

IX. STUDENT SERVICES



A. Student Affairs

1. The Law School Student Affairs offices are located in Suite 127 of the Student Services Suite on the first floor of the School of Law. Susan Palmer, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Heather Beatty, the Director of Student Affairs and Jacob Watters, Coordinator of Student Affairs are all in this suite.

You will be able to find information on most things, but the frequently asked questions pertain to the following:

- Accommodations & Disability Services
 - Bar Application Forms
 - Bar Review Loans
 - Commencement and Hooding Exercises
 - Counseling Services
 - Emergency Student Loans
 - Emergency Messages
 - Housing
 - Lockers and Student Mailboxes
 - Mental Health and Wellness
 - Orientation
 - Student Organizations
2. Emergency Loan Program

The School of Law has established an emergency student loan program available to all currently enrolled full-time law students, in good academic standing with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.00. The loans have an interest rate of 7%, are limited to \$500.00, and must be repaid within 90 days. A student may have only one emergency loan at a time.

Students requesting an emergency loan must complete an application form, available in Room 127. Completed applications will be reviewed by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or Director of Student Affairs. For the purposes of qualifying for an emergency student loan an "emergency" shall be defined as "a

sudden state of financial need relating to or impacting on the education of a law student."

Loan requests are granted only for educational related expenses. After the application has been approved, necessary forms are prepared, and the student may take them to the Office of Student Loan Accounting at 1244 Blossom Street, where a check will be prepared and given to the student.

Should a student have an outstanding emergency loan balance when a federal student loan is received, the Office of Student Loan Accounting will request authorization to deduct the outstanding balance from the federal loan monies. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that the loan is paid off no later than the date due.

Emergency loans are available during the fall and spring semesters and during summer school, if the student is enrolled. However, no emergency loans will be made during the period between semesters.

B. Career Services

The mission of the Office of Career Services is to help law students obtain the information and skills necessary for a successful job search. All 1Ls meet with a Career Services counselor in their first semester to consider which career options would best suit them. The staff continues to counsel students throughout law school about career choices, resume preparation, and interviewing skills and job search strategies. The office provides print, on-line, and one-on-one resources to help students reach their goals, including marketing themselves to employers. Career advice and resources are always available both to students and to alumni.

Some examples of what the Office of Career Services offers to students and alumni:

- Individual counseling to identify career options and aid in the search for employment
- Career assessments
- Resume and cover letter preparation assistance and review
- Judicial clerkship application assistance and counseling
- Instructional programs concerning jobs and job search methods and strategies
- Job Postings – for both summer and permanent jobs
- On- and off-campus interview programs
- Mock Interviews
- Networking opportunities
- Collaboration with student organizations on career related initiatives
- Coordination of government honors programs including the Presidential Management Fellows Program
- Resources including resume packets, sample letters, interview guides, and information about specific practice areas

The Office of Career Services also assists local, regional, and national employers in meeting their employment needs by providing on and off-campus interview programs, resume collections, job postings, and opportunities to reach out to our students and graduates.

C. Registrar and Academic Services

Information and advisement on the following matters are available through the Registrar/Academic Services Office, Room 128.

- Course Requirements
- Degree Requirements
- Dual Degree Programs
- Enrollment Verifications
- Exemplify
- Grades
- Graduation
- Registration
- Self Service Carolina
- State Bar Certifications
- Student Records*
- Study Abroad/Visiting other Law Schools
- Transfer Students
- Transient Students
- Tuition and Fee Payment
- Withdrawals/Leave of Absence/Readmission

***Note: official transcripts are only available through the University Registrar's Office at 1244 Blossom Street.**

D. Pro Bono Program

Started in 1989, the USC Pro Bono Program is the first voluntary pro bono program in a US law school. The Pro Bono Program is open to ALL USC law students who are interested in volunteering in the community. By volunteering you can hone the skills necessary to develop your career while gaining valuable experience.

The goals of the Program are:

- to provide opportunities for skills enhancement and career development;
- to involve law students in the volunteer programs of the community; and
- to foster the ethic of professional commitment to those who are unrepresented.

The range of volunteer opportunities is expansive and includes legal and non-legal projects. Due to the constantly changing nature of the volunteer opportunities, students are encouraged to check the Law school homepage for the latest list of opportunities, details and an enrollment form.

http://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/law/internal/department/pro_bono/student/index.php

The *Volunteer Opportunities* listed on the web are linked to a job description outlining the benefits and responsibilities for each activity as well as the core competencies and skills that could be attained by volunteering with that project. The **Skills Inventory and Core Competencies** are an integral part of your legal education and we want to be sure you have every opportunity to advance in the necessary areas that will insure a successful future in the practice of law. In addition *each Volunteer Opportunity* will provide a brief description of any required training.

[For the latest information and news sign up for Pro Bono Opportunities and News on TWEN and follow us on Twitter @USCLawProBono.](#) News you can use is located on our blog. The 386• View.

The ABA recommends that all attorneys provide 50 hours of pro bono service to the unrepresented and although law students are not technically required to follow this rule it is highly recommended that every student start off their professional careers on the right foot. A personal goal of 50 hours annually of pro bono work is quite easily achievable and has proven to bring great satisfaction and well-being to those students who strive to set the bar high. To assist in keeping track of this goal the Pro Bono Program has developed an online web-based time and reflection collection program entitled *M.Y. Pro Bono. (Managing Your Pro Bono)*

The Pro Bono Board is a select group of 2nd and 3rd year USC Law Students who have demonstrated their commitment to the Pro Bono Program and volunteerism. They serve as spokespeople and recruiters as well as provide ongoing support to the overall Program operation. The past Pro Bono Board selects new Pro Bono members each Spring. Selection is based first and foremost on a demonstrated commitment to the goals of the Pro Bono Program. All students are encouraged to contact any member of the Board for more information and to receive nomination information. Email addresses are on the homepage. In addition, bulletin boards on the first and second floor list the Board members.

Annually the Pro Bono Program Board honors the top volunteers in the Law School. The description and criteria for the *Hugh Willcox Volunteer of the Year* and the *Outstanding Pro Bono Service Awards* are located on the homepage.

The Pro Bono Program will celebrate 30 years starting in 2019. At 25 years we celebrated with a series of videos. The participants linked their Law School pro bono experience to

their current practice. If you need a bit of inspiration check it out! You will find it in the *Highlights* section of the website.

The Pro Bono Program works to connect the knowledge of the classroom to the real world of your community. Start your journey by dropping in to Room 386 or browsing the web; either way we look forward to sharing your experience.

E. Accommodations & Disability Services

The Office of Student Affairs of the law school works with the university Student Disability Resource Center to provide services and accommodations to meet the varying needs of law students with disabilities. The Student Disability Resource Center facilitates academic accommodations for students with documented physical, medical, sensory, and psychiatric disabilities. Disability Services also facilitates academic accommodations for students with documented learning disabilities and attention deficit disorder. These services and accommodations are in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Section 504 states, in part, that “no otherwise qualified handicapped individual. . . shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. . .”

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) states, in part, that “an individual with a disability” is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a “major life activity”, has a record of such an impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment. The ADA requires that public entities “must ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from services, programs, and activities because buildings are inaccessible”.

Students seeking an accommodation need to register with the Student Disability Resource Center before an accommodation will be given at the law school. You can contact them via their website:

Services and accommodations provided by the Student Disability Resource Center may include, but are not limited to:

https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_disability_resource_center/index.php

- Assessment of needs for law school
- Assistance with examinations
- Facilities accommodations assistance
- Liaison service with numerous organizations offering services for disabled persons
- Pre-admission counseling
- Providing readers, interpreters, or note takers

The Student Disability Resource Center notifies the Law School Office of Student Affairs regarding a student's disability and recommended accommodation. Upon official notification of a disability, it is the Law School's mission to provide reasonable accommodations and services to assist students in successfully completing a rigorous law program. Students are informed that while reasonable accommodations are available for disabilities, they are held to the same academic performance standards as any other student.

At the law school, the names of the students with accommodations are not disclosed to faculty members. For purposes of the exam accommodations, faculty members have two suggested options regarding their administration. The faculty member may provide the Office of Student Affairs with a copy of the exam to be administered or they may require the student to come to the examination room to hear the instructions and receive a copy of the exam. In either option, the Office of Student Affairs works to maintain anonymity of the student. The Law School Office of Student Affairs will notify the student of the time and place for the examination. In such cases, the Director of Student Affairs will notify the faculty member that a student will be taking an examination under accommodation. However, the faculty member will not be provided any information that will identify the student or any information explaining why the accommodation will be granted.

Once approved by the Student Disability Resource Center, the student will meet with the law school Office of Student Affairs to discuss processes of the law school:

- If an exam is take home, the allotted time will be determined by the Office of Student Affairs, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the faculty member.
- The start time of the exam will be determined by the Office of Student Affairs, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the faculty member.

It is the policy of the Law School and the University of South Carolina to provide students a prompt and suitable method for resolving complaints alleging any action prohibited by the U.S. Department of Education regulations implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Procedures:

1. Student complaints of discrimination based on a disability must be forwarded in writing to the Director, 1523 Greene Street, LeConte Room 112A, Columbia, SC 29208.
2. A complaint must be filed in writing within 15 working days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation. If a complainant needs assistance composing the complaint, appropriate assistance may be arranged through the Office of Educational Support Services.

3. An appropriate investigation shall follow the filing of the complaint. The investigation shall be conducted by the Director of Judicial Affairs, and may be informal but thorough, affording all interested persons and their representatives, if any, an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint.
4. A written determination as to the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, shall be issued by the Director of Judicial Affairs and forwarded to the complainant as soon as the investigation is concluded, normally no later than 30 working days after the filing of the complaint.
5. The Section 504 and ADA coordinator for students on the Columbia campus shall maintain the files and records of Section 504 and ADA complaints filed by students at U.S.C. Columbia. In addition, such files and records as are necessary for system-wide Section 504 monitoring and reporting purposes shall be maintained by the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs.
6. The complainant may request a reconsideration of the case if dissatisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration must be made in writing to the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, 1600 Hampton Street, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208 within 10 working days after the complainant's receipt of notification of the resolution.
7. The right to a prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of a Section 504 and ADA complaint with the appropriate federal department or agency.