

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW TO BREAK INTO LAW TEACHING

So, you are thinking about joining the legal academy, and you have a million and one questions, but you do not know to whom to turn for advice. This list of FAQs and responses will assist you in your decision about whether to enter the law school teaching market and how best to apply for a law teaching position.

This list of FAQs and responses is divided into six sections, each with an overarching theme:

- 1) What are the various kinds of law teaching jobs?;
- 2) How do I decide whether law teaching is for me, and for which type of law teaching job or jobs I should apply?;
- 3) What factors should I consider when I fill out the Faculty Appointments Register (FAR) form (the form that all teaching candidates must fill out to be formally included in interviews at the AALS Faculty Recruitment Conference), and how should I fill out the FAR form?;
- 4) What should I be doing now to prepare myself for the market and to become the strongest candidate that I can be?;
- 5) What should I expect at the Faculty Recruitment Conference?; and
- 6) What should I expect and do after I have completed my interviews at the Faculty Recruitment Conference?

In each of these sections is a list of questions, with responses, that fit under the umbrella of each overarching question. It is important to recognize that there is usually not just one answer to a question, but rather a variety of perspectives that may change from person to person or from institution to institution. In other words, the answers to each question may vary, depending on your individual circumstances, depending on the law school, and depending on whom you ask. The information provided in the responses to these FAQs is more in the nature of “factors to consider” than “clear, absolute answers.” This list tries to provide a full gamut of honest and helpful advice. A few questions, however, do lend themselves to an easy, universal answer. In these very rare instances, the universality of the response is explicitly noted.

We encourage everyone to read every section of this document; however, feel free to jump directly to whichever section will be most helpful to you. If you have just started to think about teaching in law schools, please start with the first section and move all the way through to the sixth section. If you have decided to start the job search process or are in the midst of the job search process, you may want to start with later sections.

I. WHAT ARE THE VARIOUS KINDS OF LAW TEACHING JOBS?

What is a law teacher?

- Generally speaking, “being a law professor” involves three job components: teaching, scholarship (writing articles and books), and service (service usually means being a member of a law school or university governance committee and participating in service to communities and professional organizations). However, there are many different kinds of law teaching jobs, some of which may not require all three components. For example, at some law schools, working as a legal writing professor or a clinical professor may not require any scholarship. Regardless of the position, a major goal of any law teaching position is to develop critical thinking and analysis in law students.

What are the different types of law teaching positions?

- Here is a list of various types of teaching positions that exist at law schools:
 - **Doctrinal/podium law faculty** are tenure-track or tenured law faculty who teach courses that focus on the legal doctrine in an area or field as well as the moral, theoretical, historical, and social questions and assumptions that have shaped that doctrine, including any and all critiques of the relevant doctrine. Examples of courses that doctrinal/podium law faculty members teach are most first-year law courses (e.g., Contracts, Torts, Property) and second and third-year courses such as Evidence, Corporations, Securities Regulation, Family Law, Criminal Procedure, Public International Law, First Amendment, Employment Discrimination, Feminist Legal Theory, and Critical Race Theory. Most of the courses that students take during law school have traditionally been taught by doctrinal/podium law faculty.
 - **Clinical faculty** instruct, monitor, and assess the work of law students on cases with actual clients. Typically around 8 students work in each clinical course per faculty member. Depending on the law school, clinical faculty may or may not be tenure-stream faculty. If clinical faculty are on the tenure-track, they are often required to do scholarship in addition to working on their cases, teaching, and service. At some institutions, tenure-track clinical faculty do not cover cases in the summer so that they can devote time to scholarship.
 - **Legal writing faculty** instruct students on legal research, analysis and writing. Legal writing courses are usually taught in small sections. Writing exercises may include drafting client letters, office memoranda, pretrial briefs, and appellate briefs; advocacy skills are also developed through oral exercises such as client interviewing and oral argument. In addition to lectures, legal writing faculty usually engage in one-on-one conferences with students. Depending on the law school, legal writing faculty may or may not be tenure-track faculty; many legal writing faculty positions are contractual and may not come with the same voting rights as those held by tenure-track faculty positions.
 - **Academic support faculty** focus on providing students advice on how they can best succeed within the law school environment. They arrange and offer sessions on topics such as how to brief a case, how to take notes for a law school course, how to prepare an outline to study for a law school exam, and how to take a law school exam. Academic support faculty also focus heavily on providing assistance to students who may be struggling academically in law school; however, academic support faculty can and do work with all students. At some institutions, academic support positions are not faculty positions; instead, they are contract positions on the administrative staff. Like legal writing faculty, academic support faculty, if they are faculty and not staff, tend to be in contractual positions that may not come with the same voting rights (or the same scholarship or teaching duties) as those held by tenure-track faculty positions.
 - **Adjunct professors** are part-time faculty who usually teach one upper-level or specialized course. Usually, adjunct faculty are local practitioners who have applied or have been recruited to teach a particular subject at a law school. These positions are always contractual and compensation is usually based on a set amount per credit hour taught.
 - **Professional skills faculty** provide students with instruction on the skills that they will need for legal practice. They often have students practice necessary litigation and corporate skills through role-play exercises, and then, they offer substantial feedback to students on their application of those skills. Examples of courses that they teach include

Trial Advocacy, Appellate Advocacy, and Corporate Drafting. These faculty members are often adjunct faculty members, although some schools have other categories of faculty teach these courses.

- **Visiting Assistant Professors (VAPs) or Law Fellows** are usually aspiring law professors who are looking for two years (or in some instances, one year) to get some time to write in a scholarly environment, to gain teaching experience, and to get a better understanding of the work life of law professors before they go on the teaching market. They are full-time employees, but they are not tenure-track. At some institutions, they teach legal writing or professional skills; at others they teach doctrinal courses. At some institutions, they are also enrolled in an LL.M. (or SJD) program or have the opportunity to enroll in a graduate program.
 - **Online or distance teaching instructors** are generally part-time, contract faculty who usually teach one course over the Internet.
- Exact titles, duties, and expectations for various law teaching jobs vary from law school to law school. For example, tenure (which we address below) is not a feature of all teaching positions. Instead, many law teaching jobs are contract positions. The terms of these different contracts will vary from position to position and school to school. Some will be long-term while others are short-term; some of these contracts will ensure a tenure-like status, with a presumption of renewal, while others will not offer the same level of job security.
 - Another difference between law teaching positions may be expectations with regard to producing legal scholarship; depending upon the law school and the position, some faculty members must write and publish articles, while others do not have publication requirements but function under other requirements. Basically, there can be tremendous differences between schools in how various law teaching positions are designed and compensated. While it varies from school to school, tenure-track faculty with scholarship requirements are often compensated at higher levels than are contract faculty who teach clinics, legal writing, academic support, or other skills courses when those faculty do not have scholarship requirements. It is best to get specific information, if possible, from each law school.
 - Most of the advice in our FAQs focuses on doctrinal/podium law faculty. The advice that one would give to a clinical or a legal writing faculty candidate, for example, may be different than that for a doctrinal/podium faculty candidate. If the clinical or legal writing position is a tenure-track position, however, there may be more similarities than differences in the advice provided.

What is tenure?

- Tenure is a form of job security meant to protect academic freedom that a faculty member receives from an institution after successfully fulfilling the University's and the law school's requirements during a probationary period of four to seven years; the length of the probationary period varies from school to school. After obtaining tenure, faculty members continue to fulfill their role of teaching, scholarship and service. The purpose of tenure is to preserve academic freedom and protect law professors from being fired for their controversial personal or political beliefs or for personality conflicts or disagreements with administrators.
- An important role of tenured and tenure-track faculty is participation in institutional governance. For example, as part of institutional governance, faculty typically make decisions on the curriculum, faculty hiring, and tenure.
- The standards for obtaining tenure vary from institution to institution. Generally, tenure-track faculty are evaluated in three areas: scholarship, teaching, and service. Scholarship is widely

viewed as the most heavily weighted of the three categories, but schools vary on this as well, with scholarly emphasis often being greater at more research-focused institutions.

Who makes the hiring decisions for teaching positions?

- At many law schools, the tenure-line faculty votes on hires for most positions. A hiring committee interviews candidates and then narrows the list of candidates who will be invited for on-campus interviews. These on-campus interviews may last an entire day. These daylong interviews usually involve many small group interview sessions with faculty; a meeting with the Dean; a meeting with law students, a tour of the law school, including the law library; and a 20-to-25 minute job talk before the entire law faculty, which is followed by a 35-to-40 minute round of questions from the faculty (See Section VI on law school job talks for a description of what a job talk is and advice on how to give a job talk.). At some law schools, the dean has the authority to make hires for adjunct and certain contract positions.

Is it true that law professors get the summers off?

- No, it is not true. Law professors do not get the summer off. During the summer, although they do not teach, law professors are researching, writing, and presenting papers, speaking at events, and preparing course materials; in other words, most law professors remain active and engaged over the summer.
- For most law faculty, law teaching is a full-time job. Law professors often love their scholarly, teaching, and service work, but it is all still work.
- If an individual wants to be a successful faculty member, she should expect to work as many or more hours in academia as she did in practice. She, however, can expect to have more flexibility in determining those hours.

II. HOW DO I DECIDE WHETHER A LAW TEACHING JOB IS FOR ME AND FOR WHICH TYPE OF POSITION I SHOULD APPLY FOR?

Do I have to have a certain profile to become a professor?

- The short answer is no. There is no one pathway to law teaching.
- The experience and qualities that a faculty candidate will need to get a law teaching job depend on the type of law teaching position she wants. For example, for a litigation-focused clinical faculty position, having practice experience is a must; additionally, actual courtroom experience may be essential. For a doctrinal/podium faculty candidate, however, evidence of writing and publications may take center stage.
- Below, however, are some qualities and credentials that most tenure-track, doctrinal/podium law professors possess. Again, these qualities are not required, but they are noted because they are common among law professors. Some of these credentials, such as publications, are under the control of the aspiring faculty member. Some of these credentials, such as where one went to law school, cannot be changed, but should not be seen as a bar to obtaining a teaching position if other credentials are strong.
- Doctrinal/podium law professors typically have one or more of these credentials:
 - Attended a top law school

- Judicial clerkship
 - Membership on a law journal
 - Editorial position on a law journal
 - Publication of student note
 - Publication of law review article(s) or essay(s) or some other type of “academic” scholarship
 - Strong law school grades
 - Ph.D. or some other advanced degree in another discipline, in addition to the J.D.
 - Practice experience
 - Leadership roles in a legal context (can be in law school and/or post law school)
 - Teaching experience (as an adjunct professor or through fellowships).
- These characteristics are not singularly dispositive, but to the extent that a faculty candidate possesses a good number of these accomplishments, she will increase her chances of becoming a law professor. Law faculties tend to use criteria such as these as predictors for interest in scholarship, the ability to produce high-quality scholarship, and strong ability to convey complicated legal concepts to students in the classroom. That said, even if a candidate does not have the traditional qualifications identified above, if she can develop a record that demonstrates directly that she has a strong interest in scholarship and has produced high-quality scholarship and/or can teach substantive law courses to students, she has taken steps that may increase her chances of getting a faculty position.
 - One factor that is of great importance in the hiring process is evidence of writing/scholarly interest. For instance, if an individual does not have many of the characteristics identified above but has extensive and strong writing experience and has one or more (preferably more) law journal publications, that written experience will be extremely helpful to her on the market.
 - Even if a candidate does not have many of the traditional qualities and credentials noted above, she should still apply for a faculty position through the Faculty Appointments Register (see description below.). The Committee on the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Law Teachers and Students strongly encourages anyone who is interested in scholarship and in law teaching to apply for a faculty position. After all, a candidate cannot get a law teaching job if she does not apply.

Is it possible to have too much practice experience?

- No. Indeed, in some fields such as private law, even schools that are extremely scholarship-oriented value practice experience. However, the longer an aspiring professor has been outside of the realm of academia without having written or taught, the more challenging it may be for her to secure a position. Law faculties want colleagues who really want to be law professors and tend to worry about candidates who may just want to stop practicing law but have not thought carefully about whether they want to write scholarship, teach students, and engage in University and law school service. Again, publications—and specifically those that are placed in reputable law journals—can serve as good evidence of a candidate’s commitment to the scholarly enterprise.

What is the AALS Recruitment Conference?

- The Faculty Recruitment Conference (FRC) is a hiring conference sponsored by the AALS to facilitate new faculty appointments at law schools. During the conference, law school hiring committees meet and interview law faculty candidates who have submitted the required form to the AALS at one place, usually at a hotel in Washington, D.C., during a 3-day period, held in the

fall of each year. Interested parties must register with the AALS to attend the conference and complete a form that will be included in the Faculty Appointments Register (FAR). Individual interviews with law schools at the conference are usually scheduled every 30 minutes; thus, with time for travel between interviews, the actual interview time is usually about 20 to 25 minutes.

What is the Faculty Appointments Register (FAR)?

- The Faculty Appointments Register (FAR) is the central place to which faculty candidates submit their application for law faculty positions. It can be found on the AALS website. A candidate completes a multi-page online form that is condensed into a one-page form to be included in the Register. This FAR form is the key part of an application for a faculty position, so it must be filled out with great care, thought, and strategy. This is often your first introduction to a hiring committee, because those committees commonly begin their screening processes by reviewing the FAR forms in deciding whom to interview at the FRC.
- The FAR form requests a wide variety of information from the candidate including: institutions attended; degrees earned; student leadership positions held; community service; law journal positions; employment history, including clerkships; courses of interest (both primary and secondary); publications; and names, positions, and contact information for references.
- In addition to submitting their FAR form, candidates also can upload a curriculum vitae (CV). (See definition below.) The online FAR form includes a link to the candidate's CV. It is in the best interests of candidates to upload their CVs along with their FAR forms. Candidates also may upload their research agenda or plan (See definition below). There will also be a link to the candidate's research agenda on the single-page FAR form. All information requested on the FAR form must be included on the form.
- The FAR is accessible through this link: <https://far.aals.org/>
- In the past, the AALS has made the FAR form available to law schools in three distributions. The first distribution is generally in early August; the second in late August; and the third in mid-September. In order to maximize your opportunity for getting interviews at the AALS hiring conference, it is important for you to submit your FAR form in time on the earliest available date. The deadlines for submitting your FAR form are available on the AALS website. Many hiring committees start their review of the FAR forms in the summer, and so being in an early distribution is crucial.

What should be on my CV?

- While a CV (curriculum vitae) resembles a resume, it is usually longer and includes more detailed information about a candidate's educational background, honors and awards, and academic background. It also should include teaching experience, if any, and list publications, presentations, professional service, and any other information that may communicate to law faculties that a candidate will be a good scholar, teacher, and institutional citizen. Many law faculty CVs are online and can be used as a model of an academic CV.

What is a research agenda?

- A research agenda is a brief statement of what a candidate's research interests will be as a legal academic. The agenda usually includes a description/abstract of the research projects that a candidate hopes to pursue and communicates a common theme between the different projects in a candidate's research plan.
- Writing a research agenda is not akin to signing a contract. A candidate is not wedded to the ideas in her the plan laid out in her agenda. The ideas can be modified and even dropped entirely for a new set of ideas later. Research agendas are critical because they demonstrate intellectual

curiosity, scholarly interest and forethought, and the ability to conceive of and sketch out a plan for articles and essays.

- Good research agendas tend to reveal connections between the candidate's stated scholarly interests, her work record, and her scholarship or publications record. The agenda also reveals the connection between the candidate's stated scholarly interests and her stated teaching interests.
- As a candidate sets out her research agenda, she should think about the short term, medium term, and long term. She should show how her research will unfold. At the same time, though, she must not promise too much.
- If a candidate feels unsure about how to begin to draft a research agenda, she should ask a mentor for some suggestions for leading law review articles in her areas of interest that she might read. A candidate may want to contact a faculty member at the law school she attended for advice about her research agenda.

III. WHAT FACTORS SHOULD I CONSIDER WHEN I FILL OUT THE FACULTY APPOINTMENTS REGISTER (FAR) FORM, AND HOW SHOULD I FILL OUT THE FAR FORM?

Does it matter when I submit my FAR form?

- Yes. A candidate should submit her FAR form as early as possible. Many law schools fill their interview slots or nearly all of their interview slots with persons who registered during the earliest distribution of the Registry. If a candidate waits too long to submit her FAR form, a law school may not have an interview slot to give her, even if the school is interested in her. Additionally, competition for these slots is steep, but it becomes steeper as interviewing slots disappear. Basically, the later a candidate submits her form for consideration, the smaller her chances will be in terms of finding a position through the AALS Faculty Recruitment Conference.

How is the FAR used by hiring committees?

- Law faculties use the FAR forms to make decisions about which candidates to interview at the AALS Faculty Recruitment Conference. They contact candidates for interviews at the Faculty Recruitment Conference based, in large part, on their review of FAR forms.
- There are usually 450 to 600 FAR forms in the Registry each year. Individual law schools may interview between 10 to 25 candidates at the Faculty Recruitment Conference. These numbers vary widely depending upon how many positions a school is seeking to fill and the culture at the school in terms of how many candidates are considered for each open position.
- Hiring Committee members can search through the 450 to 600 FAR forms according to a wide variety of factors including course subjects, candidate diversity, academic background, publications, etc. Hiring committees usually are composed of around 5 faculty members who may have differing goals in terms of what is being sought in potential faculty members. Some faculty, for instance, believe strongly in hiring based primarily on curricular fit; others seek "the best candidate" regardless of area of curricular interest.

How detailed should my FAR form be?

- The FAR should include every bit of information that is requested on the form. Candidates should assume that faculties will not review their CVs until much later in the process. The candidate should never simply refer a law school to her CV on the FAR form. If information is

requested on the form, the candidate should include a full response on the form itself. The CV is not a replacement for the form and vice versa.

- That said, a candidate should make sure that her FAR form is easily readable and nicely presented. The FAR form should not be overly dense. At the same time, the candidate must ensure that the information provided is not too sparse. She should try to be careful about the information she provides. She should interest a prospective team in her candidacy without overwhelming them. If, however, she must err on one side, she should err on the side of providing more information.
- The candidate should do a final, careful review of her form to ensure that there are no typographical errors, grammatical mistakes, misspellings, or inaccurate citations. There may be members of Hiring Committees who may decide to eliminate a candidate based on a typographical error.

How important is the publications section of the FAR form?

- The publications section of the FAR form is extremely important.
- The publications listed should be academic publications. “Academic publication” means a scholarly work that has been published in an academic law journal or as a scholarly book. These pieces are often theoretical as well as doctrinal.
- If a candidate does not have academic publications, then she should list her other publications. For instance, if she has written for a local bar association, bar association magazine, and practice magazines, she may include those publications. Such publications do not carry nearly the same weight as academic articles and essays.
- Below is a list of publications that law schools may consider. In general, law journal articles are more universally preferred.
 - Single-authored, published law journal articles or essays
 - Co-authored published law journal articles or essays
 - Forthcoming law journal articles or essays
 - An article or essay draft submitted, but not yet accepted for publication
 - Student Notes
 - Bar association publications or legal newspaper articles
 - Appellate briefs submitted to courts of high prestige that the candidate authored or co-authored
 - Scholarly books

What about writings that you would be willing to share but have not been published or even submitted yet? Is it better to send something rather than nothing?

- A candidate should not share any rough draft paper with a law faculty or Hiring Committee until she feels that it is of good quality. Even if a faculty member tells her that it is fine to send a very rough draft of a paper or an incomplete paper, the candidate should not send it. A candidate should remember that the job of the Hiring Committee is to evaluate the candidate. A rough draft of poor quality can leave a negative impression.

What courses should be listed as courses of interest? Do I need to list a first-year course?

- A candidate should leave herself open to a solid number of teaching possibilities. She should think broadly about what she can, or could, do.

- However, where possible, a candidate also should list courses that make sense given her research interests and practice experience. She also should make sure that the courses she lists make sense together. Courses should be listed in order of preference, with the most desirable course listed first.
- Through the course list, the candidate should try to communicate who she is and what she wants to do in a manner that is not too narrowly defined.
- It always helps to include courses that are more general, i.e., those in the standard first year curriculum or included on the bar. These courses are the courses that every law school must offer, so there is a greater likelihood that a law school will need to fill a teaching need in them.
- In coming up with her list, a candidate should think about some of the following questions: What are the high enrollment courses that almost every law school has to offer? What course can I teach in the first-year curriculum? What areas did I practice in? What research interests do I have? What do I want to write about? Are there courses that law schools need that other candidates are less likely to want to teach, and that I am qualified to teach?

How relevant is social media?

- Social media is very relevant. As with any job search, a candidate should be careful that she is not damaging her chances for a job due to what she is posting on the Internet. She should clean up her Facebook page, blog, Google search, etc.

Whom should I list as references? Do I have to list my current employer? Do I have to list a former law professor as one of my references?

- A candidate should be certain that any person whom she lists as a reference knows that she is applying for law teaching positions.
- She also should make sure that her references know her and her work well enough to speak about her potential as a scholar and, if possible, a teacher.
- A candidate should explicitly ask references whether they can offer her a very strong reference in her pursuit of a faculty position. It is best for a candidate to know this information upfront rather than list a reference who will not offer a positive recommendation to Hiring Committees.
- It is a good idea to list two or three law professors on the FAR form. Law professors understand the job better than anyone, thus they may be able to speak best to how a candidate's abilities will translate in the position. Also, law professors tend to know other law professors at different schools; in some cases, simply listing someone as a reference may raise a Hiring Committee member's attention and interest in a candidate. A candidate should contact her former law professor references ahead of time to confirm their support.
- It is a good idea to list a judge for whom one clerked, particularly if the judge is a former law professor.
- A candidate does not have to list anyone from her current employer as a reference. Law faculties understand why an individual may not want her current employer to know about her law teaching job search. If a candidate plans to list her current employer, she should do so under the employment section of the FAR form, but, if she does not want her current employer to be contacted, she must mark "do not contact" next to that employer line. Search committees will honor that request. Before a law school ultimately extends an offer to a candidate, however, some law faculties may want to contact a candidate's current employer.

Should I list geographic restrictions or preferences on the FAR form?

- The short answer is no. Not only do geographic restrictions limit your options, but they can communicate to Hiring Committees that the candidate is not serious about becoming a law professor. A candidate should recall that law faculties want people who are committed to the scholarly enterprise. Willingness to move to a broad range of locations is often viewed as good evidence of a commitment to the scholarly enterprise.
- It is important for a candidate to fill out the FAR form and conduct her job search strategically in order to maximize the exposure that she will receive on the market. Search committees from law schools talk to one another about candidates and so the more committees that are talking about a candidate, generally the better for her. So, if a candidate is able to be flexible about location, she should not indicate a geographic preference on the FAR form. Of course, the disclaimer is that a candidate needs to be genuinely interested in moving to a new place if a specific law school shows interest.
- Depending on a candidate's personal situation, familial or other obligations, she may not be able to be flexible in terms of location. If there are concrete serious family/personal reasons why a candidate cannot to a particular area, she should list her preferences and really target the schools in those areas.
- A candidate should remember that she can express her geographic preferences by engaging in a targeted job search in addition to the FAR form and the Faculty Recruitment Conference. She should reach out specifically to those law schools in her desired areas. See more on these targeted efforts below.

Are there other ways or times in which to express geographic preferences?

- Yes. Later in the process after the AALS Faculty Recruitment Conference, if a candidate is invited back to do a campus visit is another time to consider geography carefully. If a candidate is able to relocate, she should have an open mind and attend the interview at all schools to which she is invited. A candidate may learn that she loves the school and area enough to move herself and her family. But if a candidate does not have a sincere interest in being a faculty at a school or is unable to move to the location of the school, she should not waste the member school's time and should decline the interview offer.

Should I attach anything to the FAR?

- A candidate should take advantage of the opportunity to attach her CV and a research agenda along with the FAR form.

Should I target the law schools that I am most interested in? How should I do that?

- Yes. A candidate can target the law schools in which she is most interested. Barring any severe geographic restrictions, she should still submit her FAR form for the Registry, but she also can send an individualized cover letter that details and explains her interest in the law school, her CV, and any other materials that she wishes to present to the Hiring Committee Chair at those law schools that year. The chair of the committee might be posted on the school's web site or a candidate can call a school to obtain that person's name.
- Even if she has not heard from a school, a candidate should continue to update the Hiring Committee Chairs of her availability and the interviews that she has received from other law

schools until the AALS Faculty Recruitment Conference. Some schools move slower than others in granting interviews to candidates.

- Sometimes, persistence can pay off for a candidate if a law school needs to fill an interview slot at the last moment.

IV. WHAT SHOULD I BE DOING NOW TO PREPARE MYSELF FOR THE MARKET AND BECOME THE STRONGEST CANDIDATE THAT I CAN BE FOR THE LAW TEACHING MARKET?

How can I gain teaching and writing experience? What are VAPS and fellowships? What are their value and advantages?

- A lot of schools offer fellowships and/or visiting opportunities to practitioners. The benefits of such positions are: access to references, networking with other law professors, informal/formal feedback on writing, teaching experience, funded trips to conferences with other professors in your field, and the way in which such positions can demonstrate commitment to being a law professor.
- In addition, a candidate can teach while she is a full-time practitioner by teaching as an adjunct professor at a law school or another school that teaches law courses (e.g., a business or public policy school). To obtain an adjunct teaching position, you should contact the Associate Dean who is in charge of the hiring of adjuncts. You might also ask faculty members at specific law schools on the best way to obtain these positions and whether this is a good path to full-time teaching at their respective schools.
- A candidate also can teach CLE programs. These experiences can be listed on the FAR form.

How do you publish a law review article as a practitioner?

- After writing an article or essay, a practitioner can submit her paper to law reviews for consideration for publication. Each law journal has its submission guidelines up on its website. A candidate should review the guidelines at these websites. A good number of journals accept papers only through their own websites.
- Professors Allen Rostron and Nancy Levit post a paper on SSRN (www.ssrn.com) that provides the various places and requirements that different law journals offer for submission of articles. Their article can be found and downloaded at http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1019029.
- A candidate should know that placement of journal articles and essays plays a fairly large role in the evaluation process. A candidate should try to place her papers in the best journal possible.
- When you are ready to place an article or essay in a journal or are trying to determine which journal offer to accept, the candidate should speak to a mentor or to her former law professors.
- Even though placement of an article or essay is important, quality is important above all else. A candidate should make sure that her published work is of the best quality possible.

V. WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AT THE FACULTY RECRUITMENT CONFERENCE?

Should I come to the Faculty Recruitment Conference if I received no invitations for an interview with a law school?

- The short answer is probably no.

- However, occasionally, a law school may have last minute interview cancellations, so it could be worth one's time to attend the conference without interviews. The Committee knows of a few candidates, though rare, who came to the conference despite not having an interview and who obtained a law teaching job.

Should I attend all of the sessions for law faculty candidates that the AALS hosts on Thursday?

- Yes, candidates should attend these sessions if they can. The sessions will provide candidates with good information about the process and good tips for getting from interview to interview.
- The sessions also will provide you with opportunities to network with potential future colleagues.

If I have free time during the conference, should I stop by the AALS Minority Section Groups Suite, the AALS Section on Women in Legal Education Suite, or attend the AALS Section on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Reception or the Reception for Religiously Affiliated Law Schools?

- Yes. The AALS Minority and Women Sections sponsor very informative advice panels. The Section on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity typically holds a reception on Friday evening and Religiously Affiliated Law Schools typically hold a reception on Thursday evening.
- Visiting these suites and receptions can be good places to go for encouragement and advice. They also can be a good place to get feedback on a question that one answered in an interview earlier, but was uncertain about or to get advice before another interview. These suites are intended to provide a supportive environment, and they do.
- In the suites, a candidate also may make further contacts who can help her in her search in the future.

What should I focus on doing at all of the receptions that are held before and during the conference?

- A candidate should try to meet Hiring Committee members from schools that she is interviewing with or is very interested in interviewing with.
- She also should enjoy meeting the people who may end up being her new colleagues in academia.

What kinds of questions should I expect during my short interviews with faculties?

Sample job interview questions are provided below for three different types of law teaching positions: (1) doctrinal/podium, (2) clinical, and (3) legal writing.

Sample Job Interview Questions for Doctrinal/Podium Faculty Candidates

- Why do you want to be a law professor?
- Please identify the three/four courses that would constitute your ideal teaching package. A candidate should be prepared to explain how this package fits in with her research plan and practical experience.
- Is there a professor that you had that you would use a model for your teaching?
- What would be your style of teaching?
- How would you integrate the teaching of professional skills into your doctrinal course?
- Please briefly tell us about your job talk paper or topic. A candidate should be prepared for any follow-up questions.
- Please tell us about the next project or two in your research plan. A candidate should be prepared for any follow-up questions.

- What interests you in our law school?
- A candidate should be prepared for any substantive questions about any of her published papers
- What can we tell you about our law school?
- Do you have any questions of us (read in: about our specific law school and its fit with you and what you are seeking in a law school)?

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Sample Job Interview Questions for Clinical Faculty Candidates

- Why do you want to be a clinical faculty member?
- What would be your style or approach in teaching and helping students to develop professional skills?
- How would you integrate the teaching of analysis in your courses?
- How will you manage both a full caseload and scholarship requirements (for those positions that are tenure-track and have scholarship requirements)?
- What approach would you take with students whose professional skills seemed to remain stagnant?
- Teaching in legal clinics requires intensive one-on-one sessions with students. How do you envision running your conference sessions?

Sample Job Interview Questions for Legal Writing Faculty Candidates

- Why do you want to be a legal writing instructor?
- What makes good legal writing? For example, in your practice, what did you see as the distinguishing features between good writing and bad writing?
- How would you integrate the teaching of analysis in your courses?
- What approach would you take with students whose writing skills are extremely poor?
- What would be the focus of your classroom lectures? For example, would you focus on ensuring that students understand the doctrine and its reasoning in their assignment?
- What would be your primary focus in the first draft assignments of students? Second drafts?
- Teaching legal writing requires intensive one-on-one sessions with students. How do you envision running your conference sessions?

What do I do if I have interviews scheduled back-to-back and my interview with a particular school is running long?

- If a candidate has interviews scheduled back-to-back and the prior interview is running long, she should feel free to let the law school committee that is interviewing her know that she has to run to her next interview. Of course, she should let the law school committee members know that she enjoyed meeting them, and she should thank the members for granting her the interview and giving her an opportunity to share her qualifications for the job before leaving.
- The candidate should not worry about offending any law schools. Institutions understand that candidates are doing back-to-back-interviews.
- The conference is usually held in a large hotel. It may take a candidate 5 to 10 minutes to walk between interview suites.

How should I present myself during my interviews?

- The general advice for interviews is “Be yourself.” The goal for every candidate is to get a law teaching job that best suits her, her interests, and her needs.
- A candidate, however, should take every opportunity to prepare for her interviews, rehearsing answers with friends and even on her own. A candidate should study the websites and materials of the law schools that will be interviewing her.

VI. WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AND DO AFTER I HAVE COMPLETED MY INTERVIEWS AT THE FACULTY RECRUITMENT CONFERENCE?

When will I hear from schools with which I interviewed at the FRC?

After the Faculty Recruitment Conference, law schools that wish to consider a candidate further will invite her back for a full-day interview. Some schools move to this step more quickly than others. Many schools do these interviews prior to the end of the calendar year (following the fall FRC), but others do interviews after the new year.

- The school will usually want you to come for the interview fairly quickly once they call you so you should be prepared to schedule these visits. The schools pay for your travel and lodging. You should do your best to schedule the interview when the school wants to hold it; this can get difficult if you are fortunate enough to obtain multiple call-back interviews.
- The interview will usually be a day-long one, with a dinner on the night before or the day of the interview. The day will include sessions with faculty, students, the Dean, and other members of the law school community. Some schools may even require a meeting with a university administrator, such as a Provost or President. The questions you get will be much like the ones that you received during the FRC.
- One critical part of the interview day will be where you present your “JOB TALK.” This is where you talk about an article that you are writing and then discuss it with the faculty who ask you questions following a 20 minute or so presentation. Click on [this link](#) to learn more about what a job talk is, how to best prepare for a job talk, and how to best give a job talk. This is likely the most important part of the on-campus interview process, so be prepared!

I have been offered a job. How do I know if a law school is right for me?

- The best way to assess whether a school is right for you is to do a return visit. Law schools tend to pay for one return visit for candidates who receive job offers, plus their spouses/partners, if any, and, in some cases, children, if any. A school may also offer to pay for a house-hunting trip as well once the candidate has accepted the offer.
- Also, the candidate should think back to her interview at the school and consider whether there were any red flags that came up. If so, she should speak faculty members with whom she feels most comfortable about these issues.
- Factors that candidates should consider in making their decisions on an offer or offers include the livability of the city/town in which the school is located or cities or towns nearby; support for faculty research such as summer stipends and research assistants; funding for travel and conferences; salary; teaching requirements; ability to teach a consistent set of courses pre-tenure; collegiality of the law school community; the relationship between the law school and the university, if the law school is not stand-alone; and general happiness. The candidate should remember that she is not just looking for a good job, but a good home.

- Candidates also should ask junior faculty, minority faculty, LGBT faculty, and women faculty about the law school and the welcoming nature of the environment for such faculty and students.
- Candidates should ask about the resources available to support research at the law school, resources to support junior faculty, support for teaching, tenure requirements, any recent tenure denials or departures by former junior faculty before tenure, and the types of service obligations given to junior faculty before tenure.
- Generally, candidates should think about what factors they consider to be most important to their career, personal life, and/or families, if they have a family, and ask about them.