



Career and  
Professional Development  
Center

# **CLASS OF 2013 INTERNATIONAL LLM CAREER PLANNING MANUAL**

AUGUST 2012

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>ACTIVITIES</u>
<b>August, 2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>August 15-19</u> – <b>Orientation</b> (attendance is mandatory)</li> <li>▪ Begin to review and update your resume following the suggestions in this guide</li> <li>▪ Begin drafting a baseline cover letter following the suggestions in this guide</li> </ul>
<b>September, 2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>September 6, 2012</u>: <b>LLM Career Kick Off and Pass the Bar Workshop</b></li> <li>▪ Schedule an appointment with Oleg Kobelev to discuss your job search goals</li> <li>▪ September 18, 2012: first deadline for November 3, 2012 administration of the professional responsibility portion of the Bar Exam (MPRE); also possible in March and August of 2013</li> <li>▪ <u>September 25, 2012</u>: <b>LLM Resume &amp; Cover Letter Workshop</b> (attendance is mandatory for all students wishing to participating in the International Student Interview Program ( ISIP))</li> <li>▪ <u>End of September</u>: ISIP online registration/interview bidding opens</li> <li>▪ Regularly consult the Duke Law master calendar for information on upcoming career programs/workshops. Attend the programs and workshops that best serve your goals.</li> </ul>
<b>October, 2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If you have not done so already, register for ISIP and select those employers with whom you are interested in interviewing, carefully review the instructions that will be provided to you via email.</li> <li>▪ <u>Mid-October</u>: <b>LLM Alumni Panel on career opportunities in the US</b></li> <li>▪ Research potential employers utilizing print and web-based resources in this guide and finalize a list of employers with whom you are interested in working; begin preparing cover letters you will be sending to those employers.</li> <li>▪ Contact former employers, friends, colleagues, and alums who may have connections with employers; network!</li> </ul>
<b>November, 2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Early November</u>: <b>LLM Interviewing and Networking Skills Workshop</b></li> <li>▪ In early November, begin sending your job application materials to the employers not participating in the ISIP (customized cover letter and resume, and writing sample if they ask for it)</li> <li>▪ <u>Mid-November</u>: <b>International Week Events</b></li> <li>▪ If you have registered for the November MPRE, take the MPRE</li> <li>▪ Make an appointment with Duke Visa Services to explore visa options allowing you to work in the US after graduation.</li> <li>▪ Continue researching and networking with home country and US employers</li> </ul>
<b>December, 2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ISIP preliminary interview schedules available</li> <li>▪ As you head home for winter break, take the opportunity to reach out to contacts back home about job opportunities in the US and your home country</li> <li>▪ Continue sending your application materials to law firms and employers in the US</li> </ul>
<b>January, 2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Begin making travel arrangements to go to ISIP</li> <li>▪ <u>Early January</u>: <b>LLM Mock Interviews</b> (conducted by alumni and career counselors)</li> <li>▪ <u>Mid-January</u>: <b>Understanding Business Culture for International Lawyers</b></li> <li>▪ <u>January 24-25</u>: <b>International Alumni Dinner and Reception in New York followed by ISIP Job Fair</b></li> </ul>
<b>February, 2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to follow up on targeted mailings and network</li> <li>▪ <u>Early February</u>: meet with Duke Visa Services representative to discuss filing for optional Practical Training (OPT) if you are not a U.S. Citizen or permanent resident.</li> <li>▪ <u>Mid-February</u>: LLM Job Search Workshop</li> </ul>
<b>March – May, 2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Early March</u>: <b>LLM Alumni Panel II – Tips on Preparing for the Bar Exam</b></li> <li>▪ MPRE (also possible in August of 2012)</li> <li>▪ <u>Late March-April</u>: File for your OPT if you want to stay in the US following graduation</li> <li>▪ <u>Mid-April</u>: <b>LLM Field Trip</b></li> <li>▪ Fill out the post-graduation employer survey</li> <li>▪ Graduation!</li> </ul>
<b>May – July 2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study for the Bar Exam</li> <li>▪ End of July: Bar Exam</li> </ul>

# 1 | Page Chapter 1: The Career & Professional Development Center

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**The Duke Law School Career & Professional Development Center offers a variety of services, programs and resources to help LLM students effectively search for employment. Although some of the information and advice in this handbook is specifically tailored to students interested in seeing admission to a U.S. Bar and/or subsequent employment in the United States, most of this handbook's contents are useful to *all* students.**

## **International LLM Career Planning Manual**

The Career & Professional Development Center (CPDC) invites you to explore the broad range of career opportunities available to you as a Duke Law LLM student and graduate. This manual serves as a roadmap for planning your career search and seeks to answer many of the most commonly asked questions relating to your career search. Please spend some time reviewing this manual as it will increase the quality and the usefulness of your interaction with CPDC and its career counselors.

### **Programs**

CPDC, in conjunction with the International Studies Office, hosts a broad range of programs to help JD and LLM students make the most of their career search during the year. Some programs, such as LLM Résumé and Cover Letter Workshops, the LLM Mock Interview Program, and LLM Career Panels, are tailored specifically to LLM students' needs. In addition, CPDC hosts numerous career-related programs geared to a more general JD and LLM populations. You are always welcome to attend any CPDC program in which you are interested. You can find the schedule of CPDC programs by reading Duke Law Daily or by checking the Law School Calendar (available on the Duke Law website)

### **Individual Counseling**

CPDC has an attorney counselor specifically dedicated to meet the needs of our LLM students. Oleg Kobelev, Director of International Career Development, is available to meet with LLM students to discuss career planning and job search techniques, including everything from advice on résumé writing to more in-depth discussions about career choices. Oleg's office is located in room 4066 and he can be reached at 613-7144 or at [kobelev@law.duke.edu](mailto:kobelev@law.duke.edu).

### **Job Fairs**

In late January of each year, Duke Law School participates in the International Student Interview Program (ISIP) in New York City. This program is limited to foreign-trained LLM students only, and over 120 international employers come to

interview LLM students for positions both in the United States and abroad. Additionally, international employers may visit Duke to interview students or invite students to informal events. More information about the ISIP program and how to participate will be made available later in the year. Please check your email frequently to make sure you do not miss any important information regarding this event. While ISIP is limited exclusively to LLM students, Duke Law also participates in a variety of other interview programs throughout the year. The full list is available on CPDO website under "Job Fairs" (<http://www.law.duke.edu/career/interviewing/jobfairs>).

*Please note, however, that while you are welcome to participate in these programs, most employers require a J.D. degree from prospective applicants.*

## **Bar Information**

Most Duke LLM graduates who chose to take a bar exam sit for the New York Bar Exam. Duke's curriculum is specifically designed to allow you to take the New York Bar, assuming your previous legal education meets some basic requirement such as length of time of study. During orientation, you will be counseled by Duke staff about some of the more specific requirements to take the bar. Due to the recent changes by the New York Board of Law Examiners, however, we recommend that students carefully read the Foreign Legal Education Section of the New York State Board of Law Examiners website (<http://www.nybarexam.org>). We also encourage students to complete an online Foreign Evaluation Form, an important component of your New York bar application, as soon as possible. This form is free and can be completed online in less than an hour. After you have completed the form, you should begin collecting the supporting documentation necessary to substantiate the information in the form.

## Chapter 2: United States Legal Market

**Although the overall economy in the United States has shown recent signs of improvement, the legal job market continues to be challenging, particularly for students who have received their first law degree outside the United States. Below is a brief synopsis of various opportunities available to LLM students wishing to stay in the United States on a short-term or a long-term basis following graduation.**

### A. Law Firms

Law firms with international business practices are among the most likely employers of LLM students. The majority of these law firms are located in New York and Washington, DC. The availability of these types of positions depends on many factors, including the strength of the international economy. Stronger macro-economic conditions mean U.S. law firms are busier on cross-border transactions and have a greater demand for experienced LLM students. Although Duke LLMs have had success with their job search in the U.S. over the past several years, LLM students should remain cautious about the U.S. legal market next year given the continuing economic uncertainties. Positions offered to international LLM students by law firms generally fall into three categories: (1) temporary internship positions; (2) regular associate positions, also known as permanent positions; and (3) visiting foreign attorney positions, generally prearranged through law firms in the students' home countries.

**Temporary Positions:** Most law firms that would consider hiring an LLM on a short-term basis will be greatly interested in the potential legal and business contacts the LLM can provide them when he or she returns home. The demand for students from different countries fluctuates yearly based on the level of business involvement of these employers in those countries. Students seeking these positions should be aware that they are not compensated at the same rate as those with permanent positions; these jobs often carry only a modest stipend, if anything.

**Permanent Positions:** These are usually entry-level associate positions with law firms, and LLM students compete with J.D. graduates for these positions. As with temporary positions, the level of interest in LLM students fluctuates depending on the country of origin and the level of experience of a given student. U.S. law firms considering LLMs prefer those who have experience in private law firms in their home countries. LLMs who secure permanent employment with U.S. law firms typically have a common law education, excellent command of the English language, and significant work experience as a lawyer in their home country. Please also note that most permanent positions also require that you be licensed in the state in which you will practice law. Foreign-trained lawyers with a U.S. LLM degree are limited as to where they may take the Bar Exam. New York and California are two of the very few states where you may be eligible to take a Bar Examination.

**Visiting Foreign Attorney Positions:** Some foreign employers have “special relationships” with U.S. law firms. In these cases, the foreign employers will often be able to facilitate or arrange for LLMs to join a U.S. firm. This should be arranged in advance of coming to Duke or shortly after arriving. Sometimes, the LLM student will still be asked to interview with the U.S. employer. Many of the LLM positions with the best-known U.S. law firms arise in this manner.

## B. Government

The United States has a diffuse system of government, with federal, state, local, and municipal government agencies all having different hiring criteria and requirements.

**U.S. Government:** Following recent change to U.S. law, LLM students who are not U.S. citizens and permanent residents are no longer able to work for the U.S. government in either temporary or permanent positions.

**State and local governments:** Although some state governments have hired LLM students in the past, the availability of such employment is scarce and fluctuates greatly from one state to another. Students interested in pursuing these opportunities are encouraged to review state-wide hiring websites for individual states (e.g. [www.cs.state.ny.us/jobseeker](http://www.cs.state.ny.us/jobseeker)). Please note that most positions require that students be either admitted or at least eligible to take that State’s bar exam.

**Judicial Clerkships:** Judicial clerkships with federal courts are no longer available to LLM students who do not have U.S. citizenship. Some state courts, however, hire LLM students for non-paid summer internships and longer-term positions. These limited positions are extremely competitive, however, as an increasing number of J.D. students are becoming interested in these clerkships. If you wish to explore judicial clerkships following graduation, please contact Robert Barton, CPDC’s Judicial Clerkship Coordinator, at [robert.barton@law.duke.edu](mailto:robert.barton@law.duke.edu) or at 613-7030.

## C. Non-Profit Organizations

Many not-for-profit organizations (NGOs) have dramatically scaled back hiring of entry-level attorneys as the result of budget cutbacks from both government and private sponsors. As the result, the remaining positions are highly sought-after. Factors that could work in an LLM graduate’s favor, however, include relevant prior work experience and/or research experience, language skills, and international background. Many internship and permanent positions with large NGOs are advertised on [www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org) and [www.pslawnet.org](http://www.pslawnet.org).

In addition, large supranational organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, the World Intellectual Property Association, and others have limited opportunities for LLM attorneys interested in pursuing careers in international public service. Many of these positions are

advertised on [www.unjobs.org](http://www.unjobs.org). Duke Law is fortunate enough to have a standing agreement with the World Bank's Legal Associates & Interns Program, which allows for a number of opportunities for LLM students. Additionally, nationals of a selected number of countries are eligible to apply for the UN Junior Program Officer Program ([www.jposc.org](http://www.jposc.org)).

#### **D. Academia and Other Opportunities**

LLM students interested in teaching generally do so when they return to their home countries. With the benefit of a Duke LLM degree, graduates have found academic opportunities in a wide range of universities around the world. You can see a list of Duke LLM and SJD alumni in academia by going to [www.law.duke.edu/internat/teachingalumni](http://www.law.duke.edu/internat/teachingalumni).

Additional examples of career opportunities that may be available to LLM students include in-house internship positions with international companies that have a presence in or strong business ties to your country. These positions generally require several years of prior legal work experience, preferable in-house or with a large law firm. For more information on in-house counsel positions, please speak with Oleg Kobelev.

# 6 | Page

## Chapter 3: Visa Requirements and U.S. Bar Exams

**LLM students wishing to stay in the United States must be aware of visa and bar exam requirements, both of which are critical in finding employment and staying in the United States following graduation.**

### A. Visa Requirements

F-1 visa holders are eligible for Optional Practical Training (OPT) – a work authorization benefit which allows students to legally work in the United States in the field directly relevant to their academic program for a maximum of 12 months upon graduation. Due to the recent changes to F-1 visa requirements, LLM students must apply for U.S. work authorization within 60 days of graduation and begin a paid or unpaid position in the United States within 90 days from the start of their 12-month authorization period. In other words, to take advantage of OPT, students must begin work *no later* than October 15, 2012. Please keep in mind that OPT approval process can take up to 120 days; thus, you should plan accordingly.

Please note that Duke Visa Services provides an excellent website [www.visaservices.duke.edu](http://www.visaservices.duke.edu), which contains useful information concerning F-1 Visas and OPT applications, as well as a frequently-asked questions section. For individualized counseling on visa-related issues, please contact Zoe Guy, Senior International Student/Scholar Advisor at 613-5083 or at [guy00008@mc.duke.edu](mailto:guy00008@mc.duke.edu).

Students who wish to stay in the United States beyond the OPT authorization period will need the sponsorship of their employer to apply for a more permanent work-visa known as H-1B. Students should seek clarification from their employers regarding the process and may also want to seek legal counsel specializing in work visa issues to determine their prospects for obtaining such a visa.

### B. U.S. Bar Exam

Admission to the bar is regulated by each individual state; there is no national U.S. bar exam. In most states, admission requires a law degree from an ABA-accredited law school, good moral character, and passage of a bar exam. Each state administers its own bar exam, which is regulated by that state's bar admission authority (Bar Examiners).

Students at highly-ranked U.S. law schools like Duke generally prepare for bar examinations through commercial study courses and are responsible for bar preparation and application. Please see **Appendix C** for a non-exhaustive list of commercial study courses.

The reasons for taking a U.S. bar exam include

- ✓ Permanent employment in the U.S.
- ✓ Prestigious credential for home country
- ✓ Learning additional areas of U.S. law not covered in LLM classes



Students should think carefully before deciding to take a bar exam because of the high cost and time commitment that exam preparation entails, the overall difficulty of the exam, and the time pressure under which the exam is conducted.

Although bar exams are state specific, they all share several important components. All bar exams are given twice a year – in February and July – and may be given over either a two-day or three-day period depending on the state. Virtually every state divides its exam into several parts, with one part consisting of state-created questions and/or essays that test substantive law of the state, and the second part testing applicants' competency in more general subject areas. Most states rely on the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) – a national organization – to test students' knowledge of the more generalized subjects.

The most important NCBE-created exam is the Multistate Bar Exam (MBE), which has been adopted by almost every state. It consists of 200 multiple choice questions and lasts six hours. The subjects tested include contracts, constitutional law, criminal law/procedure, evidence, property, and torts. Another important component is the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam (MPRE), which contains 60 questions, lasts 2 hours and 5 minutes, and tests knowledge of professional ethics. The MPRE is a stand-alone exam that is administered four times a year and must be passed by all students before they are admitted to the bar of their jurisdiction of choice. In most jurisdictions, students must pass the MPRE within a year of taking and successfully passing the state bar exam. For additional information about the NCBE and its multistate bar exams, please see NCBE's website at [www.ncbe.org](http://www.ncbe.org).

**Which Bar Exam?** Unfortunately, most foreign-trained LLM students are only eligible to take a handful of state bar exams, most notably the New York and California bar exams. Additionally, the states of Alaska, Louisiana and New Hampshire allow foreign-trained LLM students to sit for the bar, assuming they meet certain criteria. A second, larger group of states, allows students to take the bar if they have been admitted to practice in another jurisdiction and have a requisite number of years of legal practice (generally 5 to 7 years). The District of Columbia Bar allows students to sit for the bar only if they have successfully completed at least 26 semester hours at an ABA-approved law school in the subjects tested on the D.C. Bar exam. For a comprehensive list of all U.S. jurisdictions and their admission requirements relating to graduates of foreign law schools, please refer to the Comprehensive Guide to Bar Admission Requirements 2012, available at [http://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal\\_education/publications.html](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_education/publications.html). Please also refer to **Appendix A**, which contains an excerpt from the guide detailing the differing approaches to the eligibility of foreign-trained LLM students.

**New York Bar Exam:** The vast majority of Duke LLM students who chose to take a U.S. Bar exam sit for the New York Bar. Duke Law offers a range of services in support of LLM students wishing to the New York Bar, including hosting a Bar-

related workshop and individually counseling students on the logistics of applying to take the exam. Furthermore, we are in contact with the N.Y. Board of Law Examiners to make sure our students have the most current information concerning the application process.

Under the revised New York Rule 520.6, foreign-trained LLM students are eligible to take the New York bar as long as they have demonstrated both the **durational** and **substantive** equivalency of their home country law degree. The durational equivalency is satisfied as long as a student has attended a full time program consisting of 75 calendar weeks totaling not less than 1,120 hours of classroom study – essentially 3 US academic years. The substantive equivalency is a requirement that your course of study be rooted in the principles of English Common Law and meet specific instructional requirements outlined in Rule 520.3(c).

Because most students whose first law degree is not from the United States do not meet *both* the durational and substantive equivalency requirements of the New York Bar, these students must “cure” either deficiency by successfully completing an LLM degree from an ABA-accredited law school such as Duke. Please note, however, that an LLM degree can cure either durational or substantive deficiency but not both. Starting in 2012-2013 academic year, students wishing to cure the substantive equivalency requirement,<sup>1</sup> must complete a minimum of 24 semester hours of credit, including (i) at least two credits in a legal research, writing and analysis course, (ii) at least two semester hours of credit in professional responsibility, (iii) at least two credits in a course on American legal studies, the American legal system or a similar course and (iv) at least six credits in subjects tested on the New York bar examination. You will be provided a comprehensive list of classes that would satisfy these requirements at orientation.

Please note that classes not listed as law courses, academic credit for independent studies or other directed research, and summer courses taken outside the U.S. do not count towards the 24 credit requirement. Please read carefully the foreign legal education section of the N.Y. Bar website ([www.nybarexam.org](http://www.nybarexam.org)) for important information concerning applying for the bar exam, gathering the necessary documents, and completing the Online Foreign Evaluation Form. Please also see **Appendix B** of this handbook.

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<sup>1</sup> To cure a durational deficiency a student need only show that he/she has completed at least 75 calendar weeks of classroom study.

## Chapter 4: The Job Search

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Every successful job search begins with self-assessment. According to Deborah Arron, author of *What Can You Do With a Law Degree?*, self-assessment for lawyers involves answering three basic questions:

1. Who Am I?
2. What Do I Want?
3. What Am I Willing to Give up to Get What I Want?

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When you answer the first question, think about your interests and skills. What motivates you professionally and what type of practice appeals to you most? In answering the second question, ask yourself about your career plan and goals for the future. Next, evaluate how prior work experiences shape your current professional goals. Finally, to answer the third question, carefully evaluate how much time and effort you are willing to sacrifice to achieve your objective. Remember also that your answers may change as you learn and grow during your LLM year at Duke, and it is important to remain flexible and open to new opportunities. Be prepared to explore several goals and avenues to employment simultaneously. Finally, to successfully market yourself to potential employers, be sure to have given these questions considerable thought. If you do not know the answers, neither will the employer!

### A. Identifying Potential Opportunities

Following self-assessment, the next step in any successful job search is to identify and contact potential employers by conducting in-depth research into your target markets. The CPDC provides many resources to LLM students through its programming.

- ✓ Review the event calendar and attend career-related programs
- ✓ Talk to Duke Law School Faculty. If you know of a faculty member who teaches a class related to a practice area you are interested in, make an appointment to meet with him or her to get advice and discuss job opportunities
- ✓ Many international alumni are willing to discuss their practice area, city, and organization. Oleg Kobelev maintains a list of international alumni mentors who would be willing to speak with you about possible career choices. You can also search the alumni directory to identify potential contacts. It is available under the Alumni section of the Duke Law website (user name: staff; password: devils).
- ✓ Before contacting the alumni and faculty members, be sure to discuss proper outreach strategies and etiquette with Oleg Kobelev.

## B. Electronic Career Search Resources

### 1. Law Firm Websites

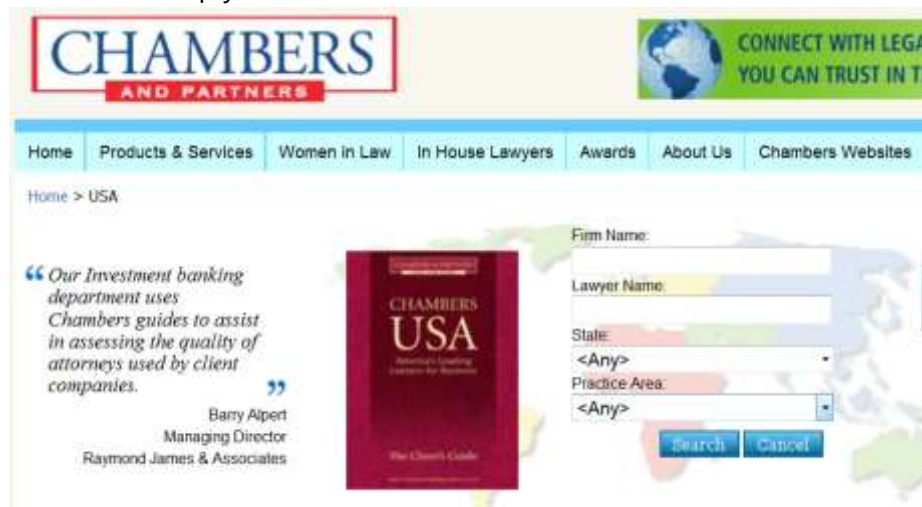
The following is a partial list of websites that might be helpful to you. Some will help to identify employers, some to seek networking opportunities, and others actually list either summer jobs, permanent jobs, or both.

- ✓ **NALP Directory** (<http://www.nalpdirectory.com>) profiles hundreds of law firms and large non-profit and governmental organizations. It also gives students the option to narrow their search to employers who have expressed interest in hiring foreign LLM students



The screenshot shows the NALP Directory website. The header includes the NALP logo and a navigation link for "Search & Compare" for employers. The main content area is titled "SEARCH, COMPARE, OR CREATE REPORTS" and includes a brief description of the directory. On the right, there is a search form with the following fields: Employer Name (text input), Type (radio buttons for Corporate, Government, Law Firm, Public Interest), City (text input), State/Province (dropdown menu), Country (dropdown menu), Office Size Range (dropdown menu), Employer Size Range (dropdown menu), Organizations that Hire Foreign L.L.M.s (dropdown menu), and Practice Areas (dropdown menu). A "SEARCH" button with a right-pointing arrow is at the bottom right of the form.

- ✓ **Chambers USA and Chambers Global.** These two publications, available in book form in the Career Center and online at <http://www.chambersandpartners.com> rank law firms and individual attorneys by state and practice area from a client's perspective. As with any rankings, you should not give too much credence to the order in which the firms are listed and certainly should not dismiss a firm simply because it is not included.



The screenshot shows the Chambers and Partners website. The header features the "CHAMBERS AND PARTNERS" logo and a navigation bar with links: Home, Products & Services, Women in Law, In House Lawyers, Awards, About Us, and Chambers Websites. Below the navigation bar, there is a search form with the following fields: Firm Name (text input), Lawyer Name (text input), State (dropdown menu with "<Any>" selected), and Practice Area (dropdown menu with "<Any>" selected). There are "Search" and "Cancel" buttons at the bottom right of the form. To the left of the search form, there is a quote from Barry Alpert, Managing Director of Raymond James & Associates, and an image of the "CHAMBERS USA" book cover.

## 2. General Legal Search:

The American Bar Association (<http://www.new.abanet.org/careercenter>) provides career advice and resources. The Job Board contains online job listings, although many of the posted jobs require experience.

Counsel.Net Attorney Job Center (<http://www.counsel.net>) contains job postings by geographic area, including some international. You can sign up to have job postings emailed to you as they become available online. The site also has chat boards.

Association of Corporate Counsel ([www.jobline.acc.com/jobs](http://www.jobline.acc.com/jobs)) contains links to in-house legal job opportunities with major American and international companies.

*Other websites with legal job postings include:*

<http://jobs.lawbulletin.com>

<http://www.lawcareers.net> (British site)

<http://www.lex.net> (British site)

## 3. Public Interest, State Government, and Non-Profit Resources:

- ✓ PSLAWNET.ORG ([www.PSLawnet.org](http://www.PSLawnet.org)) lists summer jobs, career fairs, places to apply for funding for a public interest job, and more. It also contains links to many other resources for finding jobs with a more particular focus (Federal and State Government, Environmental, Civil Rights, Native American Issues, Women's Issues, etc.)
- ✓ The Idealist ([www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org)) has listings of domestic and international nonprofit organizations, including postings for internships and jobs.
- ✓ The Advancement Project (<http://www.advancementproject.org>) lists legal and non-legal public interest openings under the Community Justice Resource Center link.
- ✓ Derechos Human Rights (<http://www.derechos.org>) and its sister group Equip Nizkor are international organizations working for the respect and promotion of human rights all over the world. Under the Communications Links heading, there is a directory of web sites as well as names and information on international organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations.
- ✓ Environlink (<http://www.envirolink.org>) is a directory of environmental organizations and also lists job and internship postings.
- ✓ National Legal Aid and Defender Association (<http://www.nlada.org/Jobs>) provides legislative updates, information on civil legal and public defender related legislation, and NLADA conferences. Job listings can be found by clicking on Job Opportunities and are organized by region. Jobs are posted by civil legal services, defender organizations, public interest organizations, and academic institutions.

## C. Networking

Consistently, **the job search method that has proven to be the most effective for LLM students in finding jobs** has been using their **prior contacts** to arrange for an opportunity to work in the U.S. The most common example of this approach is to approach a U.S.-based employer who has a relationship with your past or current employer back home. Alternatively, someone in your professional or familial network of connections may have a relationship with an employer – but you will never know about it until you ask!

Make a list of people you know who may have valuable information about careers or contacts to potential employers. Examples include family and friends of family, current and previous work contacts, acquaintances from social groups, churches, or activities, alumni you know from your home country law school, Duke Law alumni, and current or former professors. Ask the people you know for further referrals.

The next step is to engage your list by targeting specific employers that you have identified through researching your target markets as described in section A of this Chapter.

Below are some basic rules for networking:

- ✓ Ask contacts for information, not a job. For some examples of emails asking for advice and direction, please see **Appendix D**.
- ✓ Contacts are most helpful when you can ask them something to which they can respond positively. For example, ask for advice, resources about a particular field or practice area, information about career opportunities, or a critique of your résumé. Asking for a job prematurely may end the conversation quickly. If contacts are impressed with you, they will inform you about potential jobs.
- ✓ When you meet contacts, focus on them, not yourself or your own needs. Ask them about their day-to-day work activities, what they like and dislike most about their job, what led them to choose the career path they have chosen, what they would do if they were in your position, etc.
- ✓ Although you are not asking the contact for a job, treat all interactions with the same professionalism and courtesy you would an interview.
- ✓ Make sure your contacts have all the relevant information about you. You may provide them with a résumé and update it when necessary. Don't expect the contact, however, to do the heavy lifting. It is your job search and should always remain in your control, unless your contact suggests otherwise.
- ✓ You can ask contacts to refer you further by asking, for example, "Given my interests and background, is there anyone else you suggest I speak to?"
- ✓ Give positive feedback. Thank contacts for their time in person and in writing. Let them know specifically how you've acted upon their advice.
- ✓ Keep good records of whom you spoke with and what you discussed. One method that many students found useful was to keep an Excel spreadsheet listing the names of people you have contacted, the dates when you contacted them, and some other basic information.

**The Hidden Job Market:** According to some estimates, over 80% of all job opportunities are not advertised. These jobs are filled through networking. To be able to take advantage of these opportunities you must begin building a robust network of connections – a network that will serve you well throughout your professional career!

**Networking within Duke Law:** One of the best networking resources available to you *right now* and *right here* are the faculty members and your fellow LLM and J.D. classmates. It is of vital importance that you begin building long-lasting and productive relationships with your professors, as they have consistently been among the best resources for students looking for networking advice, recommendations, and job opportunities after graduation. To accomplish this, do your best to be prepared for, attend, and participate meaningfully in class. As for your J.D. and LLM classmates, while they may not in the position to help you right now, they will become a rich source of business connections and relationships down the road.

**Networking in Social Situations:** Duke Law hosts a large number of social events during the year: parties, conferences, and career receptions are all great opportunities to meet people who may have knowledge and experience in a geographic or practice area of interest to you. Be sure to check the Duke Law Calendar and the Duke Daily News for a digest of various events happening that week or that day.

Below are some additional tips on networking in this context:

*Before the Event:*

- ✓ Study any list you can find of people attending. Decide in advance whom you will try to meet.
- ✓ Make sure to dress appropriately. Most events specify what type of dress is appropriate. “Dress attire” means a business suit; “business casual” refers to nice slacks or khaki pants and a dress shirt for men. For women business casual means worn with a neatly-pressed collared shirt or sweater. Sleeveless shirts, sandals, t-shirts, and jeans are never acceptable in a business setting. If in doubt, be safe and dress formally.
- ✓ Resolve to be brave. It is very tempting to spend your time in a social setting with fellow classmates but the potential benefit of meeting and mingling with perspective employers is invaluable. Do not be afraid to converse with people you don’t know – that’s the whole point of networking!

*At the Event:*

- ✓ Avoid controversial topics: do not discuss religion, politics, or money when meeting people you do not know. Although in some countries spirited political discussions are enjoyed by all participants, Americans tend to avoid such topics at professional events.



- ✓ Approach strangers and introduce yourself with a smile and a handshake. State your name clearly. Look the person in the eyes. Shake hands; Americans expect a handshake rather than a kiss or a bow.
- ✓ Remember that in networking, quality always trumps quantity. Try to learn as much as you can about each person and don't worry about meeting as many people as possible. It is better to make one meaningful connection than to have ten perfunctory conversations.
- ✓ Wait for an appropriate opportunity or the end of the conversation to ask for a business card or offer your own. Unlike many other cultures, Americans have no social norms about presenting or receiving business cards. Do not be offended if the person does not have a card and offers to write his/her email address on a piece of napkin or puts your cards in a pocket after writing on it. Although unusual, this kind of behavior is not unexpected.

*After the Event:*

- ✓ Review any business cards you receive and make notes about the people you spoke with and topics you discussed.
- ✓ Follow up by email with any person with whom you made a connection, if appropriate. Reference the setting at which you met and something you discussed. Remember: a boilerplate impersonal follow up email is a waste of time!

**Networking online:** You may want to consider creating an account on a professional social-networking website such as LinkedIn ([www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)) or similar professional websites. As these websites become more widespread, employees will often turn to them to "vet" possible interview candidates. Not having an online profile may make you look "out of touch." If you already have an account, keep your profile and the information in it current.

## D. Job Fairs

The main LLM job fair in which Duke Law participates is the NYU International Student Interview Program (ISIP). ISIP brings together over 1,100 LLM candidates representing 75 countries to meet and interview with more than 120 of the top legal employers in the world. Although a few employers are interviewing for positions in the United States, the vast majority of opportunities are outside the United States, most often in home countries of the employers or their international offices. While working in one's home country, at least initially, is the prevailing norm, many of our graduates were sent back to the United States by their law firms after several years of practicing in their home markets because of their Duke LLM training.



You will receive additional information about participating in ISIP during the fall semester. In the meantime, you can take a look at the ISIP website at: [www1.law.nyu.edu/depts/careerservices/isip](http://www1.law.nyu.edu/depts/careerservices/isip).

While ISIP is reserved exclusively for LLM students, Duke Law participates in a number of other programs both on and off campus throughout the year. Among the highlights is the ESQ Career Symposium. This signature event brings employers from around the United States to Durham to meet students and offer insights and advice on professional life and career development.

A full list of upcoming job fairs is available at the Career Services section of the Law School website under "Job Fairs" (<http://www.law.duke.edu/career/interviewing/jobfairs>). Please note, however, that employers at most of these events are looking to hire American-trained JD students rather than LLM students. Please speak with Oleg Kobelev before deciding to attend any these events, as he will help you strategize on using your time and efforts most effectively.

**International Student Reception and Dinner:** The day before ISIP, all Duke Law LLM students are invited to a New York reception where they have an opportunity to meet international employers interviewing at the Job Fair. On average, 100-120 ISIP employers attend the event, providing Duke Law students with a great opportunity to meet and impress these employers before their interviews the next day. The reception is followed by a formal dinner, attended by Duke Law alumni, which provides students with another excellent opportunity for networking and establishing ties with the alumni network.

## E. Wintersession

Wintersession is a week-long optional program taking place between the Fall and Spring semester, which provides J.D. and LLM students with a number of practical professional skills through short, hands-on courses specifically targeted at developing important lawyering skills such as contract drafting, taking a deposition, creating a business entity, etc.

In addition to practical skills development, Wintersession provides LLM students with a unique opportunity to meet and interact with prominent law firm partners and in-house counsel who teach Wintersession classes. More information about Wintersession will be forthcoming later in the semester; but consider keeping your Winter Break options open so that you are able to participate in this exciting new program available only to Duke Law students.

# Chapter 5: Résumés, Cover Letters and Other Correspondence

To effectively look for a job in the United States, you must prepare a U.S.-style résumé and cover letter. This chapter also provides guidelines for transcripts, writing samples, and reference lists. After reading this section, please review appendices E—F for examples of sample U.S.-style résumés and cover letters.

## A. Creating a Résumé

To effectively look for a job in the United States, you must prepare a U.S.-style résumé. Your goal in creating this résumé is to make it an effective marketing tool for an American audience. This means that:

1. You must portray your education and experience in the most favorable light possible in order to convince a prospective employer to take a closer look at you, and
2. The information must be presented in the format that Americans expect

### Items to **Exclude** From Your Résumé

Personal data – such as birth date, marital status, religion, children, or physical health. These subjects are not legally permissible interview topics in the United States.

Title-such as "Résumé of Robert Smith."

Job objective-instead, express your career plans in a cover letter.

Computer skills-everyone has basic skills these days. Only list computer programming or similar skills that are relevant to a science degree or background.

### Format

Although formats vary, all Duke Law students are expected to follow the format contained in **Appendix E** of this handbook. A uniform format allows employers to find the information they seek in the places they expect to find it. See also **Appendix F** for an example of a Duke LLM student's résumé.

Americans expect résumés to be one-page documents. Studies indicate that an employer spends an average of only 30 seconds looking at each résumé when it is first received. If your résumé is longer than one page, an employer may conclude that you are unable to present materials succinctly. Experienced lawyers with several years of practice who find it difficult to reduce their qualifications to one page may want to prepare a "Representative Deals (or Case) List" as an attachment to their résumés.

The visual aesthetics of your résumé can be very important. Use bullets, "white space," and font to make your résumé easy to understand at a glance. Varying font sizes and styles can help you include more information, and the use of bold

and italics will help you emphasize certain items, such as the names of schools and employers. Avoid using too many different typefaces or graphics, however.

Use short phrases rather than sentences. Use active verbs and avoid the use of personal pronouns in the résumé.

Many employers will reject a résumé with typographical, grammatical and spelling errors. Please proofread very carefully and then ask an American friend or staff member to review your résumé. Do not rely only on computerized spell-checkers because you might misspell the word you mean by producing another word that happens to be correctly spelled. See below for special format considerations for résumés sent by email.

### **Name, Address, Telephone, Email**

Center your name in bold type at the top of the page. If you go by your middle name, you should use an initial for your first name; for example, if your name is "Eva Maria Gabrielsson" and you go by "Maria," you should consider using "E. Maria Gabrielsson." While you should not use an informal nickname on your résumé, if you go by a name that is very different from your full name, or if you have chosen an "American" name, you may wish to include it on your résumé, e.g., "Weeravej (William) Sirichatchai."

Typically you will use a local address and a permanent home address (from your home country), one justified with the left margin and one justified with the right margin. Be sure to include your Durham telephone number and Duke email address so that employers can get in touch with you.

### **Education, Educational Honors and Activities, and Grades**

Because you are currently a student, it's logical to begin the body of the résumé with your educational background. Use "Education" for the heading, which can be centered but is usually flush with the left margin. List institutions attended in reverse chronological order, with honors, activities and perhaps grades (see below) listed under the respective academic institutions at which you received them. List Duke University School of Law first, and be sure to include the city (Durham) and state (North Carolina). Indicate the degree for which you are a candidate (LLM) and the month and year you expect to get the degree.

You should list any graduate programs you attended and then "undergraduate" program(s) following the above format, also including the city and country in which they are located. Be sure to explain any degrees that might be confusing to Americans and, if appropriate, consider adding the name of your degree in your native language in parenthesis. This could be particularly useful if a reviewing attorney is familiar with the legal education system of your home country. Finally, you should not list any pre-

university education, except studying at an American or English-speaking high school, which indicates fluency in English.

### **Honors and Activities**

List your educational honors under the respective academic institutions at which you received them. Include any honors that indicate a high level of academic performance, and explain their significance if necessary [e.g., "Presidential Scholarship (awarded to top 5% of students)"]. Be sure to include any nationally-recognized honors. Latin honorifics and acronyms (i.e. *magna cum laude*) should be italicized. If you received a scholarship or grant to pursue your LLM degree, be sure to include that under "Duke University School of Law." If you completed a thesis or major paper, you may want to indicate the title of your thesis in italics under the appropriate educational degree.

Finally, be sure to include any university team sports, positions of leadership, and community organizations in which you participated, as employers view these as an indication of your ability to cooperate and achieve a common goal. Likewise, if you participated in academic competitions such as moot court competitions, these should also be listed.

### **Grades and Class Rankings**

Grades and class rankings do not have to be listed on a résumé. Your résumé is a marketing tool designed to highlight your strengths; if your grade point average ("GPA") is an asset, you may list it. For Duke grades, round to the nearest hundredth, e.g. 3.55. Similarly, if your university published rankings of students, you may list your ranking. However, if your GPA or ranking is not outstanding, you do not need to list it.

### **Experience**

The next category is "Experience." Begin with the most current or recent position you have held and work backwards chronologically. Do not leave large gaps of time unaccounted for, as you will waste precious interview time explaining these gaps. It is not necessary to list every job or internship you have had, however, particularly non-legal jobs you held while a student.

In formatting this section, typically the name of the employer should be first, then the location (city and country), the dates (months and years), and then your position title. Following the position title, you should include a brief job description. If this section on your résumé is not particularly lengthy, you may also include activities from your law school experience, such as Teaching or Research Assistant.

When describing the work you did, be succinct and use action verbs. Avoid phrases such as, "My responsibilities included writing/reading/researching...." Instead, say "Wrote/read/researched" or use other action verbs (see

**Appendix G** for a list of suggested "Action Verbs"). Use the past tense unless you are currently doing the job. In choosing which experiences to include in your job description, ask yourself the following:

1. What were my primary responsibilities?
2. What major tasks or projects did I undertake?
3. What specific examples of my work show my skills as a lawyer (even if this was a non-legal work experience)?

### **Bar Admission**

Include a separate bar admission category if you have passed or a qualified to practice law in your home country or in one or more U.S. states. If you are low on space, you may include Bar Admission as the first line under the "catch-all" category, called "Additional Information" (below).

### **Additional Categories**

All of your miscellaneous information should be grouped under the category "Additional Information." Most LLMs should include their language skills, indicating level of proficiency. Although not required, an Additional Information section could provide a good starting point for an interview. Use this category if you have a hobby that is out of the ordinary or demonstrates dedication, such as backpacking, running marathons, SCUBA, Flamenco dancing, or playing a musical instrument with a high degree of skill. Reading and traveling are examples of interests held by almost everyone and are, therefore, too commonplace to include in this category.

If you have published articles, a separate Publications section can be used. A lengthy list of publications that makes the résumé longer than one page can be produced as a separate document and attached to the résumé.

## **B. Tailoring your Résumé**

Although the basic formatting and style of your résumé will remain the same, you should consider tailoring your résumé to different employers by emphasizing one set of skills over others or including additional descriptions to demonstrate your competence in a particular area. The need for tailoring is particularly acute because employers are increasingly relying on computerized programs to conduct the initial résumé screenings. These programs scan applicants' résumés for key words relevant to the job (i.e. tax, capital markets, cross-border, Mandarin, etc.). Only résumés that pass the initial screening are then submitted to a live person for review.

In light of this reality, it becomes more imperative than ever for the applicants to tailor their descriptions in the "Experience" section of the résumé to fit the profile of the job being advertised. This need not be a laborious process and

minor adjustments are generally sufficient as long as the job being applied for is a good fit with the applicant's experience and education.

## C. Attachments to the Résumé

### References

Americans do not expect to receive reference letters with résumés. A list of References can be helpful, however, produced as a separate document and attached to your résumé. The reference list should include at least your name at the top and may also include your address. The list should have at least two references: an academic, preferably a Duke Law School professor; and an employer who knows your work. (It is not likely that a Duke professor will be able to serve as a reference until the second semester following the results of your exams.) Of course, you should seek permission before you list someone as a reference. Likewise, you should provide each reference with a copy of your résumé. When you list references, you should include their name, relation to you, and telephone number. Employers typically contact references by phone if they check references. Please see **Appendix H** for an example of a reference letter.

### Representative Deals List

Attorneys with experience in large national or transnational commercial transactions or cases may wish to prepare a Representative Deals (or Cases) List enumerating and discussing projects you have worked on as a practicing lawyer. This list should use action verbs and mention major transactions or cases in which you played a significant role, as well as describing what work you performed. Please see **Appendix I** for a sample Representative Deals list.

### Publications

If you have an extensive list of publications, you will need to decide whether the employer to whom you are writing will want to see them or not. If the publications are relevant to its core business or demonstrate a particular expertise in a related subject area, consider adding a separate sheet of paper, listing your name, your address, telephone and email, and the title "Publications" at the top of the page. If the publication was not written in English, consider translating the title but indicate in the parentheses the original language in which it was written so as not to mislead the reader.

## D. Writing Sample

You will ordinarily not need to supply a Writing Sample with your résumé. Only when employers are seriously considering you will they require a writing sample. If a sample is requested, work submitted for the Legal Analysis,

Research and Writing course may be useful. Alternatively, you may consider using a legal memorandum written in English from your previous employer. When using a document produced for a client, make sure to redact any privileged, confidential or sensitive information before submitting it as a writing sample.

Some employers may specify that they want writing samples of fewer than 10 pages. Others may ask for five or fewer pages. Still others request "short" samples, which they expect to be less than 15 pages.

If you have a longer writing sample, you should consider omitting some of it to fit the suggested length. If it is a legal memorandum or a brief, consider deleting your Facts section and replacing it with a short summary. You may also cut one of your sub-issues, retaining the ones with the most sophisticated analysis. If you decide to use an example from the Legal Analysis, Research, and Writing course, please consult your instructor for advice on adapting the assignment into a writing sample.

**Cover note:** A good writing sample should be accompanied by a cover note that includes your contact information and a short description of the sample. A writing sample cover note is something distinct from the cover letter that you will include with most job applications. The cover letter details your interest in a position and specific qualifications that you may have for it. A cover note for a writing sample introduces (very succinctly) your writing sample and provides whatever critical information that a reader might need to know about it. It is also the place to describe what you've omitted if you had to shorten your sample. Always offer to provide the entire document on request. Please see **Appendix J** for an example of a sample cover page.

**Formatting:** Consider adding a "footer" to your writing sample with your name and the word "writing sample" in the title (e.g., "Oleg Kobelev, Writing Sample"). This will cause your name to show on every page, ensuring that the reviewer knows to whom the writing sample belongs, should the cover page be separated or lost.

## E. Cover Letter

The cover letter is an important marketing tool in the job search process. The cover letter serves two purposes: first, it provides the reader with information regarding your career-related intentions; second, it identifies and attracts attention to something about you that is unique, interesting, and desirable in the context of potential employment as an attorney. Often LLM students feel as if they are bragging by advancing their qualifications in an American-style cover letter, but this type of "self-promotion" is expected by U.S. employers. Remember, just like the résumé, a cover should be viewed as a marketing device with you as the "product."

The cover letter will enclose your résumé and allows you to explain your qualifications in more detail. A strong cover letter can make the difference between getting your résumé noticed (and getting an interview) and having your résumé rejected. The cover letter is typically your first contact with a legal employer. It is, in fact, your first writing sample that the potential employer will read. Therefore, as with any other writing sample, your cover letter should be concise, clear, and persuasive.

Finally, before you can write a good cover letter, you must have specific information about the employer's work and understand what you have to offer to this employer. *Please see **Appendix K** for an example of a cover letter.*

## **I. Format**

Font: Use the same typeface and 10-12 point font for your cover letters and résumés.

Address: Your home address in North Carolina will be positioned six lines from the top edge of the page and aligned to begin at the center of the page. The date you mail the letter will appear two lines below your city, state and zip code.

Recipient: You should always direct your cover letter to a specific person. Deciding whom to write will take some research on your part. The most common choices are an employer's recruiting coordinator, a firm's hiring partner, the head of a practice group in which you are interested, someone you know who works for the employer, a Duke alumnus, or a lawyer from your home country working in the firm. If you cannot find the intended recipient, address the letter to "Dear Sir or Madam."

Check on employers' websites to see if they have a preferred procedure for employment applications. You should follow that procedure, but you may also want to send your résumé to someone who will take a personal interest in it. If you decide to send your résumé to two people at the same employer – for example, the recruiting coordinator and a Duke alumnus – indicate in your cover letter that you are also submitting your résumé to the other person by including the "CC:" notation at the bottom of the letter (below the your signature line and enclosure notation) and listing the other person who is being copied.

American lawyers admitted to a state bar are referred to in the heading as "Esq." (see below), without "Mr." or "Ms." The recipient's name, title (if applicable), employer (firm, agency or company), and address will be blocked four lines below the date and aligned with the left margin.



Greeting: The greeting should appear two lines below the addressee block and should always be as follows: "Dear Mr. [or Ms.] Jones:". Use the recipient's title (Mr. for men; Ms. for women) with only the recipient's family name, not the given name. Do not use "Esq." in the greeting. If you are not sure from the given name whether the person is a man or a woman, try to find the person's photo and/or profile on Facebook, Linked-in, or elsewhere online.

*Because the letterhead will state your name, you do not need to write "My name is ..." in the body of the letter.*

Body: The body of the letter should be single-spaced and may be printed in either block-style with no indentations for each paragraph or in semi-block style with each paragraph indented five spaces. It should be left – but not right- justified. A double space should separate the paragraphs.

Closing: The closing is positioned two lines below the last line of the body and should be aligned with the address of the recipient. "Sincerely" is usually the best closing unless you have already had contact with the person, in which case "Best regards" would be appropriate. The signature line is aligned with the closing and should be positioned four lines below it. You may note an Enclosure" two lines below the signature line, flush with the left margin.

## **II. Content**

### **A. Introductory Paragraph**

This should define your current status ("I am a student in the LLM degree program at Duke University School of Law...") and explain briefly why you are writing ("...and am interested in being considered for a 6-12 month internship term beginning . . ."). If you want to be considered for a longer-term, say that you are applying for a position as an associate. There is not a lot of room for creativity here. However, if you have an extraordinary way of creating an immediate and positive first impression (e.g., "Having decided to attend Duke Law School after winning my second Nobel Peace Prize, I am ..."), you might consider this approach. Also, if you have a particular contact at the firm, it should be noted in the first sentence, for example, "Jacques Doyenne, an attorney in your Paris office, suggested I contact you."

At the end of this paragraph, you should include a "thesis" sentence where you summarize the reasons the employer may wish to hire you. You will expand on these strengths and qualities in paragraphs three and four.

### **B. Second Paragraph - Interest In the Employer**

The second paragraph should highlight why you are writing to this particular employer. This paragraph should make clear how the employer's practice is connected to your country or your skills. With regard to the firm's practice, this is an opportunity for you to demonstrate that you are an informed

lawyer. In no more than two sentences, explain what it is about the employer that generated your interest (practice areas, reputation, a recent matter handled by the firm, acquaintance with members of the firm, firm size). The more specific you can be, the better. If possible, express your interest with enthusiasm. An employer should feel that you have devoted some thought to your selection process.

C. Third Paragraph - What You Bring to the Position

The third paragraph is where you will "sell yourself," describing in more detail those skills and personal attributes that you identified in step 1 above. This paragraph should emphasize how you can help the employer rather than how the employer can help you. Your goal here should not be to reiterate facts obvious from your résumé but rather to

Establish markers of excellence that an employer expects from an LLM, such as Duke grades (if they are strong) as well as excellent legal writing and research skills;

Set forth something about yourself that separates you from others in a positive way. A distinguishing qualification may be derived from a practical work experience in your country; leadership or volunteer activities while at Duke; or an academic experience in your home country.

Demonstrate your dedication, diligence, creativity, energy, perseverance, commitment, attention to detail, ability to assume responsibility, or work ethic by using specific facts to illustrate these qualities. Strive to compose something that the reader will remember one hour later.

D. Concluding Paragraph

State your interest in a personal interview at a mutually convenient time and place. If you plan on traveling to the reader's city on a certain date, you should indicate this fact. You may say that you will telephone to arrange an interview time. Offer to provide any additional information and express your thanks for his/her consideration. You might conclude with "I look forward to hearing from you at your convenience."

**III. Form Letters**

If you plan to contact a large number of potential employers, you may be tempted to write one letter to send to all. This would be a mistake. A generic "form letter" is bland and conveys a low level of interest in the particular employer. A good compromise is to create a strong general letter that you can particularize for each employer, using some information about the employer that you found during your research in part 1 above.

## **F. Printing and Emailing Application Materials**

### **Printing**

With the availability of sophisticated word processing programs and laser printers, you should have no trouble printing your résumé, cover letter, and other attachments. Your résumé and cover letter should be printed on white or a neutral color (ecru, very light gray) bond that has at least 25% cotton or rag content.

### **Email**

In the United State most employers now expect job applicants to email them their application materials. When doing so, please be sure to convert all your documents to Adobe Acrobat format (PDF). This way, you can be sure that they can be opened by the person who will receive it. It is also customary to name your files using the following format: Last name, first name, name of attachment (e.g. Kobelev, Oleg, Résumé). The subject line should highlight the connection to the receiver (e.g. "Duke Law" or "Brazilian Attorney"). In addition to attaching your professional materials, be sure to briefly state in the body of the e-mail why you're writing and what the attachments are.

## 26 | Page Chapter 6: Effective Interview Skills

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Your application materials set forth facts about you, but it is the interview that gives you an opportunity to bring your résumé to life and to demonstrate your professionalism, intelligence, and enthusiasm. In the U.S. there are two basic kinds of interviews: the 20 or 30 minute screening interview (which typically occur at job fairs) and longer “callback” interviews at an employer’s office, which usually involve meeting several attorneys for 30-45 minutes each.

To help you prepare, review below guidelines and be sure to practice your interviewing techniques BEFORE you go to the real interview.

### A. Interview Preparation

Part of your preparation should include learning to be an “active” interviewee. While a passive interviewer may provide good responses to interviewers’ questions, he or she lacks effective interview skills by failing to take charge of an interview, even if only briefly.

To “take charge” of an interview, you must first research the firm, its attorneys, and its clients. Not only should you read the firm’s résumé, but also newspapers and other legal publications for news about the firm’s growth, legal victories, and other noteworthy events.

This research will allow you to prepare thoughtful questions that will make you stand out. Unique questions not only demonstrate your ability to interview, but also your positive commitment to and interest in the firm.

*Please see **Appendix L** for commonly asked interview questions and sample questions to ask the interviewer.*

### Making a Positive Impression

Before you interview, you should carefully assess the positive qualities that you can offer. These may include your experience, connections, writing ability, or personality. If you cannot convince yourself that you have something to offer, it will be impossible to convince an interviewer. Some of you may believe that promoting yourself indicates a lack of humility. But Americans expect you to promote yourself and to persuade them that you would be a positive, persistent, and resourceful employee.

Further preparation for interviews includes studying possible questions that may be asked and thinking about potential answers. You do not need to memorize answers, nor should you deliver your answers as if they were rehearsed. However, practice interviews are an excellent idea. Duke’s LLM Mock Interview Program, which usually takes place in early January, offers students an opportunity to hone

their interview skills with Duke alumni and staff. Take advantage of this opportunity!

### **The Dress Code**

Before you go into an interview, remember that how you dress is important. Your attire should reflect your professionalism and contribute to your confidence level. Make sure your clothes are clean, neat and in good repair. Shoes should be shined and well-heeled. If you smoke, avoid smoking in your interview suit – the smell will linger during your interview!

You want to stand out because of your credentials, not your outfit.

## **B. The “Screening” Interview**

The first few minutes of the interview are very important because they set the tone of the interview and have a major impact on how the recruiter views the applicant.

When you go into the interview room, shake your interviewer's hand firmly, make good eye contact, and smile. You may remember the interviewer's name better if you respond when you shake hands by using his or her family name, saying, "It is nice to meet you, Mr. (or Ms.) So-and-so." Do not use the interviewer's first name unless he or she instructs you to do so.

Interviewers will assess your questions and responses not only in terms of their informational content, but also in the manner in which they are asked and answered. Your sincerity, enthusiasm, candor, humor, precision, and style are among the many aspects that will affect the impression you make. Employers look for people with both sound academic and interpersonal skills.

Answer questions directly and honestly; your self-confidence says more about you than almost everything else. Never apologize for shortcomings; instead, prepare confident responses and anticipate potentially uncomfortable questions. Interviews are also never the appropriate place to complain, because interviewers will assume your negative attitude will continue during your employment.

As a rule, you should not take notes during the interview. With only 20 minutes to make a positive impression, this time is better spent concentrating on the interviewer and his or her questions. If you have a transcript or a writing sample, put them in a portfolio and bring them out when necessary. If you take a portfolio with you, set it on the floor next to your chair. Do not be overfamiliar, such as leaning on the interviewer's desk.

After you leave the interview, take a few moments to make some notes about the interview, your reaction to it, what was said, and your impression of the interviewer(s) and the firm. These notes will help prepare you if you are invited for a second visit.

### C. The "Callback" Interview

U.S. firms usually will invite applicants who impress them during the first interview for further interviews at the law firm (a "callback"). This second round of interviews may be a bit more relaxed than your initial interview, as you have already proven yourself with at least one of the firm's attorneys. Your callback interview will likely involve a series of 20- to 30-minute interviews in individual attorneys' offices, perhaps followed by lunch with younger attorneys.

It is acceptable to phone the recruiting coordinator in advance so that you can learn the names of your interviewers and research their background and practice areas; these areas make excellent interview topics. You may also ask about interesting things in the interviewer's office, such as photographs, plaques, or college memorabilia.

Don't worry if you find that you ask more than one interviewer the same question throughout the day; it is acceptable to seek different perspectives on the same issue. Remember that everyone who interacts with you at the firm may be assessing you and whether you will fit into the firm's "personality" as well. Be courteous to everyone you meet, from the senior partner, to the recruiting coordinator, to the receptionist.

### D. After the Interview

As soon as possible after the interview, you should write thank-you letters to the interviewers. It may not be necessary to write to everyone you spoke with during a callback interview, but do write to everyone with whom you had a meaningful conversation.

In writing thank-you letters, the goal is to confirm your interest in their firm and to elicit a response. Remind interviewers of some concrete fact about you that you want to highlight, or refer to some part of your conversation that will help them remember you.

#### Thank You Letter Structure

The first paragraph should combine thanks with context. Polite openings are, "I enjoyed meeting you on [date]" or "Thank you for the interview I had with you on [date]." In the second paragraph state your interest in working with the firm, give concrete reasons for your interest, and state why you would be good for the firm. A third paragraph is optional. It might refer to some concrete or personal fact that you discussed that made a connection to the interviewer. It might also refer to enclosures you have been asked to send, such as transcript or writing sample. The final paragraph should repeat thanks, offer to answer further questions, and indicate that you are awaiting a response. *Please refer to **Appendix M** for an example of a thank you letter.*

## 29 | Page

# Appendix A: Eligibility to Take the Bar:

## Foreign Law School Graduates (excerpts)\*

*\* subject to change, please check state websites before applying*

**Alaska:** A graduate of a foreign law school in which the principles of English law are taught may be eligible to take the bar exam if he or she submits proof that 1) the law school from which he/she graduated meets the ABA's standards for approval; and 2) he/she has successfully completed 1 year at an ABA-approved law school, including successful completion of 1 course in U.S. Constitutional Law and 1 course in U.S. Civil Procedure, or is a member in good standing of the bar of 1 or more states, territories, or the District of Columbia and was admitted to the bar of that state, territory, or the District of Columbia after written examination.

**California** Foreign law school graduates must request individual evaluation to determine legal education equivalency. Graduates from foreign law schools may qualify to take the California bar exam if they obtain an LL.M. degree or complete an additional 1 year of law study at an ABA-approved or California-accredited law school which includes a certain number of credits in bar examination subject matter. Foreign-educated law students who did not graduate are not eligible to take the exam and are required to either graduate with a J.D. degree at an ABA-approved or California-accredited law school or complete 4 years of law study at a law school registered in California and pass the First-Year Law Students' Exam. Foreign law school graduates who are admitted to the active practice of law in good standing in their countries do not have to complete any additional law study to qualify to take the bar exam.

**Colorado** Must have practiced actively and substantially for 5 of the previous 7 years in jurisdiction where admitted.

**Connecticut** An applicant who otherwise does not meet the educational requirements may be eligible

to sit for the exam if he/she meets certain conditions. Conditions include admission before the highest court of original jurisdiction in a U.S. state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or a U.S. District Court for 10 or more years, good standing in such jurisdiction, active practice of law in that jurisdiction for 5 of the last 7 years, and an intention to actively practice law in Connecticut and to devote a majority of his/her work to such practice.

**District of Columbia** Applicant may be permitted to take bar examination upon successful completion of 26 semester hours of study at an ABA-approved law school; semester hours must be in subjects covered in the bar examination. All such 26 semester hours shall be earned in courses of study, each of which is substantially concentrated on a single tested subject.

**Florida** After 10 years' active practice in another jurisdiction (District of Columbia or other states in the United States or in federal courts in the United States or its territories, possessions, or protectorates) in which applicant has been duly admitted, the applicant may file a representative compilation of work product for evaluation by the Board.

**Hawaii** Applicant must be admitted to practice and be in good standing before the highest court in foreign country where English common law is the basis of jurisprudence and where English is the language of instruction and practice in the courts, and must have actively practiced for 5 of the past 6 years prior to filing the application for admission by examination.

**Illinois** Graduates of foreign law schools who are licensed and in good standing in country conferring law degree or in a U.S. jurisdiction, who have actively and continuously practiced under

such license(s) for 5 of the 7 preceding years, and the quality of whose legal and other education has been determined acceptable by the Board may apply to take bar exam.

**Kentucky** An attorney who is a graduate of a foreign law school can apply for an education evaluation to determine if applicant's legal education is substantially equivalent to the Kentucky law school education. If the law school is approved, the applicant may sit for the bar exam if he/she has been actively and substantially engaged in the practice of law for 3 of the last 5 years.

**Louisiana** Foreign attorneys can apply to take the bar exam but must first have an educational equivalency evaluation conducted.

**Maine** Must satisfy requirements of Regulation for Determining Equivalency of Foreign Legal Education and have practiced for 3 years in the jurisdiction where licensed.

**Maryland** A graduate of a foreign law school must first be admitted by exam in another U.S. jurisdiction to qualify to apply for a waiver to take the Maryland bar examination.

**Massachusetts** A graduate from a foreign law school (other than those Canadian law schools that are prequalified) may be permitted to sit for the bar exam after taking further legal studies designated by the Board at an ABA-approved law school or a Massachusetts-accredited law school. Foreign law school graduates must obtain a determination of their educational equivalency from the Board prior to making application.

**Missouri** Graduates who are not licensed in another state must be admitted to practice law in the foreign country where the foreign law degree was conferred and be in good standing with either (1) full-time practice for 3 of the 5 years preceding the application or (2) completion of 24 credit hours in residence at an ABA-approved law school within the 3 years prior to application.

**New Hampshire** Graduate must be legally trained in common law, and a determination of educational equivalency is required. Graduate must be a member in good standing in home jurisdiction. In addition, one of the following requirements must also be met: additional education at an ABA-approved law school or admission in another U.S. jurisdiction.

**New Mexico** Applicant may take exam if he/she is licensed in another state within the United States and has practiced there 4 of 6 years prior to application.

**New York** Applicant must complete period of law study equivalent in duration and substance to that specified in New York rules in law school recognized by competent accrediting agency of the government of such foreign country. All applicants must have their transcripts evaluated by the Board of Law Examiners to determine if further study is required in the form of a 24-credit program at an approved law school in the U.S., including basic courses in American law.

**North Carolina** The eligibility of foreign-trained applicants is limited to those who had an LLM conferred prior to August 1, 2005, the date of the pertinent rule change.

**Ohio** If an applicant's legal education was not received in the United States, the education must be evaluated and approved by the Supreme Court as equivalent to ABA-approved law school education. For equivalency, an applicant must show successful completion of 30 credit hours at an ABA-approved law school in addition to a foreign law degree. The registration application may not be processed until the education is approved by the Supreme Court.

**Oregon** Applicant must be admitted to practice in a country where common law of England is the basis of its jurisprudence, and where requirements for admission to the bar are substantially equivalent to those of Oregon, and applicant must



be a graduate of a law school determined by an Oregon equivalency panel to be equivalent to an ABA-approved law school.

**Pennsylvania** Applicant must have completed law study in a foreign law school, have been admitted and in good standing at the bar of a foreign jurisdiction, and have practiced in the jurisdiction for 5 out of the last 8 years. Applicant must also complete 30 credit hours taken in specified subjects at an ABA-approved law school.

**Rhode Island** Additional education at an ABA-approved law school may be required. Also, a foreign law school must be approved by a dean of an ABA-approved law school certifying that foreign degree is equivalent to that of an ABA-approved law school.

**Tennessee** Applicant must prove undergraduate and law school education are equivalent of that required by Tennessee rules.

**Texas** A graduate of a foreign non-correspondence law school accredited by its jurisdiction can take the exam if he/she holds a valid law license issued by that jurisdiction provided: he/she has 5 out of last 7 years of lawful practice in the foreign nation or elsewhere and either demonstrates that the law of the foreign nation or elsewhere is comparable to that of Texas or holds an LLM from an ABA-approved law school; or he/she has 3 out of last 5 years of lawful practice in the foreign nation or elsewhere, demonstrates that the law of the foreign nation is comparable to that of Texas, and holds an LLM from an ABA-approved law school. In all events, the applicant must demonstrate that he/she holds the equivalent of a J.D. If licensed by another U.S. jurisdiction, refer to Chart 3.

**Utah** A foreign lawyer with a law degree from an English common-law jurisdiction may sit for the

bar exam after practicing law for 2 years in a common-law jurisdiction and completing 24 semester hours at an ABA-approved law school.

**Vermont** Foreign law school graduates can be admitted on motion if admitted in another jurisdiction. Otherwise, if applicant has been admitted to practice before highest court of a foreign country which is a common-law jurisdiction, Board may allow credit for such study as it deems proper, and applicant must pursue the study of law in Vermont for at least 2 years immediately preceding examination under the supervision of an attorney who has practiced at least 3 years in Vermont.

**Washington** A foreign law school applicant who has been admitted to practice by examination in any jurisdiction where the common law of England is the basis of its jurisprudence and who has actively practiced law for at least 3 of the 5 years immediately preceding the filing of the application or participates in the law clerk program may qualify to take the bar exam.

**West Virginia** Applicant may sit for examination if a law school graduate from a foreign country where the common law of England forms basis of jurisprudence, if educational requirements for admission in said country are substantially the same as in West Virginia and applicant is admitted in good standing there, and if applicant successfully completes 30 credit hours of basic courses at an ABA-approved law school.

**Wisconsin** Applicants with foreign credentials are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and may qualify to take the bar exam.

**Puerto Rico** Applicant must validate his or her studies and obtain a law degree from a law school approved by the ABA and by the Supreme Court.

32 | Page

## Appendix B: New York Bar Foreign Legal Education Section (excerpts)

### Advance Evaluation of Eligibility.

All first-time applicants applying to sit for the bar examination under Rule 520.6 are now required to complete an online Foreign Evaluation Form before they may submit an application to sit for the New York bar examination. If an applicant will need an LLM degree or 24-credit program of study in order to qualify to sit for the bar examination, we encourage the applicant to request early evaluation of their foreign educational credentials and their anticipated course of American law study at least one year in advance of their application to sit for the bar examination. For example, if an applicant intends to sit for the July bar examination, the **Online Foreign Evaluation Form should be submitted to the Board at least one year prior to the commencement of the April filing period for that July examination.** After completing the Online Foreign Evaluation Form, the applicant must submit the documentation described below under the section entitled Documentary Proof Required for Compliance with Rule 520.6.

The Board will not commence its review of the request for evaluation until the Board is in receipt of all required documentation. When the Board is satisfied that all necessary documentation has been received, the Board will commence its review and provide the applicant with a written decision in due course.

*Please allow at least ten to twelve weeks from the date of the Board's receipt of all of the necessary documentation for a decision to be made.*

At this time, a determination of your evaluation request is not required prior to submitting your application to sit for the examination. However, applicants should be aware that if they submit an application to sit for the bar examination prior to

receiving an advance determination of their eligibility from the Board, they do so at their own risk, and the \$750 application fee will not be refunded or credited if it is later determined that the applicant is not eligible. Please also note that all transcripts and proofs submitted to the Board become the possession of the Board and will not be returned.

### Synopsis of the Requirements of Section 520.6(b)(1)

(1) Qualifying Degree (520.6[b][1]). The foreign-educated applicant must have fulfilled the educational requirements for admission to the practice of law in a foreign country other than the United States. The applicant must have a qualifying degree, which must be a degree in law.

(2) Accreditation (520.6[b][1]). The qualifying degree must be from a law school or schools recognized by a competent accrediting agency of the government of the foreign country and must be deemed qualified and approved.

(3) Durational Equivalence (520.6[b][1][i]). The applicant's period of law study must be successfully completed and also be "substantially" equivalent in duration to a full-time or part-time program required at an American Bar Association (ABA)-approved law school in the United States. The definition of a full-time or part-time program is contained in Rule 520.3 (d) and (e).

(4) Substantial Equivalence (520.3[b][1][i]). The foreign country's jurisprudence must be based upon the principles of the English Common Law, and the "program and course of law study" successfully completed by the applicant must be the "substantial" equivalent of the legal education provided by an ABA-approved law school in the United States. The specific instructional requirements are contained in Rule 520.3(c).  
**"Cure" Provision** (520.6[b][1][ii]). Applicants

enrolled in a program commencing in the 2012-2013 academic may cure the durational or substantive deficiency (but not both) by obtaining an LL.M. degree (Master of Law) at an ABA-approved law school in the United States.

**LL.M degree.** Applicants who commence a program in the 2012- 2013 academic year must successfully complete the requirements of and be awarded an LL.M. degree within 24 months of matriculation. A completed transcript showing that a qualifying LL.M degree was awarded will be required before an applicant is qualified to sit for the bar exam..

**Minimum of 24 Semester Hours of Credit.** For applicants who commence a program in the 2012-2013 academic year, the LL.M. degree program must consist of a minimum of 24 semester hours of credit. All 24 credits (except as otherwise permitted) must be in courses requiring classroom instruction with a minimum of 700 minutes of instruction time per credit, exclusive of examination time.

**Period of Instruction.** For applicants who commence a program in the 2012-2013 academic year, the LL.M degree program must take place over at least two (non-summer) semesters of at least 13 calendar weeks each, or the equivalent, exclusive of reading periods, examinations and breaks. The program cannot be completed exclusively during summer semesters; however, a maximum of four credits may be earned in summer courses.

**All coursework to be completed in the United States.** All coursework must be physically completed at the campus of the ABA-approved law school in the United States. ANY class taken at a law school's campus in a foreign country does NOT qualify toward the 24-credit requirement for the LL.M. degree. No credit is allowed for distance, correspondence or external study or for an on-line program or course.

**Required Coursework.** For applicants who commence a program in the 2012-2013 academic year, the LL.M degree program must include: (i) at least two semester hours of credit in professional responsibility, (ii) at least two credits in a legal research, writing and analysis course (which may NOT be satisfied by a research and writing requirement in a substantive course), (iii) at least two-credits in a course on American legal studies, the American legal system or a similar course designed to introduce students to U.S. law, and (iv) at least six credits in subjects tested on the New York bar examination (where a principal focus of the course includes material contained in the Content Outline published by the Board).

**Approved Law School** - Approved law school means a U.S. law school approved by the ABA. All of the courses must be taken at an ABA-approved law school. Please note that the Board cannot recommend a particular law school nor does the Board maintain a list of schools that offer programs that will satisfy Rule 520.6. You may consult the ABA's Section on Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar at their website (<http://www.abanet.org/legaled> ) to obtain a list of ABA approved law schools.

**Permissible Coursework.** For applicants who commence a program in the 2012-2013 academic year, the LL.M. degree program may include: (i) a maximum of four credits in clinical courses (so long as the clinic course has a classroom component, any clinical work is performed under direct supervision of a non-adjunct faculty member and the educational benefit is commensurate with credit awarded) and (ii) a maximum of six credits in other courses related to legal training (so long as the course is taught by a faculty member at law school awarding the LL.M. or an affiliate school and the course is completed at a campus in the United States).

**Supporting Documentation Required to comply**

**with Rule 520.6.** You will be required to submit to the Board the supporting documentation listed below directly from the issuing institutions and/or government agencies, as well as English translations if necessary. The documentation must consist of originals or copies certified directly by the issuing school or institution. Faxed copies, photocopies certified by a notary public, and photocopies certified by anyone other than an official at the issuing school or institution will not be considered. All documentation and correspondence which is submitted to the Board should contain the applicant's unique Board Identification Number (BOLE ID) which is assigned to each applicant at the time of completing the Online Foreign Evaluation Form. All documents submitted become the property of the Board and will not be returned.

#### **Required Foreign Documentation:**

**(a) Official Transcript(s).** Submit a final, official transcript from every law school attended that includes the dates of attendance for each period of study, the courses taken and passed for each period of study, the grades, the degree awarded, and the date the degree was awarded. All transcripts and other law school documentation must be received by the Board directly from the issuing law school in a sealed school envelope. The records must come directly from the school; records received from the candidate will not be accepted. If the school or university issues only one original to the graduate, then we will accept a certified copy of the transcript, but it must be certified by the issuing school as a true and correct copy of the original, and it must still be mailed to us in a sealed school envelope from the school. Copies certified by a notary will not be accepted in place of the school's certification.

**(b) Degree Certificate.** If the official transcript does not clearly state the degree awarded and/or the date such degree was awarded, you must also furnish the degree certificate.

#### **(c) Proof of fulfillment of the educational requirements for admission to the practice of law in the foreign country.**

(1) If you are admitted to practice law in a foreign country, attach a copy of your admission certificate, OR

(2) If you are not admitted to practice law in a foreign country, submit proof of the educational requirements for admission to practice law in your country and proof that you have fulfilled these requirements.

**(d) Accreditation.** Submit a written statement from the competent accrediting agency of your foreign government that the law school or schools you attended were recognized by them as qualified and approved throughout your period of study.

#### **Additional Documentation (if required):**

**(a) Supplement to transcript.** If the Board determines that your official transcript does not confirm that your legal education complies with the durational and substantive requirements of Rule 520.6 (b) (1), additional documentation from your law school will be required. You will be advised if such additional documentation is needed.

(1) Proof of durationally equivalent legal education. Section 520.6(b)(1) of the Rules of the Court of Appeals requires successful completion of law school study that is at least substantially equivalent in duration to that required under subdivisions (d) and (e) of Section 520.3. If your official transcript does not clearly confirm that your law degree was based on classroom study that is substantially equivalent in the number of hours and the number of calendar weeks in residence as required by section 520.3(d) (full-time program) or 520.3(e) (part-time program), then it will be necessary for you to provide a written

statement from your law school or schools confirming the total number of calendar weeks in residence and the total number of classroom hours successfully completed during your program of study.

(2) Proof of substantively equivalent legal education. Section 520.6(b)(1)(i) of the Rules of the Court of Appeals requires successful completion of law school study that is substantially equivalent of the legal education provided by an approved law school in the United States. If your official transcript does not clearly confirm that your law school study is substantially equivalent of the legal education provided by an approved law school in the United States, then it will be necessary for you to provide from your law school or schools any additional documentation as requested by the Board.

**(b) English translation.** If the law school transcripts, degree certificate, or any of the other documentation requested above are not in English, you must also furnish English translations of the documents prepared by an official translator. Translations made by the applicant will not be accepted. Translations may be mailed to the Board under separate cover and need not come directly from the issuing school or university. If you do not have a copy of the transcript from which to produce an English translation, then you should order a second original from your school – one to be sent directly to the Board, and one to yourself – to be used as a reference for the English translation.

## Appendix C: Non-exhaustive List of Bar Exam Preparation Courses for The NY Bar Exam (in alphabetical order)

### **BarBri**

BarBri offers a broad range of courses to help JD and LLM students study for the bar exam. The main course takes place after graduation and lasts from late May until early July. Please see [www.BarBri.com](http://www.BarBri.com) for more information

*LLM focus:* BarBri also offers a special LLM-specific online course for students wishing to get an early start on preparing for the exam. The course consists of 22 classes, broken down into two modules: (1) the academic success module and (2) substantive top-ten topics tested on the New York Bar exam module. Students have ability to choose different packages when picking a module. For more information, please contact Carl Gillen, the Associate Director of BarBri at [carl.gillen@barbri.com](mailto:carl.gillen@barbri.com)

### **Kaplan PMBR**

Kaplan is a main competitor to BarBri. It offers a similar Bar Review Courses for multiple states, including New York. More information can be found on [www.Kaptest.com](http://www.Kaptest.com)

*LLM focus:* every year Kaplan offers free Live Online Webinars on preparing for the bar exam geared toward LLM students. Webinars are usually offered in early fall. For more information about webinars, please contact the LLM Director, Diran Ajayi at [oladiran.ajayi@kaplan.com](mailto:oladiran.ajayi@kaplan.com) or Regional Director, Randi Maves, at [randi.maves@kaplan.com](mailto:randi.maves@kaplan.com).

### **LLM Bar Exam**

LLM Bar Exam is a bar review course designed specifically for LLM students to prepare for the New York Bar Examination. It is offered both live and online. For more information, please see [www.llmbarexam.com](http://www.llmbarexam.com)

### **Themis Bar Review**

Themis is another competitor to BarBri and offers online only Bar Review courses, which include lectures, tests, and personalized feedback. For more information, please see [www.themisbar.com](http://www.themisbar.com)

## Appendix D: Samples of Introductory Emails

**TO:** [Partner@lawfirm.com](mailto:Partner@lawfirm.com)

**CC:**

**FROM:** [student@law.duke.edu](mailto:student@law.duke.edu)

**BC:** [student@law.duke.edu](mailto:student@law.duke.edu)

**DATE:** December 1, 2012

**SUBJECT:** Greetings from Duke Law School

Dear Ms. Partner:

I am currently an LLM student at Duke Law School, having received my first law degree in France. I plan to pursue a career in international law in New York. I found your information on Duke Alumni Directory and noticed that your work is focused on international corporate matters. I would be grateful for the opportunity to speak with you about your experience at Duke Law and your career path. Please let me know if there is a convenient time for us to talk.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Student

**TO:** [Partner@lawfirm.com](mailto:Partner@lawfirm.com)

**CC:**

**FROM:** [student@law.duke.edu](mailto:student@law.duke.edu)

**BC:** [student@law.duke.edu](mailto:student@law.duke.edu)

**DATE:** December 1, 2012

**SUBJECT:** From Chinese Attorney at Duke Law School

Dear Mr. Partner:

I am currently an LLM student at Duke Law School, having received my first law degree in China. Your name is in the alumni database as an LLM graduate from China. May I set up a phone call with you to discuss your experience with Sample Law Firm? Your insights would be greatly appreciated, as I am now in the process of applying for internships in the U.S.

Thank you for your time,

Student

# 38 | Page Appendix E: Résumé Formatting

1101 University Drive, Apt 5B  
Durham, NC 27708  
Tel: (919) 215-7608

**FULL NAME**  
student@gmail.com

13 Rav-Ashi St. Apt. 20  
Tel-Aviv 69395, Israel  
Tel: +972-3-6452373

Use both your Durham and your home country addresses

## EDUCATION

**Duke University School of Law, Durham, North Carolina**

LLM expected, May 2012

GPA: 0.00

Honors: Scholarships (description of criteria if not well-known)

Awards (description of criteria if not well-known)

Activities: Student Groups, *position or office*

Athletic, Artistic or Other Organizations, *position or office*

Pro Bono or Community Activities, *position or office*

Use the formal "Duke University School of Law," not "College of Law" or "Duke Law School."

Round to the hundredth, not to the tenth. If you are applying before you receive your fall semester grades, you will not include a GPA section here.

**Previous University, City, Country**

Full Name of Degree (*degree name in your language*) **latin honors**, Year

GPA: 0.00

Thesis: *Title of Thesis*

Honors: Awards — *description of criteria if not well-known*

Activities: Student Groups, *position or office*

Athletic, Artistic or Other Organizations, *position or office*

Pro Bono or Community Activities, *position or office*

Include if publication-quality research or if the topic is relevant to the organization to which you are applying.

Consider adding the name of your degree in your native language

Include activities that make you appealing to employers by demonstrating (for example) leadership, engagement with legal or other relevant subject matter or communities, experience working with diverse individuals, a strong work ethic or unusual skills.

## EXPERIENCE

**Employer, City, Country**

*Title*, Month Year – Month Year

- Describe job functions using strong action verbs. Use past tense (unless you are currently employed in the position) and active voice.
- If an organization is unfamiliar, incorporate a description to give it context.
- Be succinct, but use enough detail to distinguish your experiences and achievements.
- Describe large or important projects and focus on any industry sectors, client/customer groups, or skills that are relevant to your prospective employer.

**Note:** Include résumé "Bar Admission" section, if you are qualified to practice law in your home country or another jurisdiction

**Note:** Bullet format with a period at the end of each clause. If you need more space, use fewer bullets or left justify instead of using bullets (see sample résumé)

Note that your résumés can exceed 1 page if your experience is extensive.

**Employer, City, Country**

*Title*, Month Year – Month Year

- Use your descriptions to show that you have the skills employers value, including communication (written and oral), problem solving, organization, perseverance, judgment, research ability, negotiation, client management, efficiency, team work, commitment, and a ability to work under pressure.
- Make your experience sound interesting so the employer wants to meet you and learn more.
- Demonstrate how you added value to a project, company or organization.

An "Additional Information" category can provide a good starting point for an interview, but is optional. Employment that does not rise to the level of professional experience can be included here.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Native/Fluent/Proficient/Knowledge of Foreign Language.** Describe special skills or interests.

Be prepared to be interviewed in the language you first list if you state that you are fluent or conversant.

Include unusual skills, relevant certifications, hobbies and/or a brief description of jobs or unique experiences not found elsewhere on your résumé. Focus on interests or activities which demonstrate discipline, teamwork, leadership, initiative, confidence or dedication—traits of successful lawyers. Avoid very general activities that are unlikely to spark conversation.



**Dove Goldstein**  
dove.goldstein@law.duke.edu

1101 University Drive, Apt 5B  
Durham, NC 27708  
Tel: (919) 555-7608

13 Rav-Ashi St. Apt. 20  
Tel-Aviv 69395, Israel  
Tel: +972-3-6452373

## **EDUCATION**

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**DUKE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW**, Durham, North Carolina  
LLM expected, May 2012  
*Activities:* International Law Society, LLM Representative

**DUKE ASIA-AMERICA INSTITUTE IN TRANSNATIONAL LAW**, Hong Kong, Summer 2010

**COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT SCHOOL OF LAW**, Tel-Aviv, Israel  
LL.B. (J.D. equivalent), *with honors*, Spring 2005

## **EXPERIENCE**

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**HERZOG, FOX & NEEMAN, ADV.**, Tel-Aviv, Israel  
*Associate*, September 2006 - present  
Counseled clients, primarily in English, on general corporate matters and cross-border transactions. Specialized in commercial law, telecommunications law, corporate law, venture capital and M&A. Provided legal advice on Israeli commercial and securities law in relation to M&A, corporate restructuring, listing application and credit facility; designed transaction structures; negotiated and drafted agreements.

**SHEARMAN & STERLING, LLP.**, Brussels, Belgium  
*Trainee*, May 2005 - August 2006  
Prepared due diligence report and drafted stock purchase agreement for the acquisition of an Argentinean energy company. Assisted in drafting several commercial agreements, including a complex acquisition of a European subsidiary from a large U.S. corporation.

## **BAR ADMISSION**

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The Israeli Bar Association, Israel, May 2007

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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Hebrew (native speaker), English (fluent), French (proficient). Publication: *Israel Needs More Real Merger Reform and Disclosure*, International Financial Law Review, December 2008. Enjoy competitive swimming, jazz, piano, and golf.

**Francois Arnaud**

Francois\_Arnaud@law.duke.edu  
1101 University Drive, Apt 25B  
Durham, NC 27708  
Tel: (919) 555-1234

**EDUCATION**

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**DUKE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW**, Durham, North Carolina

LLM expected, May 2013

*Honors:* James S. Bidlake Memorial Award for Superior Achievement in Legal Analysis, Research & Writing

*Activities:* International Law Society, LLM Representative

**UNIVERSITÉ PARIS II PANTHÉON-ASSAS**, Paris, France

*Master 2 (professionnel) – Contentieux, arbitrage et modes alternatifs de règlement des conflits*, June 2012  
(one year practice-oriented degree in litigation and alternative dispute resolution)

*Thesis:* “The Lis Pendens Principle: A Way to Avoid Parallel Proceedings in International Commercial Arbitration

*Master 2: (recherché) – Droit international privé et due commerce international*, June 2011  
(one-year research-oriented degree in international private and commercial law)

**UNIVERSITÉ PARIS V DESCARTES**, Paris, France

*Master 1 – Droit international et européen*, June 2010

(one year advanced degree focusing on international and European law)

*Licence de droit*, June 2009

(law degree awarded after three years of post-Baccalaureate study)

**EXPERIENCE**

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**SAVIN MARTINET ET ASSOCIES**, Paris, France

*Intern*, July 2010

As part of environmental law boutique, gained exposure to a broad cross-section of environmental litigation and regulation. Projects included creating a presentation on mining law to be presented to outside counsel; conducted legal research on a variety of environmental statutes. Assisted with legal translations and administrative tasks.

**MIAGE** (high-mountain lodge), Les Contamines, France

*Assistant Manager*, August 2010

Assisted in all aspects of running the lodge, including management of staff, customer service, ordering and serving food and managing receipts. Gained exposure to the hospitality industry’s business model.

**GREAT BASSIN INSTITUTE**, Nevada, Reno,

*International Conservation Volunteer Exchange*, Summer 2009

Worked on eradicating invasive plant species and helped build a trail for a spiritual Native American site without disturbing the fragile ecosystem.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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French (native speaker), English (fluent). Weekly volunteer at the Paris Food Bank ; spent eight years training in gymnastics and Kung Fu. Enjoy traveling and food.

**Xiaoming Zhang**

xiaoming.zhang@law.duke.edu

1101 University Drive, Apt 5B  
Durham, NC 27708  
Tel: (919) 215-7608

12 Yulan Rd. Apt 149/32  
Yi Yang, Hunan Province, 413000, China  
+86-0737-61234444

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**EDUCATION**

**DUKE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW**, Durham, North Carolina

LLM expected, May 2013

*Activities:* Environmental Law Society, Member  
Trained in mediation (16 hours) at the Elna B Spaulding Conflict Resolution Center

**TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW**, Beijing, China

LL.B., July 2006

*Honors:* Awarded Excellent Leadership of Tsinghua University Student Union, June 2007

*Law Journal:* Tsinghua China Law Review (English Version), *Managing Editor*, 2004—2005

*Moot Court:* 2006 Law Asia International Moot Competition (English-speaking), Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

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**EXPERIENCE**

**Haiwen & Partners**, Beijing, China

Associate, July 2006 – July 2012

- Focused on securities offerings, M&A transactions and general corporate compliance; representative deals include Shenzhen Development Bank's RMB29 billion acquisition of Ping An Bank in 2011, Agricultural Bank of China's US\$22 billion IPO in 2010 and Huaneng Power International's RMB10.3 billion A+H share follow-on offering in 2010.
- Acquired extensive experience in representing a broad cross-section of institutions, including state-owned corporations, such as China Huaneng Group; financial institutions, such as Shenzhen Development Bank; investment banks, including Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley; and private equity funds.
- Conducted legal research and prepared memoranda on a variety of legal issues, including securities law, banking, foreign exchange, state-owned assets regulation, foreign investment in China, and Chinese companies' overseas investment; managed due diligence, prepared reports, and designed transaction structures for a variety of securities offerings and M&A transactions.
- Drafted and negotiated transaction documents, including shares purchase agreements, articles of association, and underwriting agreements; reviewed and prepared information disclosure documents, including prospectuses, related-party transaction reports, material asset reorganization reports, and annual reports.

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**BAR ADMISSION**

Admitted to the bar of China (2005)

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**LANGUAGES**

Mandarin (native); English (fluent)

## Appendix G: Action Words

accomplished  
achieved  
acquired  
addressed  
adjusted  
administered  
advised  
allocated  
analyzed  
answered  
appeared  
applied  
appointed  
appraised  
approved  
arbitrated  
arranged  
assessed  
assigned  
assured  
attained  
audited  
awarded  
bought  
briefed  
brought  
budgeted  
canceled  
catalogued  
caused  
changed  
chaired  
classified  
closed  
collected  
combined  
commented  
communicated  
compared  
completed  
computed  
conceived  
concluded  
investigated

condensed  
conducted  
conceptualized  
considered  
constructed  
consulted  
continued  
contracted  
contributed  
controlled  
converted  
coordinated  
corrected  
counseled  
counted  
created  
credited  
critiqued  
dealt  
decided  
defined  
delegated  
delivered  
demonstrated  
described  
designed  
determined  
developed  
devised  
diagnosed  
directed  
discussed  
distributed  
documented  
drafted  
earned  
edited  
elected  
eliminated  
endorsed  
enlarged  
enlisted  
ensured  
proposed

entered  
established  
estimated  
evaluated  
examined  
expanded  
expedited  
experienced  
experimented  
explained  
explored  
expressed  
extended  
filed  
filled  
financed  
focused  
forecasted  
formulated  
found  
gathered  
graded  
granted  
guided  
handled  
headed  
helped  
identified  
implemented  
improved  
incorporated  
indexed  
initiated  
influenced  
inspected  
installed  
instituted  
instructed  
insured  
interpreted  
interviewed  
introduced  
invented  
tested

involved  
issued  
joined  
kept  
launched  
learned  
leased  
led  
licensed  
listed  
logged  
maintained  
managed  
matched  
measured  
mediated  
met  
modified  
monitored  
moved  
named  
negotiated  
observed  
offered  
opened  
operated  
ordered  
organized  
oversaw  
participated  
perceived  
performed  
persuaded  
planned  
prepared  
presented  
presided  
processed  
procured  
produced  
programmed  
prohibited  
projected  
promoted  
proofread

provided  
published  
purchased  
pursued  
qualified  
ranked  
rated  
received  
recommended  
reconciled  
recorded  
recruited  
reduced  
regulated  
related  
replaced  
replied  
reported  
represented  
researched  
responded  
revamped  
reviewed  
revised  
scheduled  
selected  
served  
serviced  
set  
solved  
sought  
specified  
spoke  
started  
studied  
strengthened  
submitted  
substituted  
suggested  
summarized  
supervised  
surveyed  
tackled  
targeted  
taught

toured  
traced  
trained  
transferred  
translated  
transported  
traveled  
treated  
turned  
uncovered  
updated  
used  
utilized  
visited  
worked  
wrote

**Verbs to use  
when describing  
legal positions**

assisted  
wrote  
proposed  
defended  
performed  
followed up  
researched  
prepared  
drafted  
determined  
investigated  
contacted  
attended  
analyzed  
negotiated  
summarized  
counseled  
interviewed  
observed  
operated  
conducted  
advised  
processed

## Appendix H: Sample Reference List

### REFERENCES

#### **Dove Goldstein**

dove.goldstein@law.duke.edu

1101 University Drive, Apt 5B  
Durham, NC 27708  
Tel: (919) 215-7608

13 Rav-Ashi St. Apt. 20  
Tel-Aviv 69395, Israel  
Tel: +972-3-6452373

#### **Professor Henry James, *Constitutional Law***

Duke University School of Law  
210 Science Dr.  
Durham, NC 27708  
james@law.duke.edu  
919-555-1212

#### **Ralph Touchett, Esq.**

Partner  
Herzogm Fox & Neemanm Adv.  
Ehad Haam 31  
Tel Aviv, Israel, 65202  
rtouchett@hfn.com  
+972-3-546-5555

#### **John Devereux**

Professor of Law  
College of Management School of Law  
7 Rabin Boulevard  
Rishon LeZion 75190, Israel  
+972-3-963-4702  
j.devereux@colman.ac.il

Be sure to include an email address  
for your references!

# 45 | Page Appendix I: Representative Deals List

**Natalie Vogel**  
Natalie.Vogel@law.duke.edu

1101 University Drive, Apt 7C  
Durham, NC 27708  
Tel: (919) 214-7755

15 Albert Avenue  
Brisbane QLD  
Tel: +61-7-3344-1234

## Financings and M&A Transactions

Only use client names if confidentiality is not at issue. If the names of your clients are confidential, use generic descriptions instead (i.e. large European telecommunications company)

- **Swiss Telecom**  
\$15 million combined senior secured, mezzanine and equity financing of a Swiss telecommunications carrier. Led negotiations of terms and drafted English documents.
- **Next-up, Inc (technology start-up)**  
Formation and financing of MIT Media Lab Europe-based company.
- **UBS Private Equity**  
Ongoing responsibility for all portfolio transactions in Europe for US Trust Private Funds.
- **Rexel, SA.**  
Represented acquirer in tender offer for Rexel, Inc., in going-private transaction.
- **AT&T Skynet**  
Represented Loral Space in \$725 million acquisition of AT&T Skynet.

## Securities Offerings

- **ING Securities**  
Represented ING Securities as initial purchaser of \$165 million senior subordinated notes of WNP Communications.
- **Merrill Lynch**  
Represented Merrill Lynch as underwriter of FiberNet Telecom high yield offering.

## Restructurings

- **Unofficial Creditors Committee of Arch Wireless**  
Represented creditors committee in restructuring.
- **Credit Suisse**  
Represented Credit Suisse in acquisition of equity of Southern Pacific.

## Other Transactions

- **Represented \$55 million License and Development Agreement between Deutsche Telekom and Siemens AG.**

46 | Page

# Appendix J: Sample Writing Sample Cover Page

**Natalie Vogel**  
Natalie.Vogel@law.duke.edu

1101 University Drive, Apt 7C  
Durham, NC 27708  
Tel: (919) 214-7755

15 Albert Avenue  
Brisbane QLD  
Tel: +61-7-3344-1234

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## Writing Sample

The attached writing sample is a legal memorandum that I drafted for a client in 2010.

**[Include a brief explanation of context and what you have cut, if necessary, and don't forget to redact all privileged, confidential, and sensitive information]**



## Appendix K: Sample Cover Letter

1101 University Drive, Apt 5B  
Durham, NC 27708

October 2, 2012

Robert G. DeLaMater, Esq.  
Sullivan & Cromwell LLP  
125 Broad Street  
New York, NY 10004-2498

Dear Mr. DeLaMater:

I am attending the LLM program at Duke University School of Law and will receive my degree in May 2013. After my graduation, I would like to work in the U.S. for up to a year before I return to my law firm in Japan. I am particularly interested in the possibility of an internship position at Sullivan & Cromwell because of its preeminent U.S. legal practice in Tokyo.

I received my first law degree with honors from Waseda University in Tokyo. After I was admitted to the Japanese Bar in 2006, I began working for Nagashima Ohno & Tsunematsu (NO&T) in Tokyo, the largest and among the most prestigious law firms in Japan. My practice primarily focused on general corporate matters as well as cross-border transactions. Through advising many American and international clients while at NO&T, I have developed strong writing and communication skills in English. My recent article written in English and calling for disclosure reform in merger transactions in Japan was featured in the December 2011 issue of the *International Financial Law Review*.

At Duke, I have had the opportunity to further develop my writing and analytical skills, as well as my knowledge of American corporate law. I would like to enhance my understanding of American law while being able to contribute to the work of your firm. I am especially interested in merger and acquisition work, and work with financial institutions. Your own expertise in these areas, as well as your background and continued work with Asian clients, is a key reason for my contacting you. I believe that my knowledge of Japanese law, my English ability, and my experience with international corporate clients, will enable me to make a significant contribution to your corporate practice.

Please find enclosed a copy of my résumé for your review. I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you further about my qualifications. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely yours,

Yukiko Watanabe

Enclosure

# Appendix L: Commonly Asked Interview Questions

## QUESTIONS INTERVIEWERS ASK

1. Why did you decide to pursue an LLM degree at Duke? What prompted the decision?
2. Why did you select the particular focus of your LLM degree? What are your interests in this area?
3. Why are you interested in working in the US? How long do you plan to stay here?
4. Tell me about yourself. Where do you see yourself five years from now?
5. Why did you decide to interview with us? What do you know about our firm/agency/company?
6. In what kind of environment are you most comfortable? What two or three things are most important to you in a job?
7. What are your grades? Do you think they are a good indication of your achievement?
8. What are some of your weaknesses?

## QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

1. What is on your desk and, if I started today, how could I help you with your project/case?

**Goal:** to demonstrate enthusiasm for the practice, weave talking points from the résumé, start a discussion regarding key priorities

2. What do you see as the biggest challenge facing the person in my position

**Goal:** create an opportunity for a follow-up discussion focused on conveying how your strengths can help meet these challenges

3. In your experience, what are some of the essential attributes of a successful associate/attorney?

**Goal:** an opportunity to discuss how these essential attributes play into your strengths as an attorney and a professional

4. What do you enjoy most about working for the firm/organization/agency?

**Goal:** give the interviewer an opportunity to describe a positive experience and follow-up with a demonstration of your enthusiasm for this position

## Appendix M: Sample Thank You Letter

1101 University Drive, Apt 5B  
Durham, NC 27708

February 2, 2013

Martha Brown, Esq.  
White & Case LLP  
1155 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, New York 10036

Dear Ms. Brown:

Thank you very much for meeting with me at the New York LLM job fair last week. I very much enjoyed interviewing with you and remain interested in a position with White & Case. I was surprised and pleased to meet with another lawyer from France, both because it was nice to speak French again briefly, but also because it helps to see someone who has taken a path similar to mine and has been successful.

As you know, I am very interested in competition law and would like, at least initially, to work in Brussels or another White & Case office outside of France. I believe that this will improve my international legal skills and make me a better international lawyer.

Please let me know if you need any additional materials from me. I hope to meet with you again. I would welcome another interview at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Natalie Vogel