UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC
McGeorge School of Law
CDO
CAREER DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

ALUMNI ADVISOR NETWORK | INSTRUCTIONS

1. Log onto McGeorgeCareersOnline (MCO) at go.mcgeorge.edu/MCO. If you don't have your password, you can reset it on the MCO homepage by clicking, "Forgot Password."

2. Click on the "Alumni Advisor Network" tab. You will see a list of almost 500 alumni who have volunteered to talk to you.
   a. Use the "More Filters" button (or the "Detailed Search" tab) to search the list by practice area, law firm size, or practice setting (i.e., government, law firm, judicial), geographic location, and other criteria.
   b. Click on an alumni advisor's name for more information.
   c. Before selecting an advisor, be sure to do additional research: Google, martindale.com, and the alum's firm website are good options.

3. After clicking the "Choose this Advisor" button, an email will notify the alum of your interest. You will also receive an email with the alum's contact information. **Please initiate contact with the alum within five days of clicking the "Choose this Advisor" button.**

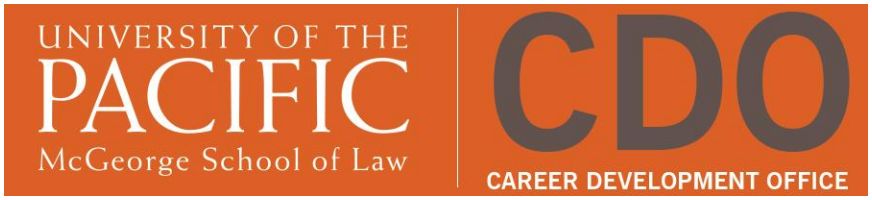
4. We recommend that you start out by choosing no more than three alumni advisors.

ALUMNI ADVISOR NETWORK
1L CHECKLIST

We know that it can be intimidating to reach out to lawyers as a first-year law student. The Alumni Advisor Network provides you with an easy way to meet lawyers and learn about different practice areas.

- ☐ **Have a plan.** It will be incumbent on you to initiate and maintain contact with your alumni advisor(s). Know what you would like to ask your advisors before contacting them.
- ☐ **Do your research.** Before you select and meet with an advisor, learn as much as you can about them to ensure a good match.
- ☐ **Be patient and flexible**. Lawyers are extremely busy people. Try not to take it personally if they do not return your call or email right away, or if it is difficult to schedule a meeting time with your alumni advisor.
- ☐ **Don't ask for a job!** Ask your alumni advisor for advice on law school course selection, effective studying and exam taking habits, or career-planning strategy, but don't ask for a job or internship opportunity with their firm.
- ☐ **Always engage your alumni advisor in a professional manner.** Promptly return all communication, be trustworthy, and keep agreements. If you and your advisor will be meeting in person, make sure to dress professionally. Be formal when emailing your advisor at all times and remember to proofread.

Keep in touch. Alumni advisors want to know how their advice has helped you. Send an email thanking them for their time, and then keep them apprised of your accomplishments.



MAKING THE MOST OF THE ALUMNI ADVISOR NETWORK

The goal of the Alumni Advisor Network is to initiate mentoring relationships between McGeorge alumni and law students. The Network provides students with a means to obtain informal advice on a wide range of topics including law school, legal practice areas, and professional development. It is an invaluable way for students to begin to develop a professional network early in their legal careers.

Please remember that the Advisor Network is not intended to serve as a recruitment device or job placement program, and is distinguished from the Alumni Mentor program utilized by the Legal Professions course.

Be clear about why you want an Alumni Advisor and what type of help or relationship you seek.

- Research alumni before making your selection: Consult Martindale, WESTLAW, LEXIS and search the web for information about the advisor and his or her firm/employer.

Initiating contact.

- Initial contact can be made through email or with a phone call. Your confirmation email will give you your advisor's email address.
    - Be professional and if emailing, remember to proofread! If you need a sample of an initial email, please see the CDO handout called "Informational Interviewing."
    - The first communication can be intimidating; if you want additional advice about reaching out to your advisor, you can make an appointment with your career advisor.
- If you meet in person, make sure you arrange a meeting place that is convenient for your advisor.
- Students must be mindful of the pressures inherent in legal practice when contacting their advisors.
    - Be patient when waiting for replies.
    - If you have not heard back within a week, feel free to follow up with a polite email or call.
    - If a second week goes by, please contact the CDO at lawcareers@pacific.edu.
- If you are working with an alumni advisor out of our geographic area, you can still get valuable information through phone or email contact and you may schedule in-person appointments when you are in the advisor's region–just make sure to plan ahead since our alumni are busy people.

Preparing for the first meeting.

- Background research: Learn as much about your advisor as you can—practice area, clients, big cases, accomplishments, or the professional organizations they belong to.
- If you and your advisor will be meeting in person, make sure to dress professionally.

Potential conversation starters.

- Course selection for law school
- Effective studying and exam taking habits
- Customs of law practice in a specific geographic region
- Steps to take during law school to prepare for the bar exam
- Balancing professional and personal life demands
- Career path advice

- Advisor's workload balance (e.g., courtroom exposure, case load, client interaction, research and writing)
- Strategies and opportunities for networking in advisor's field, including professional associations, boards, and institutes to join
- What do you like most about your job?
- What publications do you read?

Ideas for a follow-up meeting.

- Not all advisor relationships will be the same; some will consist of multiple conversations and meetings while others may not
- Engaging in further e-mail exchanges or telephone discussions
- A meeting in your advisor's office or over breakfast or lunch
- A few hours of shadowing (observing the advisor's practice)
- Attending bar functions and meetings with your advisor
- Asking your advisor to introduce you to people who might be able to offer further advice
- Conducting mock interviews or resume critiques

Demonstrate your commitment to your career.

- Alumni advisors are more willing to give you their time and attention when they know that you are committed to your career and the legal profession. You are more likely to have a good experience if you show your advisor that you are motivated, mature, and enthusiastic.
- Establish your credibility in everything that you do—be trustworthy, keep agreements, and follow through on promises. Be responsive—answer phone calls, emails, and requests from your advisor promptly.

Remember that the Advisor Network is not a recruitment device or job placement program.
However, your advisor may be willing to help with the following career-related questions:

- Do you have suggestions for improving my resume?
- Do you have interviewing tips and strategies?
- What advice would you give a candidate seeking a position in this field?
- What is the best way to find out about job openings in this field?

Tap into your advisor's network.

- Ask if your advisor will refer you to other practitioners within the field to speak with.
    - Ask your advisor if you may use his or her name when contacting these other practitioners.

Keep your advisor posted.

- Let them know the impact he or she is having on your professional development—tell them how you used their advice.

Always thank your advisor.

- Send an email or handwritten note to show your appreciation for your advisor's time and help.

Contact the CDO if issues arise or if you have any questions or comments about the program—we want your feedback!