

SELF-ASSESSMENT – JUDICIAL CLERKSHIPS

Factors to consider when deciding about clerkships:

- A. Type of Clerkship
 - 1. Trial or appellate
 - 2. State, federal, or international
- B. Reasons for seeking a clerkship
 - 1. Research and writing; practical training
 - 2. Work closely with a judge; gain a mentor
 - 3. Gain insight into the legal system and how judges work
 - 4. See different attorneys' styles of practice
 - 5. Exposure to a variety of legal issues and areas of law
 - 6. The credential on your resume
- C. Constraints on clerkship search
 - 1. Geography
 - 2. Family ties
 - 3. Place(s) you want to practice law
 - 4. Time – can you only clerk right after graduation? Can you/would you prefer to clerk later?
 - 5. Personal preferences for judges (experience on the bench, ideology, etc.)

Factors to consider when evaluating potential strengths and weaknesses in your application:

- A. Law school experience
 - 1. Clinic
 - 2. Journal experience or other significant legal writing
 - 3. Moot court
 - 4. Academic record
 - 5. Other law school activities
- B. Other academic experience (*e.g.*, advanced degree)
- C. Nonacademic experience and interests (might show skills, or interesting, well-rounded personality)
 - 1. Jobs (paid and volunteer)
 - 2. Proficiency in more than one language
 - 3. Travel
 - 4. Any other interesting, distinguishing items
- D. Writing Sample (substantive legal writing generally preferable)
 - 1. Law school work
 - 2. Work for employer (seek employer permission and redact)
- E. Recommendations (2 or 3) – speak positively, in some detail, about your research/analytical/writing skills
 - 1. Law Faculty
 - a. Supervised work or writing
 - b. Known through a small class (1st year or seminar)
 - c. Research assistant or teaching assistant
 - d. Written a good exam
 - 2. Legal Employers
 - a. Know your writing/analytical skills
 - b. Speak positively about other attributes (intellect, work habits, character, etc.)
 - 3. Nonlegal Employers or Faculty -- not viewed as well as legal faculty/employers
 - a. Know your writing/analytical skills
 - b. Speak positively about other attributes (intellect, character, work habits, etc.)