

On-Campus Interviews (OCI)

Fall 2009 Handbook

Instructions and Information

(updated July 13, 2009)

****Fall 2009 OCI begins August 10, 2009****

Other important dates:	
August 14, 2009	Off-Campus Interviews • Miami
August 21, 2009	Off-Campus Interviews • Atlanta
August 24, 2009	Law school classes begin
November 24, 2009	Law school classes end

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FLORIDA STATE LAW

FALL 2009 RECRUITING PROGRAMS

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FALL ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWING

What Is It?

During the Fall, the Placement Office sponsors an on-campus interviewing program (“OCI”). OCI is probably the most visible effort of the Placement Office and the one most well known by students. However, it is only one of many ways to find a job. Approximately 25-30% of the students receive their jobs through OCI. **Therefore, you should not limit your search to only those employers interviewing on campus. Instead, take advantage of other opportunities such as networking, volunteer work, job fairs, and targeted mailings.** A Placement Office staff member will be happy to assist you in defining and narrowing your job search efforts.

Who Participates in Fall OCI?

The OCI interviews begin August 10th and resume deadlines begin July 27th. Therefore, employers will be interviewing on campus two weeks before classes start so make your summer plans accordingly. The law firms and legal employers who recruit on campus are generally organizations that know in advance that they will have the need and the resources to support clerks and/or associates during the following summer. **Therefore, Fall OCI generally attracts larger law firms which tend to set high academic criteria for candidates.** These employers typically recruit regionally and sometimes nationally on an annual basis. To learn more about each employer, review the recruiting materials available in the Placement Office and visit the employer’s website.

If an employer sets “REQUIRED” criteria and you do not meet a specific employer’s criteria, please do not be discouraged. We encourage students to solicit the firms/employers independently of OCI. In many instances we have seen this approach work successfully for students. NOTE: if you would like to solicit a firm independently of OCI, contact the Placement Office first so we can give you the correct contact information for that employer.

Participating Employer Calendar

The first step is to review the list of employers that have registered to participate in Fall OCI, Miami Off-Campus Interviewing Program, and Atlanta Off-Campus Interviewing Program. The list includes the name of the employer; the cities for which the employer is interviewing; the date the employer will be interviewing; the resume deadline date; class years requested; hiring criteria set by the employer; and materials requested to bring to the interview. This list is maintained on Symplicity. To view it:

1. Log onto <https://law-fsu-csm.symplicity.com/students/> using your username and password; (If you have forgotten your username and password, please call the Placement Office.)
2. Click on the “OCI” button at the top of the screen; and
3. Select one of the available session options from the drop down menu (Fall 2009 OCI, Atlanta Off-Campus, or Miami Off-Campus), and scroll down to view the upcoming interviews and events scheduled.

***Please note that the employers are added on an on-going basis, so it is important to routinely check the OCI tab housed in Symplicity for updates throughout the interviewing process. It is your responsibility to check the OCI tab in Symplicity and your email frequently so you do not miss any deadlines or opportunities!

Employer Research

Two great resources for information about firms are Martindale Hubbell, which can be found on the web at www.martindale.com, and the NALP Directory, which can be found at www.nalpdirectory.org.

RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH the employers!! The biggest complaint heard from employers during interviews is that a student did not know anything about the firm, which makes it appear as though the student is not genuinely interested in working for that employer. You should examine the materials available for each employer carefully to obtain as much information as possible about the employer’s practice areas, location, salary, etc.

Also consider whether you meet the employer’s hiring criteria, if specified. If an employer REQUIRES that students have certain qualifications to interview (e.g., top 25%, Law Review, etc.), you may NOT drop for an interview with that employer unless you meet those qualifications. **However, you may drop for any firm that has PREFERRED hiring criteria.**

Importance of Grades, Class Rank and Other Activities

There is no doubt that some employers emphasize grades, class rank, and other activities such as *Law Review* or Moot Court in selecting which students to interview. However, the employers participating in OCI are diverse in size, location, and type of practice. Therefore, do not automatically assume OCI has nothing to offer you. Frequently employers are attracted by other factors in a student’s background such as previous work experience, leadership, communication skills, and attitude. In addition, many of the State Attorney’s Offices and Public Defender’s Offices participate in OCI and they typically seek students with practical experience over grades. **If an employer sets “REQUIRED” criteria and you do not meet a specific employer’s criteria,**

please do not be discouraged. We encourage students to solicit the firms/employers independently of OCI. In many instances we have seen this approach work successfully for students. NOTE: if you would like to solicit a firm independently of OCI, contact the Placement Office first so we can give you the correct contact information for that employer.

Submitting Your Resume for Interviews

To participate in OCI, you must complete a form acknowledging the “No Show” Policy. Our office will have the “No Show” policy posted on <https://law-fsu-csm.symplicity.com/students/> and you will be able to “sign” the form electronically. Once you have signed this acknowledgment, you will be permitted to participate in the Fall recruiting programs. Instructions on how to use <https://law-fsu-csm.symplicity.com/students/> are detailed later in this handbook.

Once you have studied the OCI tab and reviewed the employer information, you are ready to submit your resume (this is also called “dropping” your resume). You will submit your resume online through <https://law-fsu-csm.symplicity.com/students/>.

*****On rare occasion, OCI employers require more than a resume (i.e., transcripts and writing samples).** You will need to upload a scanned unofficial transcript and writing sample into Symplicity so you are prepared to “drop” these documents as well if asked to do so. **Most OCI employers will NOT require you to “drop” these documents with your resume.** Instead, you will be required to bring the documents to the interview if you are selected to interview with that employer. You will not need to submit a cover letter with your resume for an OCI unless indicated by the employer, which is rarely requested (1 or 2 employers a year).

The interview **resume deadlines are at 11:59 p.m. on the deadline date indicated. Deadlines are set for 14 days before the date that the employer will be on campus.** This allows sufficient time for the firm to receive the resumes, to make the interview selections, and to return their interview selections to the Placement Office one (1) week before their interviews begin.

After the 11:59 pm deadline, the resumes will be automatically bundled into a pdf file and emailed directly to the employer.

****THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THE 11:59 PM DEADLINE.****

Employer Interview Selection Process

The employers have several days after they receive their resumes to review the resumes and make interview selections. The employer then contacts the Placement Office to

notify us of which students they would like to interview. Interview appointments are generally for 20 to 30 minute periods depending upon the employer's preference. If you are selected for an interview, you will be notified via email and will have a notice on Symplicity. **It is your responsibility to check your email and Symplicity to see if you have been selected for an interview.** You will also be notified by email if you are not selected for an interview.

We ask employers to let us know their interview selections no later than one week prior to their interview date so that you have adequate time to prepare for the interview. However, not all employers comply with this request. We will do our best to post the interview selections immediately upon receipt. Also, note that sometimes an employer will wish to interview more students than originally submitted resumes for the firm. If this happens, an email will be sent re-advertising the event to all students.

Signing-up for Interview Times

If you are selected for an interview, you are REQUIRED to sign-up for an interview time as soon as possible. **You cannot decline an interview.** The only instance in which you can decline an interview is if you have accepted an offer with another firm. In that case, you must meet with the Director and explain the situation. You will sign up for the interviews online using <https://law-fsu-csm.symplicity.com/students/>. The interview times are first-come, first-served, so it is important for you to sign-up early! Once you sign up for a slot, you cannot change it!

You should not sign up for a time that is during your classes. Classes are of utmost importance in law school, so make sure you sign up for a time as soon as you are notified to avoid schedule conflicts. If you do have a conflict, you will need to meet with the Assistant Director Cristina Carter to try to schedule your interview around the conflict.

Students are responsible for keeping track of their individual interview appointments. The Placement Office does not send reminders to students about their interviews. You must be responsible and keep track of these important dates and times! You can view and print your schedule at your leisure using Symplicity.

Policy on Canceling Interviews and “No-Shows”

By submitting your resume for an employer for OCI, Miami Off-Campus Interview Program, or Atlanta Off-Campus Interview Program, you are agreeing to accept an invitation to interview with that employer. As such, if you are selected for an interview, you are REQUIRED to sign-up for an interview time as soon as possible. Therefore, you should only drop for employers in which you have a genuine interest. Do not deny

your fellow classmates potential job opportunities by dropping for employers who do not really interest you.

You may cancel an interview for “Good Cause” ONLY if you do so two (2) business days prior to the scheduled interview date. Good Cause means either an emergency arose that will make you miss the interview or that you have accepted an offer with another firm. The Placement Office Director determines what constitutes Good Cause. If an employer calls in late with its interview selections (so that you do not have two business days advance notice), you may not cancel your interview. In order to be excused from an interview, you must meet with the Placement Director at least two (2) business days prior to the scheduled interview date and provide Good Cause for desiring to cancel your interview.

You are considered a “No-Show” if you:

1. fail to appear for a scheduled interview at the appointed time;
2. if you cancel an interview less than two (2) business days before the interview EVEN IF you feel that you have a valid excuse (e.g., car trouble, illness, etc.); **OR**
3. if you cancel an interview without Good Cause more than two (2) days before the interview.

Your first No-Show requires an appointment with the Placement Director and a letter of apology to the interviewer within five (5) business days of the scheduled interview. The letter of apology, along with a pre-addressed envelope, must be brought to your appointment with the Director for review. The Director will mail the letter on your behalf. Until the foregoing steps are completed, you will be unable to sign-up for interviews or drop your resume for any additional employers. Once your letter has been approved and mailed, you will be able to participate in the College of Law’s recruiting activities.

After your second No-Show, you will be denied all future participation in the College of Law’s recruiting activities **for the balance of the academic year and your Symplicity account will be “blocked” from further participation in recruiting events.** This will occur even if you have been pre-selected for other interviews. You will receive a letter from the Director informing you of your loss of services for lack of professional responsibility. The Placement Office will also provide a copy of that letter to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs to include in your student file.

****Please remember that the College of Law’s recruiting activities are very competitive and highly sought after by students. A missed interview or late cancellation inconveniences the employer; reflects poorly on you; and jeopardizes the relationship between the employer and the College of Law.****

The Interview

On the day of the interview, a sign will be posted in the Placement Office that will inform you of the location of the interview. This information will also be available on your schedule on Symplicity; however, be sure to check the Placement Office on the morning of your interview in case there is a last minute room change. All interviews will be conducted on the law school's premises.

You should bring an extra copy of your resume, your transcript, and a writing sample to every interview.

You should arrive for your interview at least five (5) minutes prior to your scheduled interview time. Outside the interview room, the Placement Office will have a copy of the employer's information sheets available for one last review. Two (2) minutes prior to your scheduled interview time, gently knock on the door to let the interviewer know you are ready. Then wait until the interviewer invites you in.

Thank-you Notes

After your interview you should write each interviewer a note thanking him or her for the interview. By 12:00 (noon) on the day after an employer has interviewed on campus, the interviewers' information will be placed in a notebook labeled "Thank-You" located at the front desk in the Placement Office. This notebook will be a good resource for you to double-check the spelling of names and obtain mailing addresses. For sample thank you notes, please see the College of Law's Career Development Handbook or go to <http://www.law.fsu.edu/placement/resumes.html> .

Callback Interviews and Job Offers

For suggestions on how to handle callback interviews and job offers, please consult the College of Law's Career Development Handbook. This Handbook will be e-mailed to you electronically. Copies are also available in the Placement Office. The Placement Office will also host a panel to discuss callbacks later in the fall semester.

FALL RESUME REFERRAL PROGRAM

In addition to OCI, we have a Resume Referral Program for firms that are not visiting the campus. Students submit resumes on Symplicity by the deadline date, and then our office forwards the resumes to the employers. The employers will then contact the students they want to interview directly.

FALL OFF-CAMPUS INTERVIEW PROGRAMS

The Placement Office coordinates two off-campus recruiting programs in the Fall, one in Miami and one in Atlanta. These programs provide students with a great opportunity to interview with employers that do not participate in OCI. These programs are included on <https://law-fsu-csm.symplicity.com/students/>.

The off-campus programs differ from OCI in that the employers do not come to the College of Law to interview students; instead the students must travel to the employers' offices for their interviews. Students are responsible for coordinating and paying for their travel, accommodations, and other related expenses.

The procedures for dropping for off-campus employers are the same as those for OCI. The schedules for the Off-Campus Programs are as follows:

Miami Interview Date: August 14, 2009

Atlanta Interview Date: August 21, 2009

The deadline to drop your resume for the off-campus programs is fourteen (14) days prior to the date of the interview. You will receive notice of interviews as you normally would for OCI; however, you may have to schedule your interviews with the Assistant Director instead of online.

Students have had great success with the Off-Campus programs in the past, so the Placement Office encourages you to consider these programs if you are interested in the Miami or Atlanta areas. Please remember, however, that the cancellation/No-Show policy set forth above also applies to the off-campus programs.

HOW CAN THE PLACEMENT OFFICE HELP DURING OCI?

The Placement Office is here to help you with all aspects of your job search. Some students find it overwhelming to initiate a job search because of the wide variety of firms out there and locations to choose from. The Director or Assistant Director can meet with you to discuss firms, locations, and how to start narrowing your search. We will host workshops on job search strategies, resumes/cover letters, and interviewing skills. We are also happy to review

resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters. The Resource Room in the Placement Office also contains information on employers and practice areas. These are just some of the ways the Placement Office can help you as you job search, so please take advantage of our services!

TIMING GUIDELINES (GENERALLY)

The National Association for Law Placement (NALP) was organized in 1971 to promote the exchange of information and cooperation between law schools and employers. In order to advance those interests, the Association has developed these "Principles and Standards for Law Placement and Recruitment Activities."

The NALP "Principles and Standards for Law Placement and Recruitment Activities" were first adopted in 1978. Part V, "Standards for the Timing of Offers and Decisions," was derived from "Interviewing Procedures for Law Students and Prospective Employers," a set of guidelines originally adopted in the early 1960s by a group of law schools meeting under the auspices of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. Subsequent modifications were adopted in 1985, 1988, 1992, 1994, 2002, 2004, 2005, and 2009

NALP is dedicated to facilitating legal career counseling and planning, recruitment and retention, and the professional development of law students and lawyers. Florida State Law and most law schools are NALP members as well as many large law firms. NALP has established guidelines with regards to employment offers. These are guidelines by which students should respond to offers of employment as prescribed in Part V of the NALP Principles and Standards. **Please keep in mind that these guidelines are mere suggestions. Employers are under no obligation to abide by these guidelines.**

For the full text of the NALP Principles and Standards, please to:
<http://www.nalp.org/fulltextofnalpprinciplesandstandards>

**NALP GENERAL STANDARDS FOR
THE TIMING OF OFFERS AND DECISIONS**
(taken from www.nalp.org/fulltextofnalpprinciplesandstandards)

To promote fair and ethical practices for the interviewing and decision-making process, NALP offers the following standards for the timing of offers and decisions:

A. General Provisions

1. All offers to law student candidates (“candidates”) should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the offer letter unless the offers are made pursuant to Sections B and C below, in which case the later response date should apply.
2. Candidates are expected to accept or release offers or request an extension by the applicable deadline. Offers that are not accepted by the offer deadline expire.
3. A candidate should not hold open more than five offers of employment at any one time. For each offer received that places a candidate over the offer limit, the candidate should, within one week of receipt of the excess offer, release an offer.
4. Employers offering part-time or temporary positions for the school term are exempted from the requirements of Paragraphs B and C below.
5. Practices inconsistent with these guidelines should be reported to the candidate’s career services office.

B. Full-Time Employment Provisions

1. Employers offering full-time positions to commence following graduation to candidates not previously employed by them should leave those offers open for at least 45 days following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first. Offers made after December 15 for full-time positions to commence following graduation should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the offer letter.
2. Candidates may request that an employer extend the deadline to accept the employer’s offer until as late as April 1 if the candidate is actively pursuing positions with public interest or government organizations. Candidates may hold open only one offer in such circumstances. Employers are encouraged to grant such requests.
3. Employers offering full-time positions to commence following graduation to candidates previously employed by them should leave those offers open until at least November 15 of the candidate’s final year of law school. Candidates should reaffirm these offers within thirty days from the date of the offer letter. Employers may retract any offer that is not reaffirmed within the 30 day period.
4. Employers offering candidates full-time positions to commence following graduation and having a total of 40 attorneys or fewer in all offices are exempted

from Paragraphs 1-3 of this Section. Instead, offers made on or before December 15 should remain open for at least three weeks following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first, and offers made after December 15 should remain open for at least two weeks.

C. Summer Employment Provisions for Second and Third Year Students

1. Employers offering positions for the following summer to candidates not previously employed by them should leave those offers open for at least 45 days following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first. Offers made after December 15 for the following summer should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the offer letter.
2. Candidates may request that an employer extend the deadline to accept the employer's offer until as late as April 1 if the candidate is actively pursuing positions with public interest or government organizations. Candidates may hold open only one offer in such circumstances. Employers are encouraged to grant such requests.
3. Employers offering positions for the following summer to candidates previously employed by them should leave those offers open until at least November 15. Candidates should reaffirm these offers within thirty days from the date of the offer letter. Employers may retract any offer that is not reaffirmed within the 30 day period.
4. Employers offering candidates positions for the following summer and having a total of 40 attorneys or fewer in all offices are exempted from Paragraphs 1-3 of this Section. Instead, offers made on or before December 15 should remain open for at least three weeks following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first, and offers made after December 15 should remain open for at least two weeks.

D. Summer Employment Provisions for First Year Students

1. Law schools should not offer career services to first-semester first year law students prior to November 1 except in the case of part-time students who may be given assistance in seeking positions during the school term.
2. Prospective employers and first year law students should not initiate contact with one another and employers should not interview or make offers to first year students before December 1.
3. All offers to first year students for summer employment should remain open for at least two weeks after the date made.

For the full text of the NALP Principles and Standards, please go to:
<http://www.nalp.org/fulltextofnalpprinciplesandstandards>

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW SYMPPLICITY

<https://law-fsu-csm.symplicity.com/students/>

TO LOGIN to Florida State University College of Law's new online career center, please go to <https://law-fsu-csm.symplicity.com/students/> and enter your username and password. If you are unsure what your username and password are, please contact the Placement Office. Click on "Login." Once logged in you can use all the system's tools that are listed below.

TO EDIT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Once logged into the system, click on the "Profile" tab at the top of the screen.
2. Here you can edit the information on the 4 sub-tabs, including your username and password. Before moving to a different sub-tab, click on the "save changes" button. **Be sure to fill your profile out completely.** You can highlight multiple areas of practice you are interested in under the "academic information" sub-tab by simply pushing the "CTRL" key at the same time you click with your mouse. The Placement Office staff can search the profiles by a student's area of interest. For example, when an employer calls the Placement Office looking for 2nd year law student interested in lobbying who can speak Vietnamese, the staff can quickly do a search of students to see who meets these requirements.

POSTING DOCUMENTS (i.e. resume, cover letter, writing sample) TO YOUR PROFILE

Posting Your Resume

It is important to post your resume on the system. Once you have uploaded a resume, you will be able to Apply Online to positions and interviews posted to the site.

1. Click on the "Documents" button at the top of the screen. Then click on the "Add New" button.
2. Enter the name of your resume in the "label" box. (i.e. Joe Smith Legal Resume, Sally Sue Judicial Clerkship Resume) You will be able to upload many documents, so enter different names for each document.
3. Select the type of document by clicking one of the document types.
4. *Upload file* – Click on the "Browse" button and find the file you wish to upload. Once the file is selected, it will appear in the box.
5. When finished, click on the "Submit" button.

How to Upload Writing Samples, References, Transcripts, and Cover Letters

1. Click on the "Documents" button at the top of the screen. Then click on the "Add New" button.
2. Enter the name of your document in the "label" box. (i.e. Writing Sample, References, Transcript, Cover Letter for xyz Resume Referral) You will be able to upload many documents, so enter different names for each document.

3. Select the type of document by clicking one of the document types.
4. *Upload file* – Click on the “Browse” button and find the file you wish to upload.
5. Once the file is selected, it will appear in the box.
6. When finished, click on the “Submit” button.

How to “drop” a resume with an employer for OCI

1. Click on the “OCI” button at the top of the screen
2. Select one of the available session options from the drop down menu (Fall 2009 OCI, Atlanta Off-Campus Interview Program, or Miami Off-Campus Interview Program). Scroll down to view the upcoming interviews and events scheduled.

****NOTE: Symplicity will only allow you to see employers that will be recruiting for your specific class year (2L or 3L).**

3. Click on the “I” button to learn more about the employer’s interview criteria. A description about the event will appear. If you meet the criteria and want to submit your resume/ application for pre-selection, choose a bid/application number from the drop down menu and select a resume to drop. This does not guarantee you an interview slot, but indicates your interest in interviewing with the employer. A recruiter will review all resumes that are emailed to them and select from that group.

Your resume will now be reviewed along with other students’ for the pre-selection slots available. After the employer makes their choices, you will receive an email notifying you whether you have been pre-selected or not. If you have been pre-selected, then you will be able to login to the system, and pick a time slot in which to interview. Please make sure to **check your email and the web site often** to make sure that you do not miss out on any of the pre-selections.

If you have questions about an employer or specific recruiting event, please contact the Placement Office.

How to “drop” a resume with an employer for RESUME REFERRAL

1. Click on the “Jobs and Resume Referral” button at the top of the screen
2. Select “RESUME REFERRAL” from the drop down menu under the heading “Position Type”. View the upcoming Resume referrals scheduled.
3. Click on the “Job Title” to learn more about the employer’s hiring criteria. A description about the event will appear. If you meet the criteria and want to submit your resume/ application, select the document(s) to include and click Submit.

4. This does not guarantee you an interview with the employer, but indicates your interest in interviewing with the employer. A recruiter will review all resumes that are emailed to them. You will be contacted by the employer directly if the employer would like to schedule a time to interview you at their office location at a date of their choosing.

If you have questions about an employer or specific recruiting event, please contact the Placement Office.

A few final tips...

1. RESEARCH THE EMPLOYERS BEFORE YOU SUBMIT YOUR RESUME!!!!
2. Only drop for OCI, Atlanta Off-Campus, or Miami Off-Campus employers in which you have a genuine interest; remember, by dropping for an employer, you are agreeing to accept an invitation to interview with that employer.
3. Make sure your academic credentials and experience fit an employer's specified required qualifications.
4. Prepare in advance for the interview by studying the employer materials so you will be able to ask thoughtful questions during your interview.
5. Be prepared to discuss your resume. Make sure your resume indicates a current address and telephone number.
6. Bring a copy of your resume, transcript, and writing sample to every interview, even if not previously requested. Be prepared to discuss these materials.
7. Constantly check the schedule in Symplicity for updated information on fall recruiting.
8. Do not get discouraged if you do not receive interviews. Remember, OCI is a great program but it is only **one way** to land a job.
9. Please do not hesitate to contact the Placement Office staff with any questions!