most judges require a cover letter, resume, law school transcript (usually a copy of the official transcript is acceptable but sometimes the judge requires an official transcript), two-three letters of recommendation and a legal writing sample. Applicants will send hard copies of application materials to some federal court judges and all state court judges. However, there are an increasing number of **federal judges**, who are participating in an on-line application system, know as the On-line System for Clerkship Application and Review (“OSCAR”) -<https://oscar.uscourts.gov/> Beginning in 2010, applicants can also use OSCAR to search and apply to appellate staff attorney positions. Read the specific directions below and note the differences between sending your materials by mail to judges and applying electronically to those judges who are participating in OSCAR.² See “Overview of OSCAR” memo on the career services department page of Mylaw for more detailed information about applying to judges through OSCAR.
3. Application Materials
 - a. Cover Letters. Cover letters should be no longer than one page and should be clear about the position in which you are interested (i.e, one year clerkship to begin in September 20__), why you are interested in doing a clerkship with this court/judge, highlight relevant research and writing experience gained through your coursework, co-ops and other experiences, indicate the materials you are enclosing, your contact information, etc. See sample cover letters in Appendix F.
 - b. Resumes. The Office of Career Services can offer guidance to students who are updating their resumes in preparation for submitting clerkship applications.
 - c. Transcripts (for judges not participating in OSCAR).

An official Northeastern transcript is comprised of the following:

- An “academic history” with an official University seal which lists the courses you have taken, the “credit/no-credit/pass/honors/high honors or fail” designation received in each course, and the co-op positions which you have held.
- a cover letter from the Registrar’s Office explaining the School of Law’s grading system.
- all course evaluations.

² If you are applying for federal clerkships, there are two resources that you should check. 1) For a comprehensive listing of all federal judges, consult the BNA’s Directory of State and Federal Courts, Judges and Clerks (available in the Resource Room and on-line, through Career Services webpage, internet sites for job hunters, click on clerkships). 2) Most, but not all, of the judges who are seeking clerks will post positions on the OSCAR website (<http://www.oscar.uscourts.gov/>) and indicate their application requirements and whether they want their materials submitted via mail or through OSCAR.

- all co-op evaluations.

The procedure for obtaining an official law school transcript can be found at:
<http://www.northeastern.edu/law/pdfs/career-services/form-trans-req-law.pdf>

Judges who do not specify whether transcripts must be “official” generally accept photocopies of official transcripts. When in doubt, students should telephone the judge's chambers to ask whether an unofficial transcript (a photocopy of an official transcript) will be acceptable. Students who choose to submit unofficial transcripts without contacting the judge in advance may wish to offer, in their cover letter, to forward an official transcript upon request.

Unofficial transcripts: Every summer (and only once per year), the law school will upload the “academic history” page from the Registrar and add it to your course evaluations on Symplicity. Therefore, if you are applying to a clerkship whose deadline is in the fall and need an unofficial transcript, you will be able to assemble one from Symplicity. The academic history page and the course and co-op evaluations will be under the documents tab and an “explanation of our grading system” will be in the document library. You can merge these documents into one .pdf or print them out. If you are applying for a clerkship at a time other than the fall, you will need to obtain the most current “academic history” page from the Registrar (this can be produced quickly upon written or e-mail request. See: <http://www.northeastern.edu/law/pdfs/career-services/form-trans-req-law.pdf> and assemble the rest of the “unofficial” transcript from Symplicity.

d. Electronic Transcripts (for Judges Participating in OSCAR).

Those students who apply to federal judges participating in OSCAR are required to type your “grades” on the on-line law school grade sheet on OSCAR. You will be inserting the name of each course and your “credit/no-credit/pass/honors/high honors or fail” designation. If selected for an interview, students will be required to bring the entire official transcript (or a copy of an entire official transcript) to the interview. See “Overview of OSCAR” memo on the career services department page of the Mylaw for more detailed information about how to input transcript information for electronic applications through OSCAR.

e. Letters of Recommendation. Most clerkship applications must include two or three letters of recommendation. The professors or attorneys who prepare these letters should be familiar with the candidate's legal skills and people who you think can write you a strong letter. Students should give their references adequate time to write recommendation letters. Letters of recommendation should be addressed to the judge to whom it will be sent, rather than being addressed "To Whom It May Concern." Students should provide their references with a list of the judges to whom a letter of recommendation should be sent. If possible, the list should be sent electronically in a format that can be merged with the text of the letter of recommendation. Students can facilitate the process of obtaining letters of recommendation by offering to type the letters for the person providing the reference and returning the completed letters to the reference for his/her review and signature. As a general rule, letters of recommendation should be mailed with other application materials.

There is a special procedure for submitting letters of reference for those federal judges who are participating in OSCAR which is more fully explained in the OSCAR overview memo on the Mylaw and at: <https://oscar.uscourts.gov/>, under the Applicant Resources tab.

f. Writing Sample. Many judges require candidates to submit a legal writing sample either with the application or at the time of the interview. Writing samples range from relatively short memoranda of law to lengthy law review-style articles. Some judges indicate that they only want a short (5 – 10 pages) writing sample. Students should select a writing sample that is well-written, well-organized

and which demonstrates proficiency in legal research and analysis. The writing sample should be your own work, unedited by others. Writing done on co-op can be used with the permission of the co-op employer. Names or other information that could disclose the identity of a client should be deleted from any writing sample. Additional guidelines re: writing samples can be found at: <http://www.northeastern.edu/law/pdfs/career-services/guide-writing.pdf>

In some cases, you will be asked to submit an original writing piece, which you will submit with your application materials or which you will prepare at the interview. An example is the application for the MA Probate and Family Court, which includes three hypotheticals and asks you to choose one and produce a written memorandum applying the law to the factual scenario to be included with your other application materials. Another example is the Staff Attorney's Office for the US Court of Appeals, Second Circuit, which requires a writing sample be prepared as part of the interview process.

g. Explanation of Northeastern's Grading System: For judges outside of Boston or who may be unfamiliar with Northeastern, students can include in their application packets the explanation of our grading, which is in the document library on Symplicity and on the Career Services department page of the Mylaw.

4. Costs of the Application and Interview Process. You should be aware that there are some costs associated with applying for clerkships (primarily the costs of copying your written materials and the mailing costs). There are more significant costs associated with the interview process. Since most judges require in-person interviews and do not reimburse applicants for any travel or lodging costs, you must be prepared to pay for these types of expenses. These expenses will vary depending upon the number of out of town interviews you are granted and whether you can combine the interview travel expenses with a trip home or a visit to a friend during a vacation or the holidays.

F. Resources to Assist You in Applying for Judicial Clerkships

1. Career Services Resources

The Career Services Resource Room contains a variety of materials on judicial clerkships. These materials are located on the bookshelves in the clerkship section. During the clerkship hiring season, a bulletin board in the Career Services Resource Room is devoted to clerkships. Some notices of clerkship opportunities can also be found in the clerkship file cabinet in the Career Services Resource Room. On the Career Services website, "Internet Sites for Job Hunters" page, "Legal Job Listings Sites" category, there is a section devoted to clerkships. Notices of openings for some judicial clerkship positions are also included in our job listings on Simplicity. The following are some suggested resources students should consult when researching clerkships.

Federal Clerkship Resources. (Also see "State and Federal Clerkship Resources")

a. *Almanac of the Federal Judiciary* Volumes I and II, (biographical information and lawyer evaluations of federal district and circuit court judges).

b. *OSCAR* - See <http://www.oscar.uscourts.gov/>, a website/database which posts law clerkship vacancy announcements, application deadlines and requirements).

c. *Federal Judiciary Home Page* – See <http://www.uscourts.gov/> - this site has a great deal of information – you can search for jobs in the federal courts by clicking on the Career tab, you can search for information newly-appointed federal judges by clicking on the Newsroom tab, look at the Third Branch newsletter of the federal courts,

- d. *Alliance for Justice, the Judicial Selection Database* - <http://www.judicialselectionproject.org/> -contains a list of active judges, pending nominees and vacancies. You can view a list of active and pending judges by court, appointing/nominating date and president, gender and race/ethnicity.
- e. *Senate Nominations* – Up to date listing of recent nominations and confirmations, including judicial nominations with a link to biographical information on all federal judges - http://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/legislative/a_three_sections_with_teasers/nominations.htm

State Clerkship Resources. (Also see “State and Federal Clerkship Resources”)

a. *The Complete Guide to State Judicial Clerkship Procedures*, published by Vermont Law School Office of Career Services. (lists hiring and application information for state courts nationwide.) Also available on-line, Click on www.northeastern.edu/law, Career Services, Internet Sites for Job Hunters, Clerkships.

b. *National Center for State Courts*: links to state court websites <http://www.ncsconline.org/>

Federal and State Clerkship Resources.

- a. *The Judicial Yellow Book* (source of contact and biographical information about many federal and state court judges).
- b. *The American Bench: Judges of the Nation* (published biennially; a comprehensive directory of federal and state judges, magistrates and administrators; contains biographical data, addresses and telephone numbers).
- c. *BNA’s Directory of State and Federal Courts, Judges, and Clerks* (lists names, addresses, and telephone numbers of judges, clerks, and administrators). Also available on-line. You should access the on-line directory through our “internet sites for job hunters” link on our webpage because that link indicates the password for using the site.
- d. *NUSL Clerkship Surveys* (clerks evaluate their own clerkship experiences; arranged in four volumes - three containing surveys on state clerkships nationwide and one containing surveys on federal clerkships nationwide).
- e. *Massachusetts Courts, Maps and Judges* (a complete guide containing detailed maps and directions to all federal and state courts, and biographies of judges in the state and federal courts located in Massachusetts).
- f. www.judicialclerkships.com (provides information and advice on judicial clerkships as well as links to federal and state court sites and judicial clerkship listings)
- g. *Judicial Staff Directory* (scroll down on first page for information on new and pending state and federal court judges) - <http://jsd.cqpress.com/jsd/>
- h. *Directory of Minority Judges of the United States, published by the ABA, 3rd edition, 2001* (directory of state and federal minority judges with addresses and telephone numbers).
- i. *The Courts: An Excellent Place for Attorneys of Color to Launch Their Careers* http://nalp.org/assets/550_07courtsminoritybrochurew.pdf (This pamphlet, prepared by NALP and the ABA, is directed to students of color. It provides an excellent overview of the clerkship application process and is a good resource for all students).

2. Databases On Lexis And Westlaw To Assist You In Applying For Judicial Clerkships

Both LEXIS and WESTLAW have numerous databases, which contain current news stories from general and specialized newspapers and journals. These databases can assist you in researching the judges and courts to which you are applying. You can also use LEXIS and WESTLAW to search for newly appointed or confirmed judges.

G. Interviewing for a Clerkship Position

It is a significant achievement to get an interview for a clerkship position because they are very competitive. While your academic record and other factors may get you an interview, it is your personality, ability to articulate your thoughts, and chemistry with the judge and his/clerks that are often most important during the interview. If you get an interview with a judge in a city where you have to travel, some students have tried to schedule interviews with other judges in that same city. They have called the secretaries or clerks of the other judges to whom they applied in that area and explained that they will be in town interviewing with Judge X, and asked if the other judges are interested in seeing him/her while he/she is there. This strategy has sometimes been successful.

To prepare for the interview, you should try to find out as much as you can about the interview format and substance because they vary with the judges and courts. You can sometimes get this information from the secretary or clerk who schedules the interview and from prior clerks. As with all interviews, you need to be able to talk about yourself (your personal and professional background) and articulate why you are qualified for and interested in the position. You also need to do some research on the particular judge/court with whom you are interviewing (biographical information and significant cases). One of the distinguishing characteristics of an interview for a clerkship is that you will often be working very closely with one individual and therefore, personality/work style fit are particularly important. Appendix A has a list of sample clerkship interview questions which you can use to help you prepare for clerkship interviews.

H. Offers and Acceptances

Offers and acceptances for judicial clerkships can occur very quickly. Some judges make offers on the spot or very soon after the interview and most want a response fairly quickly (from within the day to a week or so). Most students accept his/her first offer from a judge. This is because they do not want to offend the judge and because of the tight timing between offers and acceptances, applicants usually do not have multiple offers at the same time. Once you have accepted a judicial clerkship, you should notify the other judges with whom you have applied to withdraw your application.

SAMPLE JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Personal Goals and General Background

- Why did you decide to go to law school?
- What do you know about this court?
- Why do you want to clerk for (this level and/or type of) court?
- Why do you want to clerk for this judge in particular?
- How would you prepare yourself to get ready for this job? How would you go about learning about this court and its procedures?
- What are your career goals and how does this clerkship fit within those goals?
- What do you hope to learn from this clerkship?
- What are your interests outside of law school?
- What do you think about this (social/political) issue? What current issues concern you the most?
- What previous legal/work experiences have you had and what did you like or dislike about them?

Training, Experience and Preparation

- What do you think makes you particularly suited for this job? From what you know about clerkships, what aspects of this job would be the easiest. What would be the most challenging?
- What about your previous education and/or work experience has prepared you for this job?
- What courses in law school are you taking/plan to take? What has been your favorite or least favorite course?
- Describe any journal or research projects you have done. Why did you choose to research and write on that topic?
- Have you participated in Moot Court, Trial Advocacy or legal clinics?
- Describe how you have handled projects or tasks requiring a high degree of accuracy and attention to detail. Describe how you worked on a project that required organizational skills.
- Why do you think you would be able to write well about the subjects before this court?

Legal and Substantive Topics

- Be prepared to discuss in detail your writing sample and to field any legal challenges raised by the judge.
- Be prepared to discuss recent decisions and issues germane to the jurisdiction of the court where the judge sits.
- What type of law interests you most?
- What do you think is the most important recent Supreme Court /Appeals Court decision and why?

Your Qualities as a Potential Law Clerk

- Describe your thinking in analyzing a case. For example, how have you gone about applying the law to the facts of a case in a judicious manner? How did you weigh the competing arguments?
- How would you go about researching a topic that was unfamiliar to you?
- Describe how you work under pressure and your ability to juggle many different types of tasks.
- Describe your strengths and weaknesses – what qualities do you possess that would make you an outstanding law clerk?
- If I ask you as a law clerk to draft a decision in a particular manner and you disagree with the outcome, what will you do?
- What do you think are the characteristics of a good bench memo? A good decision?
- How would you build a good working relationship with people here?
- Describe a project or task where you worked as a member of a team. What was your role? What challenges did you face and how did you address/resolve them? What successes or failures were important to you in working with other members of the team?

Ethical and Professional Hypotheticals:

An interview may include discussion of various hypothetical situations regarding ethical and professional conduct. An example: discuss what you would do in a situation where you are a clerk for a judge and a party in a lawsuit claims severe disability rendering them unable to walk or drive. However, you as the clerk see this person later walk to their car in a parking lot and drive off?

Miscellaneous Clerkship Interviewing Tips

(from a Northeastern graduate who is a career law clerk)

- 1) Be prepared to answer how you would do research if you did not have access to electronic resources, such as lexis and westlaw. You should discuss case books, secondary sources (practice series, treatises, annotated statutes, MCLEs, etc.).
- 2) Ask the judge what the judge expects the clerk to do. Some judges assign research projects and then do their own writing, some like clerks to do drafts. If a student likes to write, then the latter is preferable to the former.

3) Most of the time the clerk is really on his/her own. Very few judges are interested in hand holding. This may be quite different from being a coop student where the judge sees himself/herself as a teacher. This depends upon the judge, but most judges expect clerks to get the work done. Your job as a clerk is to make the judge's job easier.

4) For a trial court clerkship – be prepared to know what to do if you are handed a bankers box with filled with paper not organized in any particular order. One of your roles as a clerk may be to organize documents in order to work on a case – to obtain the docket sheet, find the complaint, and then organize the paper chronologically.

Sample Questions to Pose to the Judge or Investigate with the Clerks:

- What is a typical day like for a law clerk?
- What is the division of labor /cases including different types of tasks.
- What are the primary responsibilities of a law clerk?
- Do you believe in all written decisions or do you make oral decisions from the bench? (Written decisions require a heavier workload whereas oral decisions require a faster and more intense pace in order to produce bench memos that are a quality that allow the judge to rule from the bench.)
- How are opinions written? Does the clerk or the judge write the first draft? How many drafts does the judge usually require?
- In cases where a clerk is shared by more than one judge, what is your expectation regarding division of work and prioritizing cases from different judges?
- Do you work with the clerks on cases on an ongoing basis or do you prefer periodic formal meetings to discuss cases?
- How much time do the clerks spend in the courtroom?
- Do the clerks travel with you when you sit in other courthouses?
- What contact formal or informal is there with your former clerks? (This is an indication of what sort of long-term mentor relationship you might establish with the judge.)
- What qualities does you look for in a law clerk? What is your timetable for making a hiring decision?
- What were your most challenging cases?
- How did you reach your decision in [insert case name]?
- What role do the law clerks play in reaching a decision and/or assisting in decisions?

Working Environment and Things to Observe

- What is the atmosphere in the judge's chambers? Do the clerks seem like they are enjoying themselves or are they tense and overwhelmed? Are the judge's chambers well organized?
- How do the judge and clerks interact with the administrative staff? Is the atmosphere congenial or more formal?
- What is the physical layout of the clerks' offices in relation to the judge's chambers? Do the clerks seem isolated or is there a sense of camaraderie and exchange of ideas?

Appendix B

FACULTY MEMBERS WHO HAVE HELD JUDICIAL CLERKSHIPS

Roger Abrams	Judge Frank M. Coffin U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit
Lee Breckenridge	Judge Gilbert S. Merritt U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
Dan Danielsen	Judge Nathaniel R. Jones U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit
Martha Davis	Senior District Judge James T. Moody U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Indiana
Richard Daynard	Judge Henry T. Friendly U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit
Rashmi Dyal-Chand	Judge Warren J. Ferguson U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
Peter Enrich	Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit
Mary O'Connell	Associate Judge Sidney W. Wernick Maine Supreme Judicial Court
Wendy Parmet	Chief Judge Levin H. Campbell U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit
David Phillips	Justice Walter V. Schaefer Illinois Supreme Court
Deborah Ramirez	Massachusetts Superior Court
Sonia Rolland	Judges Guillame and Abraham International Court of Justice The Hague, Netherlands
Rachel Rosenbloom	U.S. District Judge Morris Lasker U.S. District Court for the S.D.N.Y. (sitting by designation in the District of MA)
Daniel Williams	Judge James R. Browning U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit
Margaret Woo	Washington D.C. Court of Appeals

Appendix C

**NORTHEASTERN GRADUATES FROM THE CLASSES *
OF 2005-2009 WHO HAVE HELD JUDICIAL CLERKSHIPS**

* These are the graduates who secured clerkships immediately after graduation. Additional graduates have done clerkships later in their careers and are not included on these lists.

CLASS OF 2009

Adam Alexander	AK Superior Court, Judge Suddock Anchorage, AK
Tasha Bahal	MA Supreme Court, Judge Botsford Boston, MA
James Bair	MA Appeals Court, Judge Lenk Boston, MA
Alexander Brougham	US Bankruptcy Court, Judge Rosenthal Boston, MA
Talesha Caynon	NH Superior Court Manchester, NH
Stephanie Dorvil	MA Appeals Court, Judge Brown Boston, MA
Jessie Opinion	CT Judicial Branch, Legal Research New Haven, CT
Gregoire Sauter	US District Court for the Eastern Dist. of MI, Judge Roberts Detroit, MI
Benjamin Snitkoff	MA Appeals Court Boston, MA
Matthew Sweet	MA Appeals Court, Judge Cohen Boston, MA
Sean Toohey	MA Appeals Court Boston, MA

CLASS OF 2008

Sarah Affel	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Eric Atilano	DC Court of Appeals Judge Ruiz Washington, DC
Hannah Casey	Sixth Judicial District Judge Starr Hibbing, MN
Jack Cushman	MA Supreme Judicial Court Judge Botsford Boston, MA
Micah Drayton	MA Appeals Court Judge Cohen Boston, MA
Anastasia Dubrovsky	U.S. District Court for the District of RI Judge Lisi Providence, RI
Elizabeth Ennen	MA Supreme Judicial Court Judge Botsford Boston, MA
Andrew Fitanides	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Nicole Forbes	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Jeremy Fredericksen	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Rebecca Geehr	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Matthew Greene	MA Appeals Court Judge Berry Boston, MA
Patrick Jennings	DC Superior Court Judge Anderson Washington, DC

Jeanine Kilgallen	NH Superior Court Manchester, NH
Bernice Lee	U.S. Bankruptcy Court Judge Hyman West Palm Beach, FL
Ashley Mauldin	U.S. District Court for the Northern District of NY Judge Cangilos-Ruiz Syracuse, NY
Melissa Owens	Office of Administrative Law Judges U.S. Department of Labor Washington, DC
Katie Passaretti	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
LaRell Purdie	NJ Superior Court Judge Dortch Camden, NJ
Jonathan Sachariah	Circuit Court of Maryland for Washington County Judge Beachley Hagerstown, MD
Craig Schechter	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Brianna Sullivan	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Joseph Weiner	U.S. District Court for the District of MN Judge Montgomery Minneapolis, MN

CLASS OF 2007

Azure Abuirmeileh	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Matthew Ambros	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Mark Aronsson	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Daniel Barrett	U. S. District Court of Connecticut Judge Janet Bond Arterton New Haven, CT
Peter Basso	New Jersey Superior Court Judge Jonathan Harris Hackensack, NJ
Shahria Boston	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Christopher Browne	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Andrew DeVoogd	MA Appeals Court Judge Barbara Lenk Boston, MA
Hillary Dunn	U.S. District Court for the Southern District of NY U.S. Magistrate Judge Debra Freeman New York, NY
Lisa Geoghegan	MA Probate & Family Court Boston, MA
Amanda Jimenez	Maryland County Circuit Court Judge Chapdelaine Baltimore, MD
Carol Jun	D.C. Superior Court Judge Gregory Jackson Washington, D.C.
Michael Jusczyk	Supreme Court of Rhode Island Providence, RI
Margaret Kwoka	MA Appeals Court Chief Justice Phillip Rapoza Boston, MA

Shanel Lindsay	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Melissa Maisel	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Jeremy McHugh	MA Land Court Judge Harry Grossman Boston, MA
Arturo Menendez	U.S. District Court of Puerto Rico U.S. Magistrate Judge Justo Arenas San Juan, PR
Lydia Milnes	U.S. District Court of West Virginia Judge Irene M. Keeley Clarksburg, WA
Alexandra Minnaar	U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas Judge Diana Saldona Laredo, TX
Dorian Morello	MA Appeals Court Judge Marc Kantrowitz Boston, MA
Jeffery Morgan	MA Trial Court Juvenile Court Division Boston, MA
Joanna Munson	US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit Office of Staff Attorney New York, NY
Karlo Ng	U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas U.S. Magistrate Judge Adriana Arce-Flores Laredo, TX
Hellen Papavizas	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Joanna Sandman	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Pamela Schieffelin	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Justin Stempeck	MA Superior Court Boston, MA

Erik Tomberg	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Katherine Vanderscoff	MA Probate & Family Court Springfield, MA
Ryan Williams	New Hampshire Supreme Court Justice James E. Duggan Concord, NH
Heather Yountz	MA Appeals Court Boston, MA
Michael Yu	CT Superior Court New Haven, CT

CLASS OF 2006

Kavita Bhandary-Alexander	DC Superior Court Judge Linda Davis Washington, DC
Kathryn Birkby	MA Appeals Court Judge Cohen Boston, MA
Matthew Bray	US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit Office of Staff Attorney New York, NY
Asha Bryant	NJ Superior Court Judge Melendez Camden, NJ
Joseph Calandrelli	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Tuna Chatterjee	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Jessica Davis	MA Land Court Boston, MA
Monica Elkinton	Alaska Superior Court Judge Sen K. Tan Anchorage, AK
Jill Franciosi	MA Superior Court Boston, MA

Joshua Gutierrez	MA Land Court Boston, MA
Alejandra Hung	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Jeremiah Iadevaia	U.S. District Court for the SDNY Magistrate Judge Debra Freeman New York, NY
Laura Langley	MA Appeals Court Judge David Mills Boston, MA
Sarah London	Vermont Supreme Court Justice John Dooley Montpelier, VT
Kelly Lux	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Ann Lynch	MA Superior Court Western Region
Lizabeth Marshall	MA District Court Boston, MA
Julia Meconiates	US District Court for the Dist. of Puerto Rico Judge Hector Lafitte Hato Rey, PR
Rob Moore	MA Appeals Court Judge Fernande Duffly Boston, MA
Rachel Munoz	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Amy Silverman	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Julia Tomasi	First District Court of Appeal Judge Ricky Poston Tallahassee, FL
Elizabeth Verbitsky	MA Superior Court Boston, MA

CLASS OF 2005

Shalanda Baker	MA Supreme Court Associate Justice Roderick Ireland Boston, MA
Zachary Berk	RI Supreme Court Trial Court Law Clerk Department Providence, RI
Mario Choi	New York Supreme Court Commercial Division The Honorable Richard Lowe, III New York, NY
Shannon Choy	MA Appeals Court The Honorable Cynthia Cohen Boston, MA
Riad Defreitas	Circuit Court for Montgomery County Rockville, MD
Mama Diouf	State of New York Unified Court System Legal Fellows Program New York, NY
Daniel Garcia	Alaska Court System Anchorage, AK
Jennifer Handel	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Erik Harper	U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9 th Circuit Office of the Staff Attorney San Francisco, CA
Erin Hendrick	NH Supreme Court The Honorable James E. Duggan Concord, NH
Deborah Huffman	U.S. District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia The Honorable Robert C. Chambers Huntington, WV
David Hunt	MA Land Court Associate Justice Leon Lombardi Boston, MA
Stephanie Khalifa	NY Unified Court System Supreme Court-Commercial Division New York, NY

Matthew Kirouac	MA Superior Court Boston, MA
Jaclyn Leung	CT Superior Court New Haven, CT
Laurie Martindale	U.S. District Court of Hawaii The Honorable Kevin S.C. Chang Honolulu, HI
Vanessa Peck	U.S. Bankruptcy Court The Honorable Henry J. Boroff Worcester, MA
Alison Spooner	U.S. District Court The Honorable Robert E. Keeton Boston, MA
Lonna Steinberg	MA Appeals Court The Honorable Frederick L. Brown Boston, MA
Patrick Taylor	NH Supreme Court The Honorable Linda Dalianis Concord, NH
Jennifer Turco	NH Supreme Court The Honorable James E. Duggan Concord, NH
Erik Wiebust	U.S. Court of Appeals 2 nd Circuit The Honorable Peter W. Hall Rutland, VT
Daniel Wirth	MA Probate and Family Court Boston, MA

Appendix D

**LIST OF JUDICIAL CLERKSHIPS HELD BY NORTHEASTERN
GRADUATES FROM 1971 - 2009**

<u>STATE</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE/OFFICE</u>
Alaska	U.S. District	Fitzgerald Singleton
	Supreme	Burke Compton Fabe
	Appeals	Bryner Coates Mannheimer Singleton
	Superior	Card Carlson Fabe Gonzalez Greene Rowland Serdahely Shortell Smith Suddock Tan Weeks
Arizona	Court of Appeals	Corcoran Froeb Kessler
California	U.S. Court of Appeals	Aldisert Ferguson Staff Attorneys Office
	U.S. District	Brown Jones Karlton Marshall Sweigert Timlin Woodruff
	Supreme	Rose

<u>STATE</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE/OFFICE</u>
Colorado	U.S. District	Matsch
	Supreme	Kirshbaum Mallarkey Martinez
	Appeals	Criswell Taubman
	Probate	
Connecticut	U.S. District	Arterton Burns Covello Dorsey Thompson
	Supreme	Berdon Glass
	Appeals	Bishop Spear
	Superior	
	Judicial Branch	Legal Research
Delaware	Supreme	Herman
District of Columbia	U.S. District	Bazon Bryant Davis Green
	U.S. Court of Federal Claims	
	Court of Appeals	Ruiz Wagner
	Superior	Anderson Burgess Jackson Kravitz Shuker Taylor Ugast
Florida	U.S. Court of Appeals	Roney
	U.S. District	Spellman

<u>STATE</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE/OFFICE</u>
Florida (con't.)	First District Court of Appeal U.S. Bankruptcy	Poston Hyman
Georgia	U.S. District Supreme - Civil Court Fulton City	Feldman Freeman Shoob Hill
Hawaii	U.S. District Supreme Intermediate Court of Appeals First Circuit Third Circuit District	Chang Klein Menor Wakatsuki Wilson Watanabe Ibarra
Iowa	U.S. District	Melloy Wolle
Illinois	U.S. Court of Appeals U.S. District Appellate	Motions Clerk Staff Attorneys Office Baker Marovitz Alloy
Maine	U.S. Court of Appeals U.S. District Supreme Judicial Superior	Coffin Carter Cohen Gignoux Rudman Scolnik Warnick Wathen
Maryland	U.S. District U.S. Bankruptcy Court of Appeals	Day Robinson Eldridge

<u>STATE</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE/OFFICE</u>
Massachusetts (con't.)	Superior Probate & Family Court Land Court Juvenile District	Cohen Cutter Doerfer Duffly Dreben Fine Gillerman Goodman Grant Greenberg Hale Kafker Kantrowitz Kaplan Kass Keville Laurence Lenk McHugh Mills Rapoza Rose Kilburn Lombardi Piper Grossman
Michigan	U.S. Court of Appeals U.S. District	Edwards White Cook Pepe Roberts
Minnesota	U.S. District Supreme 6 th District	Lord Montgomery Renner Wahl Starr
Missouri	U.S. Court of Appeals	Staff Attorneys Office

<u>STATE</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE/OFFICE</u>
Missouri (con't.)	U.S. District	Blanton
Montana	U.S. District	Murray
Nevada	Supreme	Shearing
New Hampshire	U.S. Court of Appeals	Bownes Stahl
	U.S. District	Devine Stahl
	Supreme	Brock Dalianis Duggan
	Superior	Griffith Grimes
New Jersey	U.S. Court of Appeals	Cowen
	U.S. District	Fisher Fitzgerald Haneke Irenas Thompson
	Supreme	Welentz
	Superior	Coleman Dortch Gaeta Harris Kentz King Lawson Lynch Melendez Muir Rodriguez Yanoff
New Mexico	Supreme	Montgomery
	Court of Appeals	Armijo Hendley Pickard

<u>STATE</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE/OFFICE</u>
New York	U.S. Court of Appeals U.S. District Supreme - Appellate Division Civil Supreme - Commercial Division All State Courts - Legal Fellows Program	Motions Clerk Pro Se Clerk Staff Attorneys Office Broderick Cangilos-Ruiz Chrein Dolinger Ellis Freeman Johnson Lasker Munson Orenstein Stewart Wright
North Carolina	U.S. Court of Appeals U.S. District Court of Appeals	Phillips McMillan Webb Elmore
Oregon	Court of Appeals Supreme	Newman Rossman
Pennsylvania	U.S. Court of Appeals U.S. District Superior Mercer County Lawrence County	Aldisert Nygaard Staff Attorneys Office Fullam Giles Green McClure Muir Shapiro Van Antwerpen Pro Se Clerk Chronister

<u>STATE</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE/OFFICE</u>
Pennsylvania (con't.)	Court of Common Pleas	Keller Ludgate O'Keefe
Puerto Rico	U.S. District	Arenas Cerezo Delgado-Colon Lafitte
Rhode Island	U.S. Bankruptcy U.S. District Supreme Superior	DeCesaris Boudewyns Lagueaux Lisi Doris Fay Shyea Weisberger Williams
South Carolina	U.S. District	Perry
Tennessee	Court of Appeals	Cantrell Susano
Texas	U.S. Court of Appeals U.S. District Supreme Court of Criminal Appeals	Gee Abel Arce-Flores McDonald Saldona Sanders Wallace
Utah	U.S. Court of Appeals	Murphy
Vermont	U.S. Court of Appeals U.S. District	Hall Oakes Holden Niedermeier

<u>STATE</u>	<u>COURT</u>	<u>JUDGE/OFFICE</u>
Vermont (con't.)	Supreme Superior Trial	Allen Dooley Gibson Morse Peck
Virginia	U.S. District	Merhige Michael
Virgin Islands	U.S. District Territorial	Young Hodge
Washington	U.S. Court of Appeals U.S. District Supreme Court of Appeals	Staff Attorneys Office Whaley Bridge Forrest Grosse James
West Virginia	U.S. District	Chambers Keeley Seibert
Wisconsin	U.S. District	Adelman Crabb

Appendix E

LIST OF CURRENT JUDGES WHO ARE NORTHEASTERN GRADUATES

The Honorable John P. Arnold
New Hampshire Superior Court
Concord, NH

Springfield, MA

The Honorable Janet Bond Arterton
U.S. District Court
New Haven, CT

The Honorable Eleanore M. Garber
Kentucky Circuit Court
Jefferson County
Louisville, KY

The Honorable Carol S. Ball
Massachusetts Superior Court
Boston, MA

The Honorable Herschel H. Hamlen, Jr.
Georgia Magistrate Court
Cobb County
Marietta, GA

The Honorable Margot Botsford
Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court
Boston, MA

The Honorable Pedro Jiminez, Jr.
Family Division, Mercer County
Trenton, NJ

The Honorable James B. Breese
Colorado District Court
2nd Judicial District, Denver County
Denver, CO

The Honorable Sally A. Kelly
Boston Municipal Court
Central Division
Boston, MA

The Honorable Timothy M. Burgess
U.S. District Court
Anchorage, AK

The Honorable Kenneth King
MA Juvenile Court
Boston, MA

The Honorable James Cott
US Magistrate Judge
Southern District of New York

The Honorable Eliza C. Klein
U.S. Immigration Court
Boston, MA

The Honorable Elizabeth A. Doyle
Blair County Court
Hollidaysburg, PA

The Honorable Diana L. Maldonado
Massachusetts District Court
Suffok County, Chelsea Division
Chelsea, MA

The Honorable Nancy Dusek-Gomez
Massachusetts District Court
Hampshire County
Eastern Hampshire Division
Ware, MA

The Honorable Landya Boyer McCafferty
US Magistrate Judge
District of New Hampshire

The Honorable Dana A. Fabe
Alaska Supreme Court
Anchorage, AK

The Honorable John M. Mott
District of Columbia Superior Court
Washington, DC

The Honorable Robert Fields
Massachusetts Housing Court
Western MA Division

The Honorable Gary A. Nickerson
Massachusetts Superior Court

Boston, MA

The Honorable Angela M. Ordonez
Massachusetts Probate & Family Court
Norfolk County
Canton, MA

The Honorable Ramon Ocasio
Circuit Court of Cook County
Chicago, IL

The Honorable Lynn Pickard
New Mexico Court of Appeals
Santa Fe, NM

The Honorable Stephanie L. Rhoades
Alaska District Court
Anchorage, AK

The Honorable Stuart M. Rice
California Superior Court
Los Angeles, CA

The Honorable Delissa A. Ridgway
U.S. Court of International Trade
New York, NY

The Honorable Victoria A. Roberts
U.S. District Court, Eastern Michigan
Detroit, MI

The Honorable Jose Sanchez
Massachusetts Juvenile Court
Essex County
Salem, MA

The Honorable Kevin Sidel

Colorado District Court
18th Judicial District, Elbert County
Kiowa, CO

The Honorable Severlin B. Singleton, III
Massachusetts District Court
Middlesex County, Cambridge Division
Cambridge, MA

The Honorable Anthony P. Sullivan
Boston Municipal Court Department
Charlestown Division
Charlestown, MA

The Honorable Sen K. Tan
Alaska Superior Court
Anchorage, AK

The Honorable Gwendolyn R. Tyre
Massachusetts Juvenile Court
Middlesex County
Lowell, MA

The Honorable David Weingarten
Boston Municipal Court
Boston, MA

The Honorable Ronald A. Wilson
South Tuscon Municipal Court
Tucson, AZ

The Honorable Paul Wooten
New York Supreme Court
Brooklyn, NY

Appendix F

**SAMPLE COVER LETTERS
FOR APPLYING FOR JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP POSITIONS**

2 Huntington Avenue
Boston, MA 02115

September 5, 200_

The Honorable Linda McGovern
United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit
P.O. Box 1244
Federal Building
Tampa, Florida 07111

Dear Judge McGovern:

I am currently a third year student at Northeastern University School of Law in Boston, Massachusetts. I am writing to apply for a position as a law clerk with your court to begin in the fall of 201_. I am especially interested in clerking with your court because of the intellectual challenge of appellate work. I am a graduate of the University of Florida and plan to return to Florida to practice law after graduation.

Through Northeastern University School of Law's Cooperative Legal Education program, I have gained substantial legal research and writing experience. I recently completed a judicial internship with Judge Jones of the Massachusetts Superior Court where I performed the traditional responsibilities of a law clerk. I wrote drafts of several judicial opinions and had extensive opportunities to observe trials and discuss litigation tactics and evidentiary issues with Judge Jones. I have also completed internships at the law firm of North & Eastern, a small general practice firm in Cambridge, MA and with the Appellate Unit of the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office in Boston, MA. In these diverse settings, I have conducted legal research and wrote memoranda on a wide variety of civil and criminal law issues.

Northeastern does not issue letter or number grades and does not have class rank. Instead, our transcript is comprised of our narrative course and internship evaluations. The strength of my research and writing skills is evidenced by the performance evaluations which I have received from both my professors and legal internship supervisors. I have worked as a Lawyering Fellow for our first year "Legal Skills in Social Context (LSSC)" Course and as a Research Assistant for one of my law school professors. I am confident that my strong academic record, teaching and research experience as well as my practical legal work experience have provided me with the research, writing, and analytical skills to be an effective law clerk.

I have enclosed a copy of my resume, transcript, and a writing sample. Additionally, I have enclosed a brief summary of Northeastern University School of Law's grading system. I hope that my credentials and experience are of interest to you. I look forward to hearing from you soon concerning my candidacy. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Robert Collins

Enclosures

40 Forsyth Street
Boston, MA 02115

September 5, 200_

The Honorable John Smith
United States Magistrate Judge
United States District Court for the District of Connecticut
915 Lafayette Blvd.
Bridgeport, CT 06604

Dear Judge Smith:

I am currently a third year law student at Northeastern University School of Law in Boston, Massachusetts and am writing to apply for a position as a law clerk with your court to begin in the fall of 201_. I have strong ties to the state of Connecticut and intend to practice law there after graduation.

As you are aware, since you have hired students through our Cooperative Legal Education Program (“Co-op”), Northeastern students graduate with one full year of practical legal work experience gained through four legal internships. I have completed internships with the United States Attorney’s Office in Boston, the Legal Advocacy and Resource Center, a legal services telephone hotline and referral agency, and Davis Malm and D’Agostine, a medium size general practice firm in Boston. Through my legal internships, I have had the opportunity to develop and refine my research, writing, analytical and client skills as well as gain exposure to many different areas of law.

In addition to my legal internships, I have had substantial law-related volunteer experience during and before law school, which includes clinical experience working with victims of domestic violence, completing a project with a team of first year students for a non-profit agency through my “Legal Skills in Social Context (LSSC)” course, working as an advocate for a victims’ advocacy group and as a legislative aide for a United States Congressman. I believe I can make a valuable contribution to your court as a law clerk because I have a strong academic record and have learned a great deal about the legal system and the work environments for which I am best suited.

Enclosed for your review is a resume, law school transcript, writing sample and three letters of recommendation. I would greatly appreciate an opportunity to meet with you to discuss my interest in serving as your law clerk during the 201_ - 201_ court term. If you would like any further information, please feel free to contact me at (617) 234-1234. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Allison Rogers

50 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

May 1, 200_

The Honorable Peter Barrister
North Carolina Superior Court
One Main Street
Charleston, NC 88768

Dear Judge Barrister:

I am currently a third year student at Northeastern University School of Law and am writing to apply for a position as a law clerk beginning in the fall of 201_. Enclosed please find a resume, writing sample, three letters of recommendation, copies of my undergraduate and law school transcripts, and a letter explaining Northeastern's academic program and evaluation system.

Northeastern has a unique Cooperative Legal Education Program whereby after a traditional first year, students alternate every quarter between working full-time as legal interns and attending classes. As a result, students complete four internships and graduate with one full year of practical legal work experience. I recently completed a judicial internship with Judge Edward Murphy of the Massachusetts Superior Court. As a legal intern, I performed extensive research and drafted bench memoranda on civil cases pending before the court. I also prepared case summaries and had the opportunity to observe and participate in the proceedings of a busy state trial court. I very much enjoyed many aspects of my judicial internship experience, including the intellectual challenge of researching and writing about a broad range of legal issues as well as the exposure to the litigation process. This experience confirmed my interest in seeking a clerkship in a state trial court after I graduate. I am applying for a clerkship with you and your court because of your outstanding reputation. I also have many ties to North Carolina, which include friends and family who live there.

I have additional practical legal experience that I gained through my internships in the AIDS law unit at the Jamaica Plain Legal Services Center and the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, Administrative Law Division. In the AIDS law unit, I handled my own case load, which consisted of drafting estate planning documents and assisting clients in filing for bankruptcy. In the AG's office, I assisted attorneys who represented state agencies in affirmative and defensive litigation. During law school, I was selected to be a teaching assistant for a small section of our first year legal research and writing course. The experience of teaching students' research, writing and advocacy skills strengthened my own skills in this area. I also worked as a paralegal for two years in a small litigation firm prior to attending law school. I believe that my professional experience between college and law school and my law school teaching and internship experiences have prepared me well for the duties of a law clerk.

I look forward to hearing from you and I hope to have the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my application.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Rogers

Enclosure

22 Center Street, #2
Cambridge, MA 02139

August 29, 20__

Linda Reynolds
Massachusetts Superior Court
90 Devonshire Street, Room 1417
Boston, MA 02109

Dear Ms. Reynolds:

I am writing to apply for a judicial clerkship for the 201_ through 201_ term. I am currently a third year student at Northeastern University School of Law. Working as a clerk interests me because it offers a unique opportunity to be exposed to a wide variety of cases and to do in-depth analysis of both plaintiffs' and defendants' claims. Moreover, I can think of nothing as satisfying as working each day to "do justice" and help people resolve their conflicts. While I am fairly confident that I want to spend the duration of my career in the criminal justice field, I think it would be valuable to have the broad exposure to civil and criminal matters that a clerkship offers.

Through Northeastern's Cooperative Legal Education Program, I completed a co-op with the Honorable Katherine Black in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. During that co-op, I had the wonderful opportunity to get a sense of what a clerkship entails. In Judge Black's chambers, I was challenged to research complex issues of federal and state law and write up my findings quickly and succinctly. Moreover, I discovered that I tremendously enjoy the intellectual and creative process involved in performing factual and legal analysis and condensing it into clear, concise writing. I have also completed internships with the U.S. Attorney's Office in Boston, MA, Shapiro, Weissberg and Garin, a small firm specializing in criminal and employment law, and the Committee for Public Counsel Services. Through these internships, I gained additional research and writing skills as well as experience interviewing and representing clients.

As my resume indicates, I have solid research and writing experience outside the legal realm. For the four years I attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, I worked at its student-run daily newspaper. During that time, I learned to take all the facts and details of a given event and weave them together to create a unified story. I also learned how to balance a full class load with a full-time job.

In addition to my resume, please find two writing samples, two letters of recommendation, the trial court application and my law school transcript. I would very much appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my interest in a clerkship with the Superior Court.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Margaret Lee

38 Charles Road
Somerville, MA 02144

August ____, 20__

Frank C. Mockler³
Managing Attorney
Massachusetts Appeals Court
John Adams Courthouse
1 Pemberton Square, Suite 3500
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Mr. Mockler:

I am interested in applying for a clerkship to begin next fall with the MA Appeals Court. I am particularly interested in an appellate clerkship because I enjoy the intellectual challenge of working on complex legal issues. I have experience working on appellate issues in courses, including Appellate Advocacy and Constitutional Litigation, and during my co-op with the Appeals Unit of the Middlesex District Attorney's office. I have also had experience working on trial court litigation, which includes a co-op with MA Superior Court Judge Brassard and with several law firms. Through these experiences, I developed an understanding of the difference in the nature of trial and appellate work as well as enhanced my legal skills, gained broad exposure to numerous areas of law and developed professional confidence.

I have enclosed my resume, a copy of my law school transcript and two letters of recommendation. I hope I have the opportunity to meet with you to discuss my interest in a clerkship with the MA Appeals Court.

Sincerely,

David Franciosi

³ Frank Mockler is the Attorney who initially screens all of the MA Appeals Court clerkship applications. He has been on panels at the law school and expressly stated that he strongly prefers short basic letters. This is an example of such a letter.