

# Judicial Clerkships: What You Need to Know Fall 2L

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# Agenda

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- Introduction to Judicial Clerkship Program
- Notes & Takeaways From 2022
- Clerkship Application Timeline (Class of '24)
- Fall Semester 2022 Action Items
- Upcoming Programs

# Berkeley Law Judicial Clerkship Program

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## Clerkship Committee

- Anna Han
- [Prof. Tejas Narechania](#) (Chair)
- [Prof. David Hausman](#)
- Eric Stern (CDO Interim Assistant Dean)
- 2 SABL Reps: Manjot Singh (2L), Alison Luna (3L)

## What Berkeley Law Provides

- Individualized counseling
- Programming to guide students (and alumni!) through the process
- Exposure to clerkship opportunities
- Connections (alumni clerks, faculty, judges (including alumni judges!))
- Logistical support (OSCAR, e-mail, paper applications)

# Resources to Bookmark Now!

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## Class of 2024 Clerkship Google Group

- <https://groups.google.com/a/lists.berkeley.edu/g/clerkships2024>
- Being a member of this group will ensure you have access to all Berkeley Law clerkship resources and stay up-to-date about clerkship openings!

[CDO Clerkship Guide](#) (updated March 2022)

[State Court Clerkship Guide](#) (“Vermont Guide”) (updated 2022)

[Alumni Clerk and Judicial Staff Directory](#) (updated June 2022)

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# Class of 2023 Clerkships (So Far)

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By early July 2022, **64** students had applied to at least one clerkship

To date, **15** students have received at least one clerkship offer (23% of applicants). Many 3Ls are still interviewing and applying, so we expect these numbers to grow throughout this year.

- **Federal**
  - 8 future district/magistrate clerkships (5 in 2023, 3 in 2024)
  - 7 future appellate clerkships (4 in 2023; 2 in 2024; 1 in 2025)
- **State**
  - 1 future DC Court of Appeals clerk (highest court in DC)
  - 1 future Delaware Chancery clerk
- **Geography**
  - 10 in California (5 in 2023, 5 in 2024 or later terms)
  - Other states: DC, DE, KS, MO, NM, TX, VT, WA

# Applying as an 3L/Alum

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## 3L experience is an advantage alone

- **28** 2022 alums received interview offers in 3L spring/after graduation
- **16** have obtained clerkships so far, including on the 9<sup>th</sup> Cir., C.D. Cal., E.D. Cal., SF Superior Court, W.D. Tex., and Court of Fed. Claims

## Alumni

- So far in 2022, at least **44** alumni applicants (2021 grads and earlier) have obtained clerkships
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Cir., 9<sup>th</sup> Cir. (8), C.D. Cal. (5), D. Mass. (2), D.D.C., E.D.N.Y. (2), N.D. Cal. (3), S.D. Cal. (2), SF Superior Court, DC Court of Appeals, DC Superior Court, and more!

# Takeaways for Class of 2024

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- Clerkships are competitive, but attainable!
- In popular jurisdictions, many 2024 positions may be filled by earlier classes
  - Many federal judges prefer, or even require, post-law school work experience
  - If you are set on clerking in 2024, geographic flexibility will be *very* helpful
- Consider state courts, which often hire entry-level clerks
  - Exception: CA Supreme Court
  - Alaska courts will interview at Berkeley Law in 3L fall
- Applying to clerkships may be an extended process - have patience and persistence!



# Myth-Busting

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There is A LOT of variability in judges' hiring preferences.

Grades are NOT all that matters.

You do NOT have to be on CLR to get a clerkship.

Clerkships are NOT just for BigLaw-bound students.

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# Big Picture Overview

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## Fall Semester (Planning)

- Consider which clerkships to pursue
- Start researching courts/judges
- Identify possible writing samples (even if they are in progress or planned for the spring!)
- Strategize letters of recommendation

## Spring Semester (Building/Targeting)

- Ask for letters of recommendation
- Prepare application packets
- Submit applications to state courts with early deadlines

## Summer (Applying/Interviewing)

- Apply to federal clerkships (beginning June 12, 2023)
- Prepare for interviews / revisit strategy

# Federal Law Clerk Hiring Plan

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[OSCAR](#) access: **January 9, 2023**

- Online System for Clerkship Application and Review

Federal Hiring Plan start date: **June 12, 2023**

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# Consider Which Clerkships to Pursue

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## Familiarize yourself with options

- Federal courts (appellate, district, magistrate, bankruptcy)
- State courts (state supreme courts, courts of appeals, superior courts)
- Other (immigration, international, administrative)

## Self-assessment

- What skills/experiences do you want to gain?
- Where are you willing/able to live for a year or two?
- How important is it that you clerk immediately after law school?
- Where are you competitive?

Identify jurisdictions where you may need to apply earlier than June (some state supreme courts/Delaware Chancery Court)

# Start Researching Judges

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## Programming

- CDO
- Berkeley Law ([Berkeley Judicial Institute](#); student organizations)
- External organizations: Alliance For Justice, ABA/FBA, American Constitution Society, Brennan Center, Federalist Society, Just the Beginning Foundation, The Appellate Project, and more!

## Online Resources

- [Berkeley Law Library research video](#)
- [Almanac of the Federal Judiciary](#)
- [Federal Judicial Center](#)
- [Bankruptcy and Magistrate Judge Database](#)
- [National Center for State Courts](#)

Outreach (3Ls, alumni, professors, etc.)

OSCAR (after January 2023)

# Research What, Exactly?

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What is important to you?

- Personal background
- Professional background
- Appointing president
- Ideology
- Shared academic connection (Berkeley Law, undergrad)
- Location
- Types of cases / workload
- Writing style
- Mentorship

What guides the judge's hiring process?

What do clerks do after clerking?



# LOR Strategy

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Applications typically require 3 letters of recommendation

- Professors (doctrinal, clinical, legal writing, etc.)
- Professional supervisors
- The more personal & specific, the better

Build & cultivate relationships now

Plan to make your ask *early* (letters will be due around mid-/late May if you are applying in June; aim to make the ask in March)

Make your recommenders' job easy

- Clerkship Questionnaire, Resume, Transcript

# Fall 2L To Do List:

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- ❑ Join Clerkships 2024 Google Group
- ❑ Review the CDO Clerkship Guide - don't ignore the Resource Guide!
- ❑ Explore clerkship opportunities / start researching judges
- ❑ Build & cultivate relationships for letters of recommendation
- ❑ Think about potential writing samples / get permission to use 1L summer work if you need
- ❑ Be kind to yourself!

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# CDO Programs

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- Judges-in-Residence (Sept. 20-21)
  - Judge Sarala Nagala '08 (D. Conn.)
  - Justice Adrienne Nelson (OR Supreme, nominated to D. Or.)
- Alaska Supreme Court Justice Daniel Winfree '81 Information Session (Sept. 22)
- Q&A with Clerkship Committee Faculty (TBD)
- PIPS Alumni Clerk Panel (TBD)
- 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Alumni Clerk Panel (TBD)
- Nuts & Bolts of Clerkship Applications (Spring 2023)
- McBaine Judges Panel (Spring 2023)
- Clerkship Town Hall (Spring 2023)