

Challenges and Issues Identified in Evaluations

Quality of Work Product	- Received feedback that was not incorporated into future drafts - Failed to comprehend issues and understand how facts support client's position - Lacked ability to problem solve without immediately coming to others with questions and asking for help. - Cited inappropriate/incorrect authorities - Work product missed major issues or the bigger picture and/or contained errors. - Written work product was overly academic - Written work product not sufficiently tailored to the target audience. - Lacked attention to detail. Made silly mistakes, which look bad. Need to proofread and own the stuff you can own.
Engagement and Initiative	- Lacked engagement and curiosity. Partners and other associates notice when juniors are not engaged or proactively offering to take on more responsibility on matters. - Failed to own projects and see them through without constant prompting or follow-up from others.
Efficiency Issues	- Need to improve efficiencies in completing more basic projects. Partners do not like seeing lots of hours billed for simple/basic projects. - Need to use the resources you have: check in with mentors/other teammates on their experience; seek samples and advice. In many instances, you don't have to start from scratch.
Lack of Experience	Need to build the skillset you need to succeed. Ensure that you are taking on enough work to gain experience that will allow you to build a skillset comparable to peers.
Communication Issues	- Regularly check in with team regarding project status. Do not "go dark" until the assignment is due. Provide updates. - Respond to questions from your teammates/partners, even on weekends. Cannot "ghost" them.
Untimely Work	- Meet deadlines or communicate with plenty of notice that you can't meet it, need an extension, etc. - Never lie about status of project. Be honest with teammates.
Failure to Enter Time	- Understand that attorney time is critical to how the firm makes money. - Entering late time impacts clients' bills, which can strain the firm's relationship with clients. - Failure to enter time can lead to deduction in bonus and other penalties.
Failure to Meet Firm's Billable Expectations	Take on enough work to meet the firm's billable hours requirement. The number is not arbitrary and is essential to the firm's overall financial performance.

Technical Standards for the J.D. and LL.M Degrees University of Oregon School of Law

The University of Oregon School of Law strives to create an inclusive and accessible learning environment that will prepare our students for success in law school and their careers. We are committed to providing an outstanding legal education that reflects our commitment to the principles of equity and justice.

As a professional school, our graduates must have a predictable level of competence across the range of knowledge and skills expected of lawyers. Such competence allows clients, licensing and credentialing authorities, and other interested parties to rely on these competencies. The American Bar Association and state bar associations require some of these competencies; others come from widespread industry practice and expectations in the legal profession, as reported by the National Association for Law Placement and the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System. To achieve these competencies, students at the University of Oregon School of Law must perform various functions, either with or without reasonable accommodation consistent with applicable law, and must practice and maintain these abilities throughout law school. These competencies, known as Technical Standards, are listed and described below.

All students are expected to meet the same Technical Standards, including students with disabilities and LL.M. students for whom English is not their native language. The University of Oregon School of Law is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students who experience access barriers and require accommodations to satisfy the Technical Standards, as well as consideration of language-based adjustments for non-native English speakers in the LL.M. Program.

Description of Technical Standards

Attendance and Assessment

- Adhere to the law school's attendance policy, course-specific requirements, and punctually attend classes prepared and ready to participate.
- Satisfy exam, paper, and other assignment policies in all enrolled courses and academic offerings.
- Give and receive feedback to facilitate learning and develop one's professional identity in the legal profession.

Behavioral Skills

- Exercise the good judgment, honesty, integrity, and interpersonal skills required to work under stressful conditions and changing circumstances.
- Manage course loads and academic demands that may be mentally and emotionally taxing.

- Monitor one's own behavior and identify when one needs to access and utilize available resources.
- Effectively work alone, and with others, including students, faculty, and staff.
- Adhere to the University of Oregon's Community Standards Affirmation, Student Conduct Code, and the School of Law's Oath of Professionalism.

Communication Skills

- Communicate with others in a candid, respectful manner.
- Initiate communication and engage with members of the law school faculty and administration without the assistance and intervention of third parties.

Critical Thinking and Learning Skills

- Follow directions, make reasonable inferences, and organize and synthesize information.
- Research, solve problems, apply concepts, and navigate systems.
- Understand large amounts of complicated material from a variety of sources (e.g. written material, lectures, and audio and video presentations, etc.).
- Extract and organize ideas that can be communicated to others.
- Set goals, formulate and execute plans, and adjust as needed.

Participation

- Be prepared to respond, with or without advance warning, to questions from the instructor, guest speakers, or other students in a classroom or other instructional setting.
- Satisfy participation policies in all enrolled courses and academic offerings, which may include presenting in front of others.

Time Management Skills

- Meet deadlines, keep scheduled appointments, and complete classroom assignments, exams, and administrative tasks within the approved timeframe.
- Practice strategic time management, including prioritization, short and long-term task planning, accountability, and exercising judgment in scheduling.
- Respond to emails and other correspondence from faculty, administration, and staff in a timely manner.
- Manage competing demands and heavy workloads.

Notes on Accommodations

While these technical standards delineate the necessary abilities of all students and the fundamental learning objectives, they are not intended to deter or exclude students for whom reasonable accommodations for a disability will allow successful participation in and completion of the program. The University of Oregon School of Law is committed to training lawyers with disabilities and provides reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who apply for admission and are enrolled as law students. Otherwise qualified individuals will not be excluded from admission or participation in the School of Law's education programs and activities based on their status as a person with a disability. Students should be aware that:

1. All students must be able to meet these requirements, either with or without reasonable accommodation consistent with applicable law.
2. The University of Oregon School of Law adheres to a formal process for assessing need and assigning accommodations through the Accessible Education Center (AEC). Reasonable accommodations are reviewed on a case-by-case basis through an interactive process between the student and AEC, in accordance with these technical standards and consistent with applicable law. Accommodations are deemed unreasonable if they fundamentally alter an essential academic requirement that is necessary to the curriculum of the student's particular program. This includes competence, knowledge, and general lawyering skills inside the classroom and in the practical environment. In those cases, the request for accommodations may be denied.
3. It is the responsibility of a student with a disability, or a student who develops a disability, to self-disclose to the AEC and request accommodations. The AEC will engage in the interactive process to determine eligibility and potential reasonable accommodations, which may or may not be consistent with accommodations a student was assigned in the past. Prospective and current students with questions regarding these Technical Standards are also encouraged to contact the Law School Student Affairs Team for assistance.

Notes on LL.M. Students

LL.M. students are expected to meet the same Technical Standards as J.D. students. LL.M. students whose native language is not English must fulfill these requirements consistent with their level of English proficiency presented at the time of admission. Admitted students who anticipate needing a language-based adjustment to satisfy their anticipated program requirements must contact the Director of the LL.M. program to explore eligibility.

Acknowledgements

Resources were consulted in the development of these standards, including National Association of Law Placement Report on 2020 Survey of Law Firm Competency Expectations for

Associate Development, Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System's 2014 Foundations Project, Suffolk Law's Essential Performance Standards, and Boston University School of Law's Technical Standards.

Approved and adopted by faculty on 5/16/23



UNIVERSITY OF
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School of Law

Center for Career Planning and Professional Development

BEFORE YOU START

Establish professional goals for the summer.

- What do you want to accomplish or get exposure to over the summer? Are there particular practice areas or specific projects that you would like to tackle? Are there specific people within the organization with whom you would like to meet or work with?
- Some (but not all) work environments may give you the opportunity to develop a writing sample. Remember, your writing sample should be primarily your own work with minimal editing. Be sure to get your supervisor's permission to use your work as a writing sample.

Clarify and verify first day details.

- Make sure you are clear about what time you are expected and where on your first day and make a plan to be there on time!
- Clarify what the office dress code is and plan accordingly.

MAINTAIN HIGHEST STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONALISM

Approach your work like a lawyer.

- Strive to make an impression that you are responsible and professional:
 - Be a team player and keep a positive, "can do" attitude. Show interest and enthusiasm in all that you do and in everyone with whom you meet.
 - Treat everyone in the office with respect and professional courtesy, including administrative personnel and other staff members. These individuals are often the backbone of the organization who know a lot about the business. They can be a great resource (if available to you)

and you will be judged by how you interact with them.

- Respect client confidences. Never talk about pending matters or cases in public or with friends and family.
- Promptly respond to phone calls, emails, text messages, or instant messages such as Teams or Slack. If you need more time to provide an answer or craft a full response, acknowledge receipt of the communication and give a timeline for when you will respond fully.
- Behave appropriately at social events. Maintain the same professionalism as in an office setting.
- Avoid creating an impression that communicates: *I am entitled; I am better than anyone else; I am not a team player; I don't want to work hard; I need someone to hold my hand to get my work done:*
 - Express gratitude for the opportunity to work with the firm or organization and learn from experienced professionals.
 - Take initiative; volunteer for assignments.
 - Take a reasonable amount of time to look for answers to your questions independently before asking your supervisor. If you have a standing meeting with your supervisor, try to save a list of questions for that time rather than asking them as they come up.

MANAGING YOUR SCHEDULE

Meet participation expectations.

- Understand and meet the expectations for:
 - (1) the hours you are expected to be physically present at the office or online if working remotely;
 - (2) the hours you are expected to bill (if applicable) or devote to work projects daily; and
 - (3) the events, trainings, or programs you are expected to attend.
- Check with your supervising attorney before scheduling appointments or personal time off. While most employers will entertain reasonable time-off requests, it's best to try and schedule these with advanced notice and approval to minimize the disruption to your employer.
- It is critically important to calendar and meet internal and external meetings and deadlines.

TAKING ON ASSIGNMENTS

Make sure you understand expectations.

- Take a notepad and pen with you wherever you go; you never know when you might receive an assignment from someone.
- Take detailed notes while receiving an assignment so you have a record of what is being asked of you.
- Make sure you ask enough questions so you understand:
 - (1) the scope of the assignment, including what question(s) are you expected to answer and what jurisdiction's law applies;
 - (2) the work product that is expected of you (oral report, email, memo, etc.);
 - (3) the project due date (or check-in dates);
 - (4) estimated time for completion;
 - (5) relevant resources that may be available to you (templates, treatise, etc.);
 - (6) any background materials you should review before getting started, such as the pleadings in a litigation matter; and
 - (7) if applicable, the matter number you should bill time to.
- Don't be afraid to ask follow-up questions after you get started on the assignment. It's better to go back for clarification early on than waste time spinning your wheels or deliver work product they didn't want.
- Make sure your calendar your deadlines as soon as you receive them. If you know you are prone to procrastination, give yourself enough time by calendaring the deadline early or setting up progress deadlines.

Take Advantage of Available Resources

- You are expected to have a good command of Microsoft Word, and for some positions, Excel. If you don't have a lot of experience with these or find yourself struggling to format documents, take advantage of online resources to shore up your skills.
- UO Law is a LinkedIn Learning Campus – utilize this great resource.
<https://hr.uoregon.edu/linkedin-learning>

- Be aware of and utilize research assistant tools that may be available to you such as BarBooks (for Oregon law), phone or online assistance with Lexis Nexis or Westlaw or employer/UO law librarians.

Deliver high-quality work product on time.

- The work product you turn in to your supervisor should be your very best **final draft**. This means you need to make and take time to edit and proofread your work. Do not turn in a rough or first draft with formatting issues, grammatical errors, or content gaps. This applies to everything that you draft, including emails, memos, briefs, etc.
- Review these helpful articles by LRW Professor Suzanne Rowe:
 - [Painful Prose: The Difficulty of Writing](#), Oregon State Bar Bulletin (Dec. 2023) (pp. 17-19)
 - [The Last Step: Proofing Documents for Format](#), Oregon State Bar Bulletin (Oct. 2023) (pp. 17-19)
- Maintain good communication with your supervisor(s) and colleagues about the status of your work. Develop a strategy for providing updates.
- Meet all deadlines. If you realize you may have trouble meeting a deadline, tell the assigning attorney as soon as possible and well in advance of the deadline, and propose a resolution. Ask your supervisor for help in setting priorities, if necessary.

Take responsibility for developing your skills.

- Take on a variety of projects and participate in the life of the office by approaching attorneys and asking if you can help them.
- Ask to accompany attorneys to court, depositions, meetings, training sessions, and networking events.
- Talk to attorneys about your interests and goals. Make an effort to get to know as many people at the office as you can.
- Keep a record of every project you work on so you can update your resume after the summer and use for future cover letters and letters of recommendation. (You may also need this for conflict checks in the future!)
- Plan ahead to ask for a recommendation or reference at the end of the summer.

Encourage and accept feedback.

- Feedback is a gift. Be open and receptive to feedback with a positive attitude. Do not respond defensively to constructive criticism.
- If you are not getting feedback, it's OK to ask for it, but be thoughtful about your timing and be prepared to ask specific questions. You want to strike the right balance of understanding growth opportunities without being demanding or coming across as needing constant affirmation.
- Make sure to implement feedback into subsequent work product. It takes time and energy for attorneys to give you feedback. Respect their time and effort.
- Read this helpful article from LRW Professor Elizabeth Frost on receiving feedback with grace. [Accepting Criticism with Grace](#), Oregon State Bar Bulletin (Dec. 2017) (pp. 13-15).

DEALING WITH MISTAKES

Be responsible and proactive.

- Mistakes happen; it is part of the learning process. When you make a mistake, tell your supervisor or assigning attorney immediately, in person if possible, and suggest ways to remedy it.
- Learn from your mistakes. Don't make the same mistake twice.

COMMUNICATION IS CRITICAL

Be responsive.

- It is imperative that you promptly respond to phone and email messages, invitations, meeting requests, etc.
- Figure out your supervisor and other assigning attorneys or colleagues' appropriate and preferred methods of communication.
- Review these helpful short videos on effective communications with your supervisor.
 - Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3srb5Qy0S8&feature=youtu.be>
 - Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j3ZPw9vFD4o&feature=youtu.be>