



CAREER SERVICES OFFICE

*The  
Essential  
Orientation  
FAQs*

## **What is the Career Services Office?**

The Career Services Office (CSO) is dedicated to helping you plan and prepare for your career. Developing your *Personal Career Plan* begins in your first year of law school, as you learn about opportunities for summer employment (for day students) or full-time legal employment (for evening students), and it continues throughout your remaining years as a law student as you develop further experience that makes you attractive to prospective employers. We assist you with drafting cover letters and resumes, prep you for interviews with employers, and discuss career options with you as they develop. Our primary focus with you is one-on-one counseling sessions during which we can sit down, talk about your interests and goals, and devise a plan to help you achieve your dreams. We also host programs on particular practice areas or job search techniques, and we like to develop ties with student organizations to co-produce programs that are of interest to students.

CSO also engages in job development. We identify employer populations that are of interest to you, reach out to them, and show them the tremendous strengths that Touro law students and grads possess. Unlike many other law schools, Touro offers its services and facilities to employers free of charge, and we make it as easy as possible for employers to list internships, summer jobs, and post-graduate positions with us.

Upon graduation, you will have lifetime privileges with CSO as an alum. You may come in to speak with a counselor, have your job search documents reviewed, and receive access to our graduate job listings any time you seek to make a change or transition in your legal career.

## **Where is CSO located?**

CSO is located in room 306, on the third floor near the elevators.

## **Who works in CSO?**

Our staff consists of:

Margarett Williams, Assistant Dean for Career Services

[mwilliams@tourolaw.edu](mailto:mwilliams@tourolaw.edu)

Barbara J. Mehrman, Assistant Dean Emeritus for Career Services

[babraram@tourolaw.edu](mailto:babraram@tourolaw.edu)

Tom Maligno, Executive Director of the Public Advocacy Center and

Director of Public Interest (Tom's Office is Room PA201 in the PAC)

[thomasm@tourolaw.edu](mailto:thomasm@tourolaw.edu)

Erica Edwards-O'Neal, Director of Career Services

[ericae@tourolaw.edu](mailto:ericae@tourolaw.edu)

Charlie Hill, Assistant Director of Career Services

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Brett Gilbert, Director of Alumni for Career Services

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Claudia Morett, Administrative Assistant

[claudiam@tourolaw.edu](mailto:claudiam@tourolaw.edu)

Irene (Cookie) Sacks, Secretary

[irenes@tourolaw.edu](mailto:irenes@tourolaw.edu)

## **What are CSO's office hours?**

Our hours are as follows:

Monday – Wednesday:	9:00 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Thursday:	9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Friday:	9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

## **How do I see someone at CSO?**

The best way to meet with a counselor is to call or stop by CSO and make an appointment. Our telephone number is (631) 761-7030. In addition, if you have a quick question or concern, you may drop in to see if a counselor is free to speak with you.

## **Does it matter who I see at CSO?**

Yes and no.

Every member of the counseling staff is qualified to discuss your career goals, prepare a *Personal Career Plan* with you, review your resume and cover letters, prepare you for interviews, and, in general, talk with you when you have questions or concerns about where you see yourself in the legal market. Some students develop a relationship with a particular counselor and continue to see that person throughout their law school career and beyond. Other students like to “shop around,” and are not as concerned with seeing the same counselor on a regular basis. Either way is fine with us, although there is something to be said about seeing the same counselor on a regular basis so he or she gets to know you.

## **How do you communicate with students?**

We are a big fan of email and, in particular, your Touro email account. We use your Touro account almost exclusively to advise you of programs and opportunities. Also, you should use your Touro email address on all documents to employers, as it looks professional and employers will remember your email address more easily.

## **What should I do if I don't know what kind of law I want to practice?**

Most first-year law students have no idea what kind of law they want to practice. You will, however, begin to explore different areas of law during your first year classes, through programs and events sponsored by CSO and student organizations, by taking elective courses following your first year, and through discussions with your counselor. This is a time for exploration, and no employer is going to think less of you because you might not know in your first year or even your second year of law school what area of law you want to practice.

## **What should be on my resume?**

In general, there are up to four sections of a law student's resume: Education, Legal Experience, Other Experience, and Languages/Interests/Special Skills. If you do not have any legal experience, and most first-year students do not, then you can have just one "Experience" section.

CSO offers a "Resume, Cover Letter, and Thank You Letter Tips" handout to students that includes model legal resumes. It is *very important* that you look through this handout and reformat your resume as necessary so that your resume will look clean and professional to prospective legal employers.

*This is important:* You should have a CSO counselor review your resume *any time* you make a change to it. This would include after you have added a new job or if you simply changed a previous job description. We want your resume to be as strong and effective as possible, so please make it a point to show recently changed resumes to a counselor.

## **I have a resume from when I was an undergraduate (or from when I applied to a former job), is that good enough?**

Not usually, no. In general, legal resumes have a different look to them than do business or other resumes. For example, while bullet points are very common and appropriate for business resumes, they are not as common on legal resumes. Please refer to the model resumes in the "Model Legal Resumes and Cover Letter Tips" handout to see how your resume should look.

## **What should be in a cover letter?**

Your cover letter is a teaser for your resume, and, hopefully, encourages the reader to read your resume in detail. A cover letter is important, it is the first writing sample an employer reads from you, and employers do read it. In general, a cover letter has three central paragraphs:

The first paragraph tells the reader who you are, why you are writing, and lets the reader know if any other documents are enclosed. For example. The leading sentences to a cover letter may be something like: "I am a first-year student at Touro Law Center, and I am interested in a summer internship with the Court. My resume and transcript are enclosed for your review."

In the second paragraph, you let the employer know what experience and skills you have to qualify you for the position. Avoid talking about how wonderful it would be for you to work for the employer. Rather, talk about how the employer will benefit from hiring you. Mention previous jobs you have had and the skills you learned that would help you perform your job for the employer.

Finally, the third paragraph concludes the letter, and may read something like: "Thank you for your consideration, and I hope to have the opportunity to speak with you." Remember to always sign a cover letter.

Please review the "Resume, Cover Letter, and Thank You Letter Tips" handout for the "do's and don'ts" of cover letter writing.

## **How many times should I schedule an interview prep session with a counselor?**

You are entitled to schedule an interview prep session before every interview you receive. We encourage you to do just that, until you and your counselor believe that you are comfortable and confident during interviews. Prep sessions for interviews with district attorney and legal aid offices are particularly necessary, as these offices tend to ask hypothetical questions on substantive law issues for which you should be prepared.

## **Are “thank you” letters required?**

Again, yes and no.

Large employers generally evaluate candidates quickly, and thank you letters arrive too late to have much effect. On the other hand, smaller employers appreciate the “personal touch” of a thank you letter, and their hiring decisions may take some time. If you send a thank you letter, it should be professional and typed, just like a cover letter. You should have thank you letters reviewed by a counselor just as you would any other job search document.

## **What kinds of summer jobs are generally available to 1Ls?**

There are several different kinds of employers that generally offer summer positions to first-year students:

- Federal and state judges
- Government offices
- Legal departments of corporations
- Public interest organizations
- Some small to mid-size law firms

Do not be too concerned with the practice area of your first summer job. Rather, you should focus on other aspects of the job, including supervision by an attorney and substantive legal research and writing assignments. You will have the opportunity to focus your resume on particular practice areas as you progress through law school.

## **Do these jobs pay?**

Some law firms pay an hourly rate, some pay a weekly salary, while others do not pay at all. Some legal departments of corporations pay for your work, although most do not. Government, judicial, and public interest employers generally do not pay, and encourage students to apply for funding through fellowship and work-study sources.

## **When should I start looking for a summer job?**

Federal judges and some federal government agencies begin looking for summer interns toward the end of the semester. If you would like to apply for these competitive positions, you should meet with a counselor in late November/early December.

The next *very important* deadline to be aware of as part of your summer job search is the early December deadline to register online for the NYU Public Interest Legal Career Fair. The

NYU Fair is a tremendous opportunity to submit your resume to over 100 employers, but you must register early to be eligible. Look for flyers posted around the building and for emails describing the NYU Fair in greater detail.

### **Where do I look for summer job opportunities?**

There are a number of methods to look for a summer job. The first place to look is on JACOB: Touro Law Center's Career Management System online, powered by software from Symplicity. To register for JACOB go here: <https://law-touro-csm.symplicity.com/students/>. A counselor can go over JACOB and other sites with you when you meet. A few other good places to start are listed on the CSO blog (<http://toulawcso.blogspot.com>).

### **How do I submit my cover letter and resume for summer jobs?**

In almost every case, you will be told how to apply for the job in the job listing on JACOB. Most of the time, you will send a cover letter and resume (and sometimes a transcript and/or writing sample) to the employer directly. At other times, you will submit your documents to CSO and we will send them along to the employer.

### **Do employers look at my first year grades?**

Some employers will ask to see your first semester grades (you will most likely be hired by the time your second semester grades are released). Judges and large employers tend to look at grades more closely.

### **I may want to participate in a study abroad program this summer. Does that mean I can't have a summer job?**

No, not at all. If you are thinking about attending one of Touro's great summer abroad programs, you should conduct a summer job search just as you normally would. Your cover letter can be modified to let the employer know when you would be available to start work. If, by chance, you have not secured summer employment by the time you go abroad, there will be summer jobs listed online when you return.

### **I've heard about "Fall OCI." What's that all about?**

Large law firms and some large government offices and public interest organizations interview almost one year ahead for second summer jobs for full-time students and third summer jobs for part-time students. These interviews occur in the late summer and early fall and have been traditionally referred to as Fall On-Campus Interviewing (OCI). OCI is a very competitive process, and participating employers tend to focus on class rank and membership on the Law Review and Moot Court Board rather than experience in order to select students to interview. You will learn more about the Fall OCI process in the spring.

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