

OSCAR Quick Reference Guide for Applicants



OSCAR AT A GLANCE

- Create an OSCAR account to research federal law clerk and appellate staff attorney positions.
- Receive automatic notifications of new law clerk and staff attorney positions fitting your selection criteria.
- Create cover letters and grade sheets with OSCAR's online editor.
- Upload PDF application documents including resumes, cover letters, and writing samples.
- Identify your recommenders and generate electronic requests for letters of recommendation.
- Search for available clerkships and staff attorney positions using OSCAR's powerful tools.
- Organize clerkships and staff attorney positions into custom folders.
- Save a list of positions to your computer.
- Build and submit applications online to OSCAR-participating judges and staff attorney offices.

THE OSCAR WINDOW

1. Home | My Profile | My Documents | My Recommendations | Search For Positions | My Applications | Resources | Help

2. Search For Positions

3. Judges List | Advanced Search | Folders | Archived Positions

4. Help Finding a Position: How to Search for Positions (309KB, PDF), Using the Advanced Search Features (271KB, PDF)

5. Basic Search: Judge Types, Keywords, Clerkship Position Status, Application Method, Application Finalized, Application Withdrawn, Term Start Month/Year, Post/Last Modified Date for Open Positions, Post/Last Modified Date for Closed Positions

6. Apply Search, Clear

7. BATCH OPTIONS: Replace Resume/Cover Letter, Copy To New Folder, Copy To Existing Folder, Remove From Existing Folder, Delete Folder, Finalize Applications, Save This List to Excel

8. Items 1-20 of 192

9. Table with columns: Last Name, First Name, Type of Judge, Court, City, Apply Online, Application Methods, Date Modified

Last Name	First Name	Type of Judge	Court	City	Apply Online	Application Methods	Date Modified
Adelman	Lynn	District Judge	United States District Court, Eastern District of Wisconsin	Milwaukee	Yes	PDF, Word, Excel	Apr 19, 2012
Altabe	William	District Judge	United States District Court, Northern District of California	San Francisco	Yes	PDF, Word, Excel	Apr 19, 2012

1. **Main Navigation Menu** — click navigation tabs to move around in OSCAR.
2. **Tabs** — use tabs to navigate through each section of OSCAR.
3. **Instruction Box** — blue boxes provide basic instructions and information as well as links to relevant help and resources.
4. **Tip Sheet Links** — look for these links to tip sheets with step-by-step instructions on performing OSCAR tasks.
5. **Basic Search Box** — use the available search options to find positions that meet your criteria.
6. **Function Buttons** — click to perform designated functions.
7. **Batch Options Menu** — use this menu to apply batch functions to selected items in OSCAR lists.
8. **Column Headers** — display list information. Click the ▼ to sort the list by that column.
9. **List of Items** — display searchable/sortable lists of applicants in OSCAR available under various tabs.

MANAGE YOUR ACCOUNT

Register for an Account

OSCAR only allows third-year law school students and law school graduates to register for accounts and apply for clerkship and staff attorney positions. Rising third-year law school students can register for OSCAR accounts to begin researching positions and building applications; OSCAR will store the applications and release them to the judges in accordance with the dates specified in the Federal Law Clerk Hiring Plan.

1. Navigate to the OSCAR website at <https://oscar.uscourts.gov>.
2. Click on the **Registration** tab.
3. Fill out the required information in the form.
4. Click **Submit**.

Receive Notifications of Position Postings

OSCAR provides automatic email notifications when new positions are posted. You can customize this function to only provide notifications of positions posted by preferred judge types or states using the instructions under Update My Profile.

Update My Profile

1. Click **My Profile > Profile**. OSCAR displays your applicant profile.
2. Click **Edit Profile** and make the desired changes.
3. Select **Yes** in the *Verification of Data* field.

Verification of Data: By choosing Yes, I hereby confirm that all data entered in this profile and any application documents are true and correct. The information in your profile and your verification of the data will be displayed in your application packet(s).

☒ Yes ☐ No

4. Click **Update Profile**.
- ### Change Your Password

1. Click **My Profile > My Account**. OSCAR displays your account information.
2. Enter and verify new password.
3. Click **Change Password**.

CREATE AND UPLOAD APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

The *My Documents* tab is where you upload or create all of the applicant-generated documents that you will include in your applications. The process of uploading documents to OSCAR is simple, but there are certain restrictions you must be aware of:

- All documents uploaded to OSCAR must be in PDF format and less than 300KB in size.
- Transcripts cannot be uploaded to OSCAR. You must create “grade sheets” using the online form. **Note:** Judges and staff attorney offices are aware that these are unofficial transcripts.
- OSCAR restricts the total number of documents you can have uploaded at any one time. Restrictions vary by document type and are listed on the *My Documents* tab.

Create a Cover Letter Using the Online Editor

Creating cover letters in OSCAR's online letter does not limit you on the total number of cover letters and allows you to use *merge fields* to automatically personalize the letters by filling in the recipient's name and address information once the cover letter is attached to an application.

1. Click **My Documents**.
2. Click **Add New** (bottom of screen). OSCAR displays the *Document Details* tab.
3. Enter a name for your cover letter in the *Document Label* field.
4. Choose the **Clerkship Cover Letter** or **Staff Atty Cover Letter** from the *Document Type* drop-down menu.
5. The screen will refresh and display the online editor where you can type your letter.
6. Click **Upload** (shown at the top and bottom of the screen) to save your work.
7. On the *My Documents* tab, click on the label (entered in step 3) to reopen the cover letter and continue working.

Document Type:

- Clerkship Cover Letter
- Resume
- Clerkship Cover Letter
- Staff Atty Cover Letter
- Writing Sample
- Law Grade Sheet
- Other Grade Sheet
- Undergrad Grade Sheet

Create Grade Sheets

Applicants must enter their grades into an online grade sheet form. OSCAR allows you to create three types of grade sheets: Law School Grade Sheet, Undergraduate Grade Sheet, and Other Grade Sheet.

1. Click **My Documents**.
2. Click **Add New** (bottom of screen). OSCAR displays the *Document Details* tab.
3. Enter a name for your grade sheet in the *Document Label* field.
4. Choose **Law Grade Sheet**, **Undergraduate Grade Sheet**, or **Other Grade Sheet** from the *Document Type* drop-down menu. OSCAR displays the grade sheet form.
5. Enter a number in the *Grade Sheet Ordering* field. If you have multiple grade sheets of the same type in your application (e.g., two law grade sheets), the *Grade Sheet Ordering* field allows you to control which grade sheet appears first in the application.

Grade Sheet Ordering: You must type a number in this field to indicate the order of your Law Grade Sheet within your application packets (e.g., type "1" for your first grade sheet, type "2" for your second grade sheet, etc.). Please limit this number to a positive whole number to avoid errors.

6. Verify the *School Name* (completed by default).
7. (Optional) Use the *Grading System Description* box to describe your school's grading system. (Useful for alternative grading methods.)
8. (Optional) Enter cumulative GPA.
9. Enter *Semester/Quarter Date* for your first term.
10. Enter the *Ordering* number for the semester/quarter.

Note: This determines the order your semesters/quarters appear in the grade sheet. OSCAR does not use the date to establish a chronological order. Enter "1" for your first term, "2" for your second term, etc. Failure to do this will result in a disorganized grade sheet that shows your terms in a random order.


11. Enter your courses in the *Course Rows*. Only *Course Name* is required—all other fields are optional.

Ordering:
You must type a number in this field to indicate the order of your semesters/quarters (e.g., type "1" for your first semester, type "2" for your second semester, etc.). If you fail to put a number in this box, you will not be able to add course rows in the proper sequence, and your final document will not save or display correctly. Please limit this number to a positive whole number to avoid errors.

1

Course Name	Professor Name	Grade Earned	Credit Units	Comments	Delete Course Row
Civil Procedure	Professor Name	A	3		Delete Course Row
Contracts	Professor Name	B	3		Delete Course Row
Torts	Professor Name	B+	3		Delete Course Row

Add Course Row

12. Click **Add Course Row** to add a new row to that semester/quarter.
13. Remove extra rows using **Delete Course Row**.
14. Enter additional information in the **Narrative** text box (e.g., a leave of absence, semester honors or other academic awards, etc.).
15. Click **Add Semester/Quarter** to add a new section.
16. Click the **Save** button frequently to save your work to the OSCAR server.
17. Click **Upload** to:
 - Save your work to the OSCAR server.
 - Return to the *My Documents* tab.
 - Convert your grade sheet into a PDF document.
18. After you click **Upload**, your grade sheet will be available on the *My Documents* tab. Click the PDF icon  to the left of your grade sheet to preview your work.

Upload Resumes, Writing Samples, and Cover Letters as PDF files

1. Click **My Documents**.
2. Click **Add New** (bottom of screen). OSCAR displays the *Document Details* tab.
3. Enter a name for your document in the *Document Label* field.
4. Choose the document type from the drop-down menu.
5. If you are uploading a resume or writing sample:
 - Click the **Browse** button in the gray file box.
 - In the pop-up window that displays, navigate to where the file is stored on your computer or network, select the file, and click the **Open** button. The file path will show in the browse box.
 - Click **Upload**.
6. If you are uploading a cover letter:
 - OSCAR displays the online editor screen. In the area immediately below the *Document Type* pull-down menu, choose **.pdf file**. OSCAR will display the same file browse box shown above.
 - Click **Browse** to locate your file.
 - Click **Upload**.
7. Your new document will be available in the list on the *My Documents* tab.

CHOOSE RECOMMENDERS

Selecting your recommenders is a crucial part of the application process. You must identify all of your recommenders before submitting applications just as you must upload all your application documents before applying to a position. Please note that simply identifying your pool of recommenders **does not generate recommendation requests**. Recommendation letters are associated specifically with an application packet, so **you must actually create an application** and associate recommenders with the application to generate recommendation requests. Use one of the three methods described below to identify your recommenders in OSCAR.

Search for a Faculty Recommender

For each law school participating in the OSCAR program, the law school administrator uploads a master directory that contains a list of the school's faculty recommenders. To search this list:

1. Click **My Recommendations > Choose My Recommenders**.
2. Scroll down to *Choose Existing Recommender*, and click the **Select Your Faculty Recommender** drop-down menu.
3. Select your recommender from the menu.
4. Click **Add to My Recommenders**.

Search for a Non-faculty Recommender

If you cannot find your faculty recommender on the drop-down menu or you are including non-faculty recommenders in your applications, you can search to see if another law school or applicant already added your recommender to OSCAR.

1. Click **My Recommendations > Choose My Recommenders**.
2. Scroll down to *Choose Existing Recommender*, and click in the **Search the System for Recommenders Here** search box.
3. Begin typing the name of your recommender. OSCAR displays a list of recommenders with names containing the characters you enter.
4. Select your recommender from the list.
5. Click **Add to My Recommenders**.

Create New Recommender Accounts

If you are unable to find your recommender in OSCAR, create a new account for the recommender.

1. Click **My Recommendations > Choose My Recommenders**.
2. Scroll down to *Create New Recommender*, and click **Create Recommender**.
3. Enter the recommender's information in the pop-up box that appears. Required fields are marked with a red asterisk (*).
4. Click **Save**.

View Your Recommenders/Change Default Status

OSCAR automatically sets the recommenders selected from your school's database as *Default Recommenders*, which means that they will automatically be checked as selected recommenders when you create an application.

1. Click **My Recommendations > Choose My Recommenders**.
2. Scroll down to *Current Recommenders* to see the recommenders you identified.
3. Default recommenders are identified by a green check (✓) in the *Default* column of your *Current Recommenders* list. To change a recommender's default status, check the box next to his/her name and select the appropriate function from the *Batch Options* menu.

Request Letters of Recommendation

See *Create a Draft Application*.

SEARCH FOR POSITIONS

Find clerkship and staff attorney positions with ease using OSCAR's powerful search features.

Basic Search

OSCAR displays gray boxes with Basic Search functions on the *Judges List* and *Staff Attorney Offices List* tabs. Choose search parameters and click **Apply Search**. Results show below. Click **Clear** to reset the screen.

Advanced Search

OSCAR provides *Advanced Search* tabs under the *Judges* and *Staff Attorneys* tabs. Choose search parameters and click **Submit**. Results appear in new *Search Results* tab. Click **Clear** to reset search.

Hint: Use *Batch Options* menu > *Save This List As Excel* to export results to a spreadsheet.

Determine Hiring Status

OSCAR provides several methods to determine the hiring intentions of a judge or staff attorney office. **Remember:** If there is no position posted, OSCAR considers the chambers/office to be "not hiring."

Review Judge/Staff Attorney Office Profile

OSCAR provides several methods to determine the hiring intentions of a judge or staff attorney office.

1. Click **Search for Positions** and select **Judges** or **Staff Attorneys**.
2. Click the **Judges List** or **Staff Attorney Offices List** tab.
3. Locate desired judge or staff attorney office in list. Click **last name** to view.

Test	Oscar	District Judge	United States District Court, Northern District of Illinois	Chicago					Feb 01, 2012
CLERKSHIP INFORMATION									
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year	Term Start: 1/8/2012	Term End: 1/24/2013	Accepting Applications: Expired						

4. Review information under *Judge Details* or *Staff Attorney Office Profile* tab.

Find Available Positions

OSCAR provides a simple search feature to locate judges/staff attorney offices with available positions in OSCAR.

1. Click **Search for Positions** and select **Judges** or **Staff Attorneys**.
2. Click the **Judges List** or **Staff Attorney Offices List** tab.
3. In the Basic Search area, check **Available** under *Clerkship Position Status/Position Status*.

Clerkship Position Status ☒ Available ☐ Filled ☐ Expired ☐ None ☐ Archived

4. Click **Apply Search**. OSCAR displays a list of judges/staff attorney offices with available positions.
5. Click **Clear** to reset search parameters.

Review Positions

1. Click **Search for Positions** and select **Judges** or **Staff Attorneys**.
2. Click the **Judges List** or **Staff Attorney Offices List** tab.
3. Locate desired judge or staff attorney office in list. Click **last name** to view.
4. Click the **Clerkship List** or **Positions List** tab.
5. Scroll down to view the position information. Click **View & Apply** for the complete position listing and to create a draft application.

Options	Clerkship Term ▼	Term Start Date ▼	Term End Date ▼	Accepting Applications	Status	Application Status
View & Apply	2 Years	Sep 01, 2013	Aug 31, 2015	4/19/2012 - 1/1/2013	Available	

Create Folders

Save judges or staff attorney offices with open positions to custom-named folders you create in OSCAR. **Note:** You can also create new folders from the Home tab or using Copy to New Folder in the Batch Options menu.

1. Click **Search for Positions** and select **Judges** or **Staff Attorneys**.
2. Click the **Folders** tab.
3. Click **Add New Folder**.
4. Enter the new folder name in the pop-up window.
5. Choose parent folder if applicable.
6. Click **Create**.

Save Positions to Folders

Method One: Batch Options Menu

1. Click **Search for Positions** and select **Judges** or **Staff Attorneys**.
 2. Click the **Judges List** or **Staff Attorney Offices List** tab.
- Note:** You can also execute this process from the Folders or Search Results tabs.
3. Select judges or staff attorney offices using check boxes.
 4. Click **Copy to Existing Folder** in Batch Options menu.
 5. Click destination folder.

Method Two: Copy to Folders/Change Folders Buttons

1. Click **Search for Positions** and select **Judges** or **Staff Attorneys**.
 2. Click the **Judges List** or **Staff Attorney Offices List** tab.
- Note:** You can also execute this process from the Folders or Search Results tabs.
3. Locate judge or staff attorney office with position in list.
 4. Click **Copy to Folders** (judge/SAO not in a folder) or **Change Folders** (judge/SAO not in a folder).
 5. Choose destination folder in pop-up window.
- Note:** You can also create a new destination folder.
6. Click **Add Clerkship/Add Position**.

Save a List of Judges to your Computer

1. Click **Search for Positions** and select **Judges**.
 2. Click the **Judges List** tab.
- Note:** You can also execute this process from the Folders or Search Results tabs.
3. Click **Save This List to Excel** in Batch Options menu.
 4. Click **Entire List, Selected Items**, or **This Page**.
 5. Your browser will prompt you to save or open the file. Choose **Save** and select the location (local disk or network drive) for file download.

CREATE AND SUBMIT APPLICATIONS

Assemble your draft applications, send recommendation letter requests, and submit your applications to judges and staff attorney offices.

Create a Draft Application

1. Click **Search for Positions** and select **Judges** or **Staff Attorneys**.
 2. Click the **Judges List** or **Staff Attorney Offices List** tab.
- Note:** You can also execute this process from the Folders or Search Results tabs.
3. Locate desired judge or staff attorney office in list. Click **last name** to view.
 4. Click the **Clerkship List** or **Positions List** tab. Scroll down to view the list of positions.
 5. Click **View & Apply** for the complete position listing and to create a draft application.
 6. Use menus in **Choose My Documents** field to select application documents.
 7. Use check boxes to select the recommenders who should receive letter requests for this application.
 8. Click **Create Draft Application**.

Note: Creating a draft application causes OSCAR to send a recommendation request to the accounts of the recommenders you selected for the application.

Build an Application

Application materials may be submitted via the following methods (Online applications are preferred):

Online:
Submitting an application requires 2 steps:

Step 1: Begin creating your draft application by posting the documents you wish to include in your application packet, one of which must be a resume. You will then specify your recommenders. Click the **Create Draft Application** button to begin building a draft application and to trigger recommendation requests to your recommenders. You can add or change documents or recommenders as long as the application is in draft.

Step 2: When you are satisfied with the contents of your application, it is time to finalize your application to make it available to judges. Click the **Finalize Application** button to finalize your application. You may finalize applications individually through the Build an Application box under each judge's Clerkship Details, or you may "batch finalize" by clicking on the Applications sub-tab. Please know that once your application is finalized, you will not be able to make any changes to your documents or recommender. Judges can view finalized applications from 2012 and earlier graduates immediately. OSCAR will release finalized applications from 2013 graduates to judges on September 4, 2012 at 12:00 p.m. Noon EDT. * Indicates a required field

Choose My Documents:
Select documents you have uploaded in My Documents Section

Cover Letter [new]:
[select] ▼

Resume [new]:
[select] ▼

Writing Sample [new]:
[select] ▼

Law Grade Sheet [new]:
[select] ▼

Undergraduate Grade Sheet [new]:
[select] ▼

Other Grade Sheet [new]:
[select] ▼

Recommendations: **HELP**
You can add or remove recommendation requests until the application has become visible to the judge.
Recommendations upload letters of recommendation through OSCAR.

☐ Aaron, Paul
☒ Yes, Tessa
☒ Test, test

Clicking on the **Create Draft Application** button will store your materials as a draft and allow you to trigger recommendation requests to your listed recommenders.

Create Draft Application

Finalize your Application

1. Click **My Applications** and select **Clerkship Applications** or **Staff Attorney Applications**.
 2. Locate the application in the list you wish to finalize.
 3. Click **Edit** in the *Options* column to view the draft application. Ensure that all documents are correct and that all desired recommenders are checked.
 4. Click **Finalize Application**.
 5. OSCAR displays a confirmation pop-up. Click **OK** to continue.
- Note:** You cannot make changes to a finalized application.
6. Confirmation time and number will display in the *Date Finalized* column. OSCAR sends a confirmation email with the final application packet.

Withdraw an Application

Warning: Applicants cannot re-apply to a position after withdrawing an application.

1. Click **My Applications** and select **Clerkship Applications** or **Staff Attorney Applications**.
2. Locate the application in the list you wish to withdraw.
3. Click **Withdraw** in the *Options* column.
4. OSCAR displays a confirmation pop-up. Click **OK** to continue.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Resources Tab

The OSCAR **Resources** tab contains help and training resources to aid you in using OSCAR more effectively. Under the **Resources** tab, you will find:

Info Center—Links to general information on judiciary employment and federal clerkships, FAQs, and contact information.

Applicant Resources tab—Illustrated tip sheets, user guides, video tutorials, and more are available under this tab.

Blogs—Look for the latest information in the OSCAR News blog, including policy updates, helpful hints, usage statistics, and more.

Online Help

Click **Help** in the main navigation menu to view searchable, indexed online help from any OSCAR screen.