Class of 2015 First-Year Professional Development Timeline

Ongoing

- Contact Career Counselor with questions or concerns and keep your counselor up to date on your job search.
- Check email, the Career Center webpage and the Professional Development Resource Center (PDRC) for updates at least weekly.
- Review and regularly re-assess your personal professional network.
- Review legal & business media sources, including market-specific publications, both for subject matter content and possible points of connection.
- Attend and participate in the Career Center’s programs to gain insight into various aspects of the legal profession.
- Engage with the Law School and broader legal community to:
  - Master key laws and current challenges in your practice area of interest;
  - Strengthen core skills needed to demonstrate your commitment to, qualification for a career in your desired field; and
  - Create advocates invested in your professional success by actively pursuing professional relationships.

October 2012

- Attend Writing Successfully: Resume & Cover Letter workshop to which you are assigned by LARW section.
  - Receive and review the abbreviated professional biographies of the Career Center's dedicated advisors.
- Prepare your best legal resume, utilizing the guidance and resources provided in this Manual.
- Sign-up for your initial meeting with a member of the Career Center team.
- Fill out your student Questionnaire and refine your resume as needed. E-mail those documents to your career advisor twenty-four hours prior to your scheduled session.
- Prepare your “baseline” cover letter for legal positions utilizing the guidance and resources provided in the workshop and this Manual.
- Attend Building Relationships & Effective Networking Techniques workshop.
- Receive the password to access the Career Center’s online PDRC.

November 2012

- Attend initial meeting with your career advisor as scheduled.
- Explore practice areas and markets of interest, taking into account your current professional skills and geographic preferences.
- Create and maintain a spreadsheet of all contacts made and track your follow-up.
- Join at least one state & local bar association, including a practice-specific section.
- Prepare targeted, personalized cover letters for employers to which you plan to apply in December.
- Continue to revise your resume with the assistance of your career counselor.
- Use Thanksgiving Break to begin researching potential employers for your 1L summer.
If you are planning on applying to any job on December 1, prepare the applications well in advance of that deadline.

**December 2012**

- Prepare for exams.
- Mail/send those applications already prepared.

**Winter Break**

- Prepare targeted, personal cover letters for, and send applications to, all remaining employers of interest based upon your current research.
  - Call contact persons at employers to confirm receipt of materials & express continued enthusiasm.
  - Prepare and regularly update spreadsheet of applications submitted, principal contact, date and substance of last contact, referrals made to others, etc.
- Identify additional employers in diverse sectors of the legal economy (e.g., large firm, small firm, government, public interest, judicial internships, in-house opportunities, faculty research assistants, etc.) and in at least three distinct legal markets.
- Create a personalized application schedule to keep track of pertinent deadlines.
- Prepare and send your next wave of applications.
- Reach out to attorneys in your preferred practice areas and/or attorneys with whom you have a “connection” (e.g., Duke Law alumni, attorneys affiliated with your undergraduate institution, former employers, etc.)
- If possible, arrange to be in your primary markets of interest during the break and notify prospective employers of your upcoming trip in your letters to them.
- Ask at least one Duke Law professor and other targeted individuals to serve as professional references throughout your 1L job search, and prepare a reference list following the format in the Manual’s appendices.
- Revise your open research memorandum from LARW (or other work that best demonstrates your skilled analysis and effective communication of a timely legal topic) to serve as your writing sample in the first-year search.
- Prepare your professional wardrobe for the upcoming interview season.

**January 2013**

- Meet with your career counselor to strategize about your 1L job search and review your application materials.
- Update resume with grades and other accomplishments.
- Send a supplemental letter to all employers with which you have an application pending, expressing continued interest in the employer/opportunity and including a copy of your unofficial transcript.
- Prepare your personal elevator pitch and practice its delivery.
- Review the key elements to successfully interviewing for a legal position, think carefully about your proposed responses to the most commonly asked questions, and identify those core attributes you most want to convey as evidence of your future success.
- Identify additional networking and mentoring contacts, and reach out using the methods outlined in this Manual.
February – May 2013

- Be in regular contact with your career counselor concerning your 1L job search.
- Conduct a Mock Interview and practice incorporating feedback received.
- Follow up with employers (ongoing).
- Prepare and send additional waves of targeted, personalized application materials as needed.
- Continue building relationships with professionals in your markets and practice areas of interest.
- Send thank you notes and regular updates to all those with whom you have spoken to keep the connections alive.
- Attend Career Center programming, workshops and other Law School events to prepare for success “on the job.”
- Watch online seminars (see information about PLI in the Manual’s appendices for further information) on areas of substantive law and day-to-day practice, which will enhance your ability to add immediate value to the work of your summer employer.
- Meet with your career counselor to discuss your upcoming 2L job search.