JUDICIAL CLERKSHIPS:
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When do I apply for a clerkship?
The timing varies depending on whether you are applying to state or federal judges. For federal clerkships, it is good to start early as judges hire up to two years in advance for clerkships. You can find out more by researching the location and judges you are interested in on OSCAR [https://oscar.uscourts.gov/]. For Illinois state and local judges, the hiring process is not on a regimented time frame and judges hire as needed, most candidates are hired after graduation. Other states have earlier hiring plans and can be researched on the Vermont Law School Guide. http://www.vermontlaw.edu/careers/judicial-clerkship-guide

What materials do I need to apply?
Resume, cover letter, 1-2 writing samples, 2-3 letters of recommendation, official transcripts (law and possibly undergraduate).

What kind of writing sample should I use?
Research the judges for specific requests. In general, your sample should be 15 pages maximum, focus on 1-2 issues, applies the law to the facts in clear concise manner (generally not a journal article). Include a cover page explaining the issue, conclusion reached, and context of the sample. See handout on writing samples at http://www.luc.edu/law/career/handouts.html

Who should I ask to write letters of recommendation?
Judges are primarily concerned with your research and writing abilities. So ask any professor, supervisor, or legal writing instructor who can speak to those skills. Try to get a variety of recommenders, especially if you are using three letters of recommendation.

What kind of qualifications do you need to clerk?
Judges consider a variety of factors in selecting their clerks. But generally the following factors are considered: academic performance, journal/moot court participation, writing experience, judicial externships and some judges require work experience.

What are my chances?
In 2011, 8 graduates clerked for state court, 4 graduates clerked for federal
In 2012, 3 graduates clerked for state court judges, 2 graduates clerked for federal judges
In 2013, 3 graduates clerked for state court judges, 7 graduates clerked for federal judges

You can increase your chances by applying to less geographically popular locations and by applying to state as well as federal clerkships.

What is the salary of a judicial clerk?
For federal law clerks, the salary available depends upon legal work experience subsequent to graduation from law school, bar membership and applicable locality pay adjustments. Most recent law school graduates with academic excellence qualify for at least grade JSP-11, step 1 (annual base salary of $50,287). To learn more about the federal pay scale visit https://oscar.uscourts.gov/drupal/content/qualifications-salary-benefits. For Illinois state court clerkships, salaries are in the range of $40,000 to $70,000.

Where do I learn more about the process?
Visit our website http://www.luc.edu/law/career/judicial_clerkships.html. There are many steps involved in preparing your applications, so please plan ahead. Please make sure to speak with Maureen Kieffer, mkieffer1@luc.edu, if you are interested in applying for Judicial Clerkships.

What is the process for alumni who need letters of recommendation from Loyola faculty?
We are happy to assist alumni with their letters of recommendation at any point in time. We need your spreadsheets and the letters from the faculty at least two weeks prior to when you need the letters printed/uploaded.