

An Outline of Academic Employment Opportunities for Lawyers^[1]

Attorneys choose to pursue academic careers, to be defined in a moment, for a variety of reasons. While salaries are generally not as high as they might be in private practice, the opportunity to work in an intellectually exciting environment and the possibility of maintaining an easier work-life balance, makes academic life very attractive. While law schools are the most obvious environments in which to teach, colleges, business schools, and paralegal programs, for example, may also hire attorneys to teach relevant courses.

Academic careers can be broken down roughly into two areas - teaching and administration. Within the faculty category, there are tenure-track, clinical and adjunct positions.

Teaching

- Tenure-track

A tenure-track position is a full-time position that, in addition to teaching, also generally also includes serving on one or more law school committees, conducting research and publishing scholarly articles. These positions are considered to be highly prestigious and, as a result, they are very, very competitive. More often than not, in addition to his/her J.D., a full-time professor will have an LL.M. or S.J.D., (Doctor of Juridical Science), judicial clerkship and/or a teaching fellowship.

- Clinical

Another category of teaching has come with the rise of clinical courses as part of law school curricula - clinical teaching. Typically, a clinical professor will supervise students in their representation of actual clients through a clinical program at the law school. For these types of positions, strong practice experience in the area being taught is of paramount importance.

- Adjunct

Some practicing attorneys, in addition to their practices, serve as adjunct, or part-time, professors or instructors. They typically teach a course or two in their area of specialty or, perhaps, a legal research and writing course. For attorneys who want to continue their practice, yet are also interested in teaching, this is a good, (and to some extent, "easier") route to consider.

Administration

Another avenue for working in academia is law school (or higher education) administration. Lawyers serve in a number of different positions in law schools and other institutions. Law schools in particular prefer to hire someone with a law degree for these positions, as they have a keen understanding of legal education and the legal profession. Some examples of these positions are career services, admissions, student services, alumni and development, academic support, and law librarians. In addition, law schools, colleges and universities may have a general counsel's office which hires attorneys to advise the institution on a wide range of legal issues.

Academic Career Resources

<http://chronicle.com> (Academic positions)

www.nacua.org (National Association of College & University Attorneys)

www.aals.org (Association of American Law Schools)

www.aals.org/frs/ (AALS Faculty Recruitment Page)

www.aals.org/services_sections_ce.php (Clinical Section of AALS)

www.nalp.org (Go to "Career Paths" and then "Job Listings")

<http://www.saltlaw.org/subsections/view/27> (Academic institutions)

www.cleaweb.org (Clinical Education Association website)

<http://clinic.law.cuny.edu/clea/clea.html> (Clinical Legal Education Association newsletters)

www.academploy.com (Academic Employment Network)

<http://academiccareers.com/> (Academic Careers Online)

www.higheredjobs.com/ (Higher Ed. Jobs website)

www.aeee.org (American Association for Employment in Education, Inc.)

www.aahe.org (American Association of Higher Education)

^[1] This article was contributed to the Lawyers in Transition Committee by Amy Gerwitz-McGahan, Director of the *New Directions* program at the Pace Law School in White Plains, NY.