

CAREER PLANNING FOR DAY STUDENTS

Career Development Office



As a full-time law student, you are in an excellent position to explore the legal employment market and identify areas of interest because of the vast resources available to you. The Career Development Office encourages you to explore a variety of career opportunities during your three years at Suffolk to determine which one is the best fit for you. In addition, you should engage in all of the steps involved in effective career planning as you progress through law school.

Effective Career Planning

- ✿ Perform self assessment (consider your skills, interests, values, and personality)
- ✿ Research the variety of opportunities available in the legal field
- ✿ Gain practical experience
- ✿ Focus on a particular area to strengthen relevant skills and demonstrate interest
- ✿ Develop effective job search strategies

It is important to keep in mind that the legal job market of the 21st century is competitive. We recommend that you keep informed of job openings, deadlines for recruiting, and career related programs through *Spotlight*, the Career Development Office newsletter that is available every Thursday afternoon, and through Symplicity, the CDO's online job posting resource (available through the CDO website, <http://www.law.suffolk.edu/offices/career/>).

First-Year Students – *Getting Started*

During your first year, you should focus primarily on your coursework. Your GPA and class rank are critical pieces of information that many employers may use to evaluate you in the hiring process.

Attend a Career Development Office Orientation Program: Resume Workshop and Symplicity Training.

These sessions will give you the opportunity to meet the individuals in the CDO and will provide an overview of the programs and resources available through the office. By attending the Resume Writing Workshop and Symplicity training before meeting with a career counselor, you can minimize the time spent on your resume and spend more time engaged in career planning with your counselor.

Attend programs that are scheduled throughout the year. Our programs provide students with information on a variety of legal specialties and alternative careers and serves as an effective networking vehicle. Information pertaining to our programs can be found on our website, www.law.suffolk.edu or pick up a handout in the Career Development Office.

Meet with a career counselor. A counselor can assist you in brainstorming for employment options based on your interests and skills, creating an effective job search strategy, and fine-tuning your resume or cover letter.

Review the Summer Job Survey Information on Symplicity. The Summer Survey, located on Symplicity, contain descriptions of summer positions previously held by Suffolk students. This is an excellent resource for first-year students seeking summer employment possibilities.

Attend career-related panels. The Career Development Office presents a number of career panels throughout the academic year. A schedule of programs including topics, dates and times is available in advance in order to help you plan your attendance.

Network. Speak with family and friends about contacts they may have in the legal community. Networking is one of the most effective ways to learn about employment opportunities. We encourage you to take advantage of this strategy in your search for employment and information regarding the legal job market.

The Rappaport Center for Law and Public Service. Make an appointment with the Rappaport Center for Law and Public Service if you are interested in a career in public service. The Rappaport Center will provide you with helpful resources and information pertaining to government, public interest and pro bono opportunities. The Rappaport Center for Law and Public Service is located on the first floor of Sargent Hall in Suite 110.

Second-Year Students – *Gaining Momentum*

Your second year is the time to begin focusing on which area(s) of practice you find most interesting. The position you obtain for the summer may be an important factor in where you are employed after graduation. Several programs offered by the Career Development Office can help you define your focus, build a network and find a job. Some of these programs include:

Recruitment programs. On- and off-campus recruitment programs take place in the fall and spring. The majority of participants are large law firms, and government and public-interest agencies. It is important to obtain a schedule of the interviewing dates and, more importantly, the dates when resumes must be submitted. You can get this information in the Career Development Office.

Mock interviewing. This practice interview session is highly recommended for students who wish to improve their interviewing skills. In order to set up a mock interview, make an appointment with a career counselor in the Career Development Office. You may opt to have the mock interview videotaped.

Career panels and workshops. The CDO coordinates career panels through which many successful alumni return to Suffolk to speak to students about a variety of specialties within the legal field. In addition to these panels, the office regularly offers resume writing and job search strategy workshops.

Clinical programs and academic internships. It is important to gain practical experience while you are a student. Suffolk's clinical programs and academic internships are an excellent way for you to gain training in a number of interesting legal settings.

www.pslawnet.org. This national database of public sector employers provides up-to-date information on internships at federal and state agencies and public interest organizations. Students may generate a computer printout of internships based on legal specialty, geographic location and other relevant criteria.

Part-time law clerk positions. Some firms have part-time (20 hours per week or less) positions available. These positions are posted on Symplicity. If you need your login and password to Symplicity, please contact the Career Development Office at 617-573-8148 or stop in, we are located on the first floor of Sargent Hall in Suite 120.

Law Review, Transnational Law Review, Journal of High Technology Law, Moot Court Board, and other extra-curricular activities. Participation on a journal will enable you to hone your research and writing skills and help you build a strong resume. Law associations and other student groups can be a good source for networking within the field. For more information, speak with a career counselor, or consult the Suffolk University Law School website.

Judicial clerkships. A federal or state judicial clerkship provides the opportunity to clerk for a judge on a one- or two-year basis. Clerkships are available on both the trial and appellate level and afford an opportunity to explore varied areas of the law, while strengthening your research and writing skills. In addition, a judicial clerkship provides invaluable exposure to the court system. You must submit application materials to the federal and state courts by early September of your final year. The CDO houses a number of excellent judicial directories for your information. If you wish to learn more about clerkships, please see the Judicial Clerkship handouts in the CDO office and speak with the Judicial Clerkship Advisor, Margaret Talmers.

Third-Year Students – *Reaching the Finish Line*

Your final year of law school is the time to position yourself for a full-time job offer. Your job search will run more smoothly if you have a clear sense of what type of position you are seeking and you can offer relevant skills and experiences. If you feel unsure of your focus, it may be beneficial to meet with a career counselor.

Many of the items listed in the career planning section for second-year students also apply to your third year, including participation in recruitment programs, career panels and workshops, clinical programs, and part-time clerkships.

Other Important Areas on Which You Should be Focused are:

Informational interviewing/Networking. The On-line community, located on the Suffolk Law School's Alumni Office's website, contains the contact information on Suffolk Law alumni who are available to speak with you about their area of expertise. You might also find out how to contact alumni of your undergraduate institution for informational interviewing.

Career counseling. We encourage you to make an appointment with a career counselor. Together, you can gather ideas and identify resources that will help you to develop an effective job search strategy and research prospective employers.