

University of South Carolina School of Law Employer Handbook

<u>Table of Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
Non-Discrimination Policy	1
Procedures for On-campus Interviews	2
Parking	2
Transfer Student Grades and Class Ranks	2
Grading Policies	3
Class Ranks, Credentials, and Grade Verification	3
Journals	4
Moot Court and Mock Trial	5
Pro Bono Program	5
Honor Societies	5
Honors and Awards	6 - 7
National Association for Law Placement (NALP) Principles & Standards	
General Standards for the Timing of Offers and Decisions	8 - 9*
Principles for Employers	10 - 12

***PLEASE NOTE THE NALP GENERAL STANDARDS FOR TIMING OF OFFERS AND DECISIONS HAS CHANGED. SEE PAGES 8-9.**

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT

The University of South Carolina School of Law has long been committed to a policy against discrimination. The School is a member of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) and is committed to abide by AALS standards of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, handicap or disability. Accordingly, the Law School's facilities are available only to employers whose practices are consistent with this policy.

The Law School is also a member of the National Association for Law Placement (NALP) and adheres to the standards set forth by the Association. By using the Office of Career Services for on-campus interviews, resume forwarding, or job postings, employers agree to abide by both University and NALP guidelines for employment offers, non-discriminatory hiring practices, and recruiting activities.

Copies of the NALP guidelines sections "Principles for Employers" and "General Standards for the Timing of Offers and Decisions" are included in the Employer Guidelines section at the end of this material.

Procedures for On-campus Interviews

All interviews at the University of South Carolina Law School are pre-screened by employers.

Upon receipt of the employer registration form, the Office of Career Services posts information including the name of the employer, interview and deadline dates, class year of students to be interviewed, and preferred hiring criteria. Resumes of students who wish to be considered for interviews are sent by email, or by express mail at the employer's expense, approximately fifteen (15) days prior to a campus visit. Employers fax or email the Career Services Office a list of the students they have chosen to interview. Career Services then notifies students to sign up for interview times.

Interviews are scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. unless otherwise requested when interview lists are returned by the employer. The schedule provides a one hour lunch break and very brief morning and afternoon breaks. Interviewers should arrive at the Office of Career Services, Suite 139, between 8:30 and 8:45 a.m. Upon arrival, interviewers will be given their final schedule and shown to their interviewing location. The office staff will take messages for employers while they are on-campus and will also relay messages to students you may be trying to contact.

Parking

The Office of Career Services has Visitor Parking decals available, which allow parking in the "D" lot directly in front of the law school or in other university lots. Parking is on a first-come, first-serve basis; after 8:40 a.m. there are seldom any spaces in the law school lot. If there are no spaces in the nearby lots, metered parking is available on all streets surrounding the law school. The decal will allow parking in any University lot, but does not guarantee a space. **The decal must be visible in the rear window on the driver's side, and must display the date of the interview.** Cars in university lots must be parked with the rear bumper facing out.

Transfer Student Grades and Class Ranks

Transfer students enter USC School of Law at the beginning of their second year of law studies. ***Transfer students during their second year of law school have no USC class rank.*** At the completion of two full semesters at USC, transfer students become members of the third year class; at the end of the spring semester of their second year, their cumulative GPA and class rank are computed on the basis of all law school grades earned (their work at USC and all work accepted for transfer credit). In effect, the third year class will expand by the number of transfer students and, within the expanded class, class ranks for all students will be calculated accordingly. All members of the expanded third year class are eligible for all University and School of Law academic awards based on their cumulative GPAs.

Grading Policy

The Law School has a mandatory Grade Distribution Policy. The purpose of the grade distribution policy is to maintain relative parity among the faculty, particularly among first year sections. Various systems of grade distribution (curves) are used by a number of law schools.

Our current policy requires that for first year courses the average of all grades in each particular class fall in the range from 2.7 to 3.0.

For upper level courses in which the enrollment exceeds 25 students, grade distribution is recommended but not mandatory. In those upper level courses using grade distribution, the average should fall within + or -.25 of the average GPA of the students entering that course. The grade distribution policy is not applicable to smaller upper class courses.

The University of South Carolina School of Law utilizes a four point grading scale as follows: A = 4.0; B+ = 3.5; B = 3.0; C+ = 2.5; C = 2.0; D+ = 1.5; D = 1.0; F = 0.0.

Class Ranks, Credentials, and Grade Verification

Students have several options in providing an indication of grades on their resumes. Students may list their GPA, individual class rank, and/or their percentile rank. Class rankings are compiled only at the end of spring and fall semesters. Class ranks vary each year; below is a table showing ranks (as of June 2008) for the classes of 2009 and 2010. The GPAs of 1Ls are usually somewhat lower than those of upper class students.

Class of 2009:

Top 5% = 3.758

Top 10% = 3.583

Top 15% = 3.500

Top 20% = 3.426

Top 25% = 3.377

Top 33% = 3.262

Top 50% = 3.103

Class of 2010:

Top 5% = 3.750

Top 10% = 3.550

Top 15% = 3.450

Top 20% = 3.350

Top 25% = 3.300

Top 33% = 3.150

Top 50% = 2.933

Employers are encouraged to request unofficial student transcripts if desired. It is an Honor Code violation for a student's resume to include false or misleading information.

Journals

A writing competition, open to all first year students, is held in the spring. Students who want to be considered for membership on a journal are given a legal problem and must write an analytical paper on the issue presented. Students rank the journal(s) of their choice. Grades are an important component for some journals, but not for all.

South Carolina Law Review

Law Review membership is determined by combining an evaluation of a student's legal writing ability with their first year grades. The competition paper's score is averaged with the student's grade point average for the first year, with each part given equal weight. Students with the highest averages (and who have also stated a preference for *Law Review* over the other journals) then receive offers to join the *Law Review*. The student who receives the highest writing competition score is the recipient of the Victor A. Michalewicz Annual Award for Excellence in Legal Writing.

ABA Real Property, Probate and Trust Journal

Faculty who teach in the areas of Property Law, Trusts & Estates, and Tax Law select the members of this Journal, based on a combination of grades and writing competition. The Real Property, Probate and Trust Journal is published quarterly by the Real Property, Probate and Trust Section of the American Bar Association; the law school serves as the host affiliate for the Journal. Journal members receive detailed training and carry out extensive editing duties.

South Carolina Environmental Law Journal

The South Carolina Environmental Law Journal, unlike those journals published in other states, specializes in environmental issues of particular importance to South Carolina and to the region. Members of the Environmental Law Journal are chosen by the previous year's student editorial board, based upon the writing competition held in conjunction with the other journals. Grades are not a basis for selection.

Journal of Law and Education

The Journal of Law and Education is a national publication specializing in the important legal issues affecting education in the United States. Since its inception more than ten years ago, this journal has been published at the University of South Carolina School of Law. Originally, only one or two students were chosen by the faculty advisor to work on this journal each year; more recently, a full editorial board is selected based on the writing competition.

South Carolina Journal of International Law and Business

Members of the Journal of International Law and Business are chosen by the previous year's student editorial board, based upon the writing competition held in conjunction with the other journals. Grades are not a basis for selection.

Moot Court and Mock Trial

The Moot Court Bar members are chosen each year from the second year class. In the fall, second year students write a brief and then participate in oral arguments judged by local attorneys. The top 20 to 25 people are selected for membership in the Moot Court Bar. In the spring semester, moot court members argue again. The five top scoring participants are named as captains of the interscholastic teams which represent the law school. The top oralist from the spring round for each issue is invited to argue the hypothetical case before the South Carolina Supreme Court or Court of Appeals.

The Moot Court Bar also sponsors the J. Woodrow Lewis Third Year Moot Court Competition and the Mock Trial Competition. The competitors in the J. Woodrow Lewis Competition must write a brief and participate in two rounds of oral arguments. The two best advocates argue before three members of the South Carolina Supreme Court and a winner is chosen. The Mock Trial Competition is an extensive elimination competition in which two 2-person teams are chosen to go to the national competition. The competition is based on an actual trial scenario.

Pro Bono Program

The pro bono program for law students at the University of South Carolina Law School was formed in 1989. Since that time, it has become a nationally and locally recognized program. While law students do not formally undertake professional obligations until admission to the bar, the School of Law believes that it is important to foster the ethic of professional service in aspiring lawyers. The Pro Bono Program provides a wide range of opportunities for law students who volunteer. Not only do the participants obtain legal knowledge and skills, but they also experience an enormous personal reward from helping the less fortunate in our community.

Honor Societies

Order of the Coif

The University of South Carolina School of Law is one of approximately 60 law schools in the country which has a chapter of this national honorary legal society which recognizes outstanding student scholarship. Membership is limited to the top 10% of each graduating class. Members are inducted the morning of graduation; no students are members prior to graduation.

Order of the Wig and Robe

This local honorary organization annually recognizes outstanding students on the basis of scholarship (top 10% of the 2L class; top 15% of the 3L class). The student with the highest average is named Chief Justice, and the second highest is named Clerk of Court.

Order of Barristers

The Order of Barristers is a national honorary society recognizing law students who have excelled in oral advocacy. Each year the USC Moot Court Bar confers this honor upon the top eight oralists in the second year Moot Court competition.

Honors and Awards

(Not all awards are presented every year)

Alternative Dispute Resolution Writing Competition Award is presented to the student who writes the best research paper on an ADR topic.

Anthony Raymond Scholarship is presented annually to a disabled student who exemplifies the qualities of courage, determination, and advocacy for the rights of the disabled.

Barney O. Smith Trial Competition Award is presented to the winner of the trial competition.

CALI Award is presented to the student who earns the highest grade in each section of a class. (Comparable to previous Am Jur. Awards.)

Claude N. Sapp Award is presented to the senior student who is chosen by his or her classmates as possessing the best combination of scholarship, leadership, and industry.

Compleat Lawyer Awards are presented in the late spring or at graduation to three third year students who, by their performance in law school, their leadership activities, and their relationships with fellow students and professors, have demonstrated that they will meet their obligations as lawyers in an exemplary manner.

Cy Young Award is presented in the spring to the third year student with the highest GPA.

Coleman Karesh Award is presented in the spring to the second year student with the highest GPA.

Dean's List includes students who earned a grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a minimum of 12 credited semester hours.

Dean's Medallion was originated by former Dean Harry M. Lightsey, Jr. and is presented annually, at graduation, to the graduate with the highest GPA.

Edward C. Roberts Award is presented to the third year student who submits the best research paper.

G. G. Dowling Award is presented to the student who typifies outstanding qualities of integrity, concern for others, and legal scholarship, as selected by the Dean.

Hugh Willcox Pro Bono Student of the Year Award is presented in the spring to a student who has actively participated in the Pro Bono Program and has given unselfishly of his or her time.

Irving Steinberg Award is presented to the outstanding third year student in Workers' Compensation.

John Holland Scholarship is awarded to the third year student who demonstrates leadership and a commitment to extracurricular activities, with consideration given to academic performance and

financial need.

J. Woodrow Lewis Competition Award goes to the winner of the third year Moot Court Competition.

Karen Lee Award is presented to the second year student who best combines dedication to academic pursuits with a genuine concern for the welfare of fellow classmates.

Kevin S. Curry Memorial Scholarship is presented biannually to a student who exemplifies ability, courage, and concern for others. Preference is given to a student with a medical disability.

Luther Lee Phi Alpha Delta Service Award is presented by Phi Alpha Delta to a member who exhibits qualities of leadership and service.

Outstanding Senior Research Paper is a silver cup presented to the third year student who submits the best research paper, as determined by the academic dean.

President's List includes students who earned a grade point average of 4.0 on a minimum of 12 credited semester hours.

Pro Bono Volunteer of the Year Award is presented to a student who demonstrates a strong commitment to public service through the law school's Pro Bono Program and who exhibits a genuine concern for others.

Professor Arthur B. Custy Award is given to the outstanding third year student in Tax.

Richard J. Foster Award is presented in the spring to the first year student with the highest GPA.

Stanley H. Kohn Scholarship is awarded to a student demonstrating scholastic achievement, high moral character, financial need, and active participation in Phi Alpha Delta.

Student Bar Association (SBA) Service Award is presented by the SBA to the senior law student who exemplifies leadership, support, and continued service to the SBA, as determined by the SBA Executive Council.

Susan McCrary Scholarship Award is presented to a rising third year student who has actively participated in volunteer organizations such as the Pro Bono Board, the Public Interest Law Society, Guardian Ad Litem, and other law school activities.

Susan McCrary Volunteer of the Year Award is presented annually to a Women in Law member who best embodies the spirit of a volunteer.

Victor Michalewitz Award is presented to the student who submits the best paper in the Law Review writing competition.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR LAW PLACEMENT (NALP)

PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS FOR LAW PLACEMENT AND RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES

General Standards for the Timing of Offers and Decisions

To promote fair and ethical practices for the interviewing and decision-making process, NALP offers the following standards for the timing of offers and decisions:

A. General Provisions

1. All offers to law students should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the offer letter unless the offers are made pursuant to Paragraphs B and C below, in which case the later response date should apply.
2. Candidates are expected to accept or release offers or request an extension by the applicable deadline. Offers that are not accepted by the offer deadline expire.
3. A student should not hold open more than five offers of employment at any one time. For each offer received that places a student over the offer limit, the student should, within one week of receipt of the excess offer, release an offer.
4. Employers offering part-time or temporary positions for the school term are exempted from the requirements of Paragraphs B and C below.
5. Practices inconsistent with these guidelines should be reported to the student's career services office.

B. Full-Time Employment Provisions

1. Employers offering full-time positions to commence following graduation to law students not previously employed by them should leave those offers open for at least 45 days following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first. Offers made after December 15 for full-time positions to commence following graduation should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the offer letter.
2. Students may request that an employer extend the deadline to accept the employer's offer until as late as April 1 if the student is actively pursuing positions with public interest or government organizations. Students may hold open only one offer in such circumstances. Employers are encouraged to grant such requests.
3. Employers offering full-time positions to commence following graduation to candidates previously employed by them should leave those offers open until at least November 15 of the

candidate's final year of law school.

4. Employers offering candidates full-time positions to commence following graduation and having a total of 40 attorneys or fewer in all offices are exempted from the provisions of this section. Offers made on or before December 15 should remain open for a minimum of three weeks. Offers made after December 15 should remain open for at least two weeks.

C. Summer Employment Provisions for Second and Third Year Students

1. Employers offering positions for the following summer to candidates not previously employed by them should leave those offers open for at least 45 days following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first. Offers made after December 15 for the following summer should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the offer letter.

2. Students may request that an employer extend the deadline to accept the employer's offer until as late as April 1 if the student is actively pursuing positions with public interest or government organizations. Students may hold open only one offer in such circumstances. Employers are encouraged to grant such requests.

3. Employers offering positions for the following summer to candidates previously employed by them should leave those offers open until at least November 15.

4. Employers offering candidates positions for the following summer and having a total of 40 attorneys or fewer in all offices are exempted from the provisions of this section. Offers made on or before December 15 should remain open for a minimum of three weeks. Offers made after December 15 should remain open for at least two weeks.

D. Summer Employment Provisions for First Year Students

1. Law schools should not offer career services to first-semester first year law students prior to November 1 except in the case of part-time students who may be given assistance in seeking positions during the school term.

2. Prospective employers and first year law students should not initiate contact with one another and employers should not interview or make offers to first year students before December 1.

3. All offers to first year students for summer employment should remain open for at least two weeks after the date made.

Principles for Employers

A. Employers should maintain productive working relationships with law schools.

1. Employers should inform the law school office of career services in advance of any recruiting activities involving their students, whether conducted on- or off-campus, and should, at the conclusion of those activities, inform the office of career services of the results obtained.
2. Employers without formal recruiting programs or whose hiring activities are sporadic in nature should notify the law school office of career services as far in advance as possible of planned recruiting activities in order that appropriate assistance might be arranged.
3. Employers who conduct on-campus interviews should refrain from making unnecessary schedule change requests.

B. Employers should respect the policies, procedures and legal obligations of individual law schools and should request only services or information that are consistent therewith.

1. Employers should not expect or request preferential services from law schools.
2. Employers should not solicit information received by law schools in confidence from candidates or other employers.
3. Appointments with candidates for in-house interviews should be established for a mutually convenient time so as not to unduly disrupt students' studies.
4. Employers should promptly report to the office of career services any misrepresentation or other abuse by students of the employment search process.

C. Employers should provide full and accurate information about the organization and the positions for which recruitment is being conducted.

1. Employers should provide to law schools complete organizational information as contained in the NALP Employer Questionnaire: (http://www.law.sc.edu/career/employer/employer_questionnaire.pdf) well in advance of any recruitment activities. Position descriptions should include information about the qualifications sought in candidates, the hiring timetable, nature of the work, the number of available positions, and, if known at the time, the starting salary to be offered.
2. Invitations for in-office interviews should include a clear explanation of any expense reimbursement policies and procedures.

D. Employer organizations are responsible for the conduct of their recruiters and for any representation made by them.

1. Employers should designate recruiters who are both skilled and knowledgeable about the employing organization.
2. Employers should instruct interviewers not to make any unauthorized commitments.
3. Candidates' personal privacy should be safeguarded. Information about candidates that is protected by law should not be disclosed by an employer to any third party without specific permission.

E. Employers should use valid, job related criteria when evaluating candidates.

1. Hiring decisions must be based solely on bona fide occupational qualifications.
2. Employers should carefully avoid conduct of any kind during the interview and selection process that acts or appears to act to discriminate unlawfully or in any way contrary to the policies of a particular institution.
3. Factors in candidates' backgrounds that have no predictive value with respect to employment performance, such as scores on examinations required for admission to academic institutions, should not be relied upon by employers in the hiring process.
When evaluating second and third year applicants, employers should not place undue emphasis on the nature of a first year summer job experience or on a student's decision not to work after the first year.
4. There has been a long-standing tradition that the first year summer be used to engage in public service work or to take time away from the law altogether, and, while the practice of having first year students work in private law firms provides additional employment opportunities to some students, such experiences should not be valued or emphasized inordinately.

F. Employers should refrain from any activity that may adversely affect the ability of candidates to make an independent and considered decision.

1. Employers should give candidates a reasonable period of time to consider offers of employment and should avoid conduct that subjects candidates to undue pressure to accept.
2. Response deadlines should be established when the offer of employment is made. Employers who extend offers in the fall should abide by the timetable for student response set out in the General Standards for the Timing of Offers and Decisions (above) and must abide by it with respect to students enrolled in law schools that have adopted it as an employer requirement.
3. Employers should not offer special inducements to persuade candidates to accept offers of employment earlier than is customary or prescribed under the circumstances.

G. An employer should honor all commitments made on its behalf.

1. Offers of employment should be made in writing, with all terms clearly expressed.
2. If, because of extraordinary and unforeseen circumstances, it becomes necessary for an employer to rescind or modify an offer of employment, both the student and the office of career services should be notified promptly.