

CAREER AND PLACEMENT SERVICES

Western Michigan University Thomas M. Cooley provides comprehensive services to help students and graduates with career planning and employment searches.

1. Career and Professional Development Office Staff

The school elevated the importance of career and professional development services with the 2008 addition of the function's own Associate Dean, who is a member of the school's leadership group, and a supporting Assistant Dean. These additions reflect the school's commitment to its vision strategies, which include increased employment rates among graduates. The Associate Dean of Career and Professional Development is a former State Bar of Michigan president with wide contacts in the profession.

Each campus has at least one career and professional development coordinator to provide direct services to students and alumni, and employers seeking to hire them. Of the seven career and professional development coordinators, all are lawyers, with an average of 13.47 years of law or law-related practice as licensed attorneys. One has a master's degree, and one has two LL.M. degrees. The average career and professional development services experience for all career coordinators is 6.65 years. The coordinators also reflect the student body's diversity. The coordinators are of different ages, genders, races, cultures, and law-practice experiences, enabling students to choose career advisors with whom they share interests and affinities, to maximize achievement potential. The school trains each coordinator in relevant areas of expertise and requires coordinators to remain current in that expertise.

Although career and professional development career coordinators may be assigned to a particular campus, they provide services to all students regardless of any student's principle campus location. The Associate Dean of Career and Professional Development has an office in Lansing, but provides programming and appointments to each Michigan campus at least twice per term and to the Tampa Bay campus once per term. The Assistant Dean of Career and Professional Development spends three days per week at the Lansing campus and two days per week at the Auburn Hills campus. The following table summarizes the background of the Career and Professional Development Office staff.

Career and Professional Development Career Coordinators and Experience

Position	Campus Location	Undergrad Degree	Advanced Degree	Juris Doctor	Law or law-related practice as a licensed attorney	CPD experience
Associate Dean	Lansing*	BA Biology	MS	Yes	27 years	8 years
Assistant Dean	3 days Lansing;	BA Political Science		Yes	14 years	8 years

Position	Campus Location	Undergrad Degree	Advanced Degree	Juris Doctor	Law or law-related practice as a licensed attorney	CPD experience
	2 days Auburn Hills					
Career Coordinator	Auburn Hills	BA History		Yes	27 years	6 years
Career Coordinator	Auburn Hills	BS Animal Science	LLM - IP LLM - Corporate	Yes	3 years	6 years
Career Coordinator	Grand Rapids	BA Political Science		Yes	3 years	12 years
Career Coordinator	Lansing	BA Social Science		Yes	20 years	6 years
Career Coordinator	Tampa Bay	BS Political Science		Yes	.3 year	.5 year
Total					94.3 years	46.5 years
Average					13.47 years	6.64 years

* Twice per term minimum at Auburn Hills and Grand Rapids campuses and once per term at Tampa Bay campus.

Career and Professional Development Administrative Staff

Position	Location	Undergrad Degree	CPD Experience
Administrative Assistant	Lansing	BS Psychology	9 years
Recruiting Assistant	Lansing		10 years

2. Career and Professional Development Services

A. Student Engagement

The most dynamic and purposeful career and professional development services are of little value if students are not engaged. The Career and Professional Development Office seeks to have contact with each student during every term of their matriculation. Students learn of career and professional development services in the following ways:

- 1) **1st term Student Orientation.** A career coordinator on each campus explains basic career and professional development services and the importance of these services for students to attain their career goals during new student orientation.
- 2) **1st term Introduction to Law Class.** A career coordinator on each campus instructs on the Career and Professional Development Office locations, personnel, and resources and how to sign up and use Symplicity during Introduction to Law classes.

- 3) **3rd term Research and Writing Class.** A career coordinator on each campus reviews the basics of resume and cover letter drafting, editing, tailoring, and updating with students in the Research and Writing class.
- 4) **5th to 7th term Advanced Writing Class.** A career coordinator on each campus presents to Advanced Writing classes the intricacies of tailoring resumes and cover letters.
- 5) **Every term, CPD Career Week.** During class, faculty members explain their career journey, invite students to networking events, and talk about the importance of career and professional development services. The purpose of CPD career week is to create a culture of placement.
- 6) **Terms 1 to 6, Professional Development Series I – VI.** The Professional Development Series is a Blackboard online program required of all first to sixth term students. The online Professional Development Series focuses on graduate employment rates by helping students to develop interpersonal and professional skills as well as leadership attributes and professional competencies through co-curricular programming. The Professional Development Series is an initiative developed by a multi-departmental working group of administrators and faculty. This mandatory six-term series provides law students with foundational and advanced skills to ensure that students have an attitude of employability, success, and achievement of career goals. Some of the required engagement exercises include meeting with a career coordinator, drafting a competitive resume and cover letter, attending a networking or other career-related speaker program, engaging in an informational interview, and creating a career portfolio through a social media platform. Students who do not complete the required engagement exercises by week eight of the term are not permitted to register for classes the following term. This series requires students to take advantage of career and professional development services designed to improve their ability to secure employment and evolve into a highly engaged student population that takes ownership of their success.
- 7) **Every term, Top Achievers Program.** The Career and Professional Development Office and select faculty host an event for the top 10% of each class on each campus. Students are exposed to employment opportunities that may be available to them because of their high grade point averages. Students receive advice on how to build their resumes to achieve new or revised career goals.
- 8) **Emails to students.** A career coordinator on each campus sends emails to students inviting them to visit the Career and Professional Development Office on their campus often.

- 9) **Every term, Dynasign, campus newsletters, blogs, bulletin boards, and forums.** Career coordinators advertise specific programs or events sponsored by the Career and Professional Development Office on lobby Dynasigns and publish notices in newsletters, blogs, bulletins boards, and forums.

- 10) **Every term, student organization fairs.** A career coordinator on each campus will attend the term-beginning student organization fair with career and professional development information and resources.

- 11) **Every term, involvement with students.** Career coordinators at each campus interact with students on an informal basis in hallways, are advisors to student organizations, and co-host events with student organizations to generate strong relationships between students and the Career and Professional Development Office.

B. Career Services

The Career and Professional Development Office offers a wide range of career services that are designed to be comparable at every campus and available to all students regardless of campus location or scheduling option. In the charts that follow, declining gross numbers parallel the declining overall enrollment number at the School. These career services include:

- 1) **Career counseling.** Career coordinators offer individual appointments covering career exploration, job-search strategies, resume and cover-letter review, mock interview, networking opportunities, application processes and timelines, Symplicity and other on-line-resource training, and employment trends. Students meet with career coordinators either through an appointment that is made online through Symplicity or on a walk-in basis. The following table shows the career counseling appointments and ancillary services for the period 2014 to June 2016.

Career Counseling Appointments and Ancillary Services, 2014 to June 2016

Appointments and Ancillary Services	2014	2015	2016 (to June)
Total Counseling Appointments	1616	1647	522
Mock Interviews	183	198	29
Job Applications	725	475	313
Cover Letter Reviews	727	441	163
Resume Reviews	1331	1191	551

Full user statistics reports from Symplicity for career counseling appointments for 2014 to June 2016 are attached as **Appendix 5-A**.

The Career and Professional Development Offices (CPD) are open Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Auburn Hills, Lansing, and Tampa Bay campuses

and Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Grand Rapids campus. CPD offers Saturday hours from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Auburn Hills, Grand Rapids, and Lansing campuses. The Saturday hours are typically scheduled for the first Saturday of each month. Students can meet with a career advisor during evenings and weekends by appointment. Evening and weekend appointments are also available to any student at any campus by appointment. The following table shows the number of weekends that CPD was open by campus and the number of appointments after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends.

CPD Weekend Services Statistics (2014 to June 2016)

Category	2014	2015	2016 (to June)
# Weekends Auburn Hills CPD Open	7	9	17
# Weekends Grand Rapids CPD Open	9	6	4
# Weekends Lansing CPD Open	13	11	15
Appointments after 5:00 PM	28	31	21
Weekend Appointments	30	27	54

Although the Career and Professional Development Office is open on some weekends and by appointment during evenings and weekends, many evening and weekend students choose to pursue career counseling at times other than when they are on campus for classes. From 2014 to June 2016, the following table shows the distribution of career counseling appointments for evening and weekend students.

Weekend and Evening Student Appointment Times, 2014 to June 2016

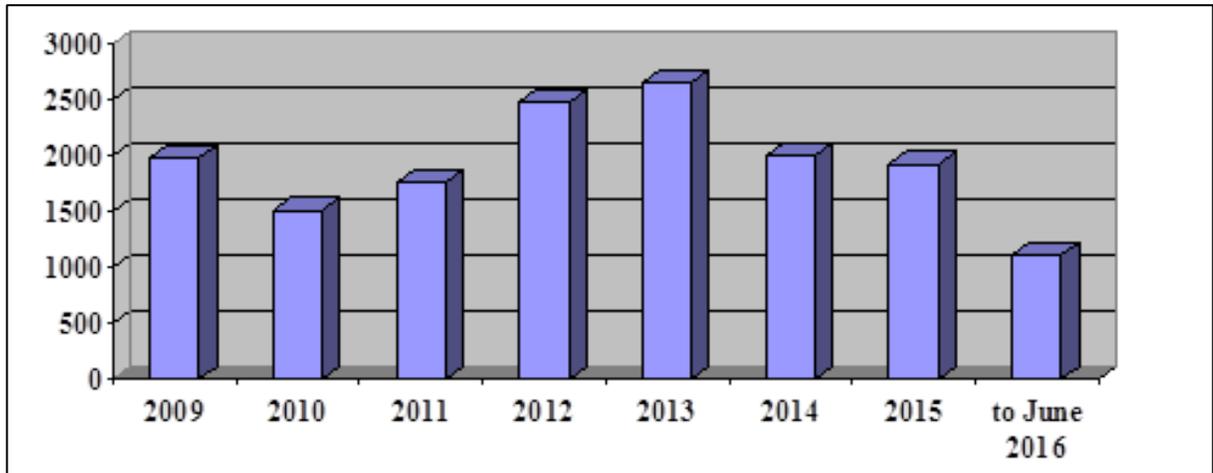
Time	2014	2015	2016 (to June)
Morning (before Noon)	65	48	10
Afternoon (Noon to 5 p.m.)	129	81	12
Evening (after 5 p.m.)	19	5	1
Total	213	134	23

- 2) **Job postings.** Career and professional development staff search for and publish full-time and part-time employment opportunities worldwide, and also internships, work study, fellowships, summer-associate positions, and volunteer openings. These postings are immediately posted in Symplicity.

In 2011, CPD implemented Symplicity as its online career management platform. Employers can directly post positions at the law school through Symplicity at any time. Additionally, career and professional development staff are assigned to research new job websites and mine job postings from these websites continuously to post in the law school Symplicity system. For the Class of 2015 ABA employment questionnaire, job postings was the greatest source of employment reported by graduates. Job posting success is the result of employers posting more positions through Symplicity, staff innovation in researching new job websites, mining job

postings from websites, and employer outreach meetings. The following table depicts the number of job postings from 2009 to June 2016.

Number of Job Postings, 2009 to June 2016



- 3) **Programs and workshops.** The Career and Professional Development Office offers programs at each campus that feature guest judges and lawyers, law professors, and career coordinators speaking on various career-related topics, excursions to law firms, government offices, state and federal courts, and Canadian courts, resume and cover-letter workshops, networking events, diversity programs, mock-interview programs, and career-skills presentations. The following table gives the number of career and professional development programs and workshops by campus for 2014 to June 2016.

Programs and Workshops by Campus 2014 to June 2016

Campus	2014	2015	2016
Ann Arbor	35	N/A	N/A
Auburn Hills	44	36	17
Grand Rapids	25	20	9
Lansing	56	49	15
Tampa Bay	47	36	11
Total	207	141	52

Of these career and professional development programs and workshops, 12 programs were offered on Saturdays in 2014, 21 programs in 2015, and 8 programs through June 2016. A list of all programs and workshops by title, campus, date, and time are attached as **Appendix 5-B**. Attendance at these programs is illustrated in the following table.

The Career and Professional Development office also provides programs by video conference which allows programs hosted at one campus to be broadcast to all campuses. Twelve video programs were offered in 2014, 8 in 2015, and 2 have been offered in 2016. CPD also has transitioned to the Blackboard Panopto system through which programs can be recorded and then viewed by students at their convenience. Prior to Panopto, many programs were recorded and stored via DVD.

Attendance at CPD Programs and Workshops by Campus, 2014 to June 2016

Campus	2014	2015	2016 (to June)	Average/Campus
Ann Arbor	78	N/A	N/A	2.22
Auburn Hills	237	322	187	7.69
Grand Rapids	55	76	45	3.26
Lansing	268	376	81	5.96
Tampa Bay	750	674	177	17.03
Total	1388	1448	490	
Average/Program	6.70	10.27	9.42	

- 4) **Employer outreach.** Career coordinators visit employers locally and across the country to establish new professional relationships and encourage existing employer relationships with the goal of creating job opportunities and externships for students and graduates. Specifically, employer outreach initiatives are all designed to bring job postings and externship opportunities to the law school, connect students and graduates with employers, provide insights into the hiring needs and practices of employers, and improve the public image of the law school by establishing contacts with employers in Michigan, Florida, and across the country.

In 2013, career coordinators had 86 high quality employer outreach meetings; in 2014, 117 meetings; in 2015, 72 meetings; and through June 2016, 12 employer meetings. A high quality employer outreach meeting is where an appointment is with a specific employer at a set time. The typical progression of the meeting is to first introduce the law school, learn of the employer's needs, and determine market conditions in the area. The conversation then turns to how the law school can assist the employer with hiring needs. Career coordinators attempt to obtain, in this order: a job listing for an attorney or paid student law clerk; a commitment for on-campus interviews; a field office for a student externship; a volunteer pro bono or Cooley Volunteer Corps opportunity; and if all else is unsuccessful, a continuing relationship between the employer and the law school. Following a high quality employer outreach meeting, the career coordinator who visited the employer will share information learned with other career coordinators either during a bi-weekly career coordinators' meeting or in a written report that is sent to all career coordinators. A list of all employer outreach meetings, including introductory public relations meetings, from 2014 to June 2016 is attached as **Appendix 5-C**.

- 5) Career resources.** The Career and Professional Development Office provides resources on career exploration; preparing resumes and cover letters; interviewing; job-search strategies; securing internships, fellowships, and public-interest positions; job-search directories; legal newspapers and magazines; international job-search resources; and a library of recordings of prior career programs and presentations. Some of these career resources are available 24 hours every day on-line in Symplicity or the careers page of the law school portal. Career-related library books are housed in CPD Offices and available to be checked out from the CPD Office.
- 6) National employment listings.** The Career and Professional Development Office (CPD) subscribes to many national employment listings, including the Brigham-Young University Intercollegiate Job Bank web-site, the University of Arizona Government Honors and Internship Handbook, International Career Employment Weekly, and the Public Service Jobs Directory. CPD also is enrolled on Listserves of employers and employment posting aggregators, such as USAJobs.gov; various federal and state departments; ABA Legal Career Central; State Bar of Michigan Career Center; and LawCrossing.com. Career coordinators counsel students on how to use employment Listserves so job postings are sent directly to students.
- 7) Career and Professional Development Forum.** Career coordinators host a web-based forum where timely career-related information is shared, such as material on top market trends and professionalism. The forum allows students to reflect on the post, comment on it, and have a dialog about it.
- 8) Practice-area guides.** Career coordinators write on-line articles posted to Symplicity that provide students with practice area specific information and job application information. The information is available 24 hours every day for students to read at times most convenient for them.
- 9) Job fairs and student-scholarship opportunities.** Job fairs and scholarship opportunities are published on Symplicity to inform students of the opportunities and to assist them in registering for or applying to a job fair or scholarship. In 2014, 24 job fairs were advertised; in 2015, 22; and through June 2016, 9 job fairs have been advertised to students. No statistics are kept that reflect student attendance at job fairs. A list of job fairs advertised from 2014 to June 2016 is attached as **Appendix 5-D**.
- 10) Employer Recruitment Campaign.** Annually, the Career and Professional Development Office (CPD) launches its employer recruitment campaign by mailing approximately 500 personalized recruitment invitation letters signed by the Associate Dean and Assistant Dean to employers in Michigan, Florida, and across the country. The primary purpose of the letter is to invite the employer to hire a WMU-Cooley law school graduate. Before the mailing, career coordinators and the recruiting assistant

conduct research on the hiring potential of employers. The list of employers is evaluated and employers who are not likely to hire are removed and new potential employers who may be in a position to hire are added. Two weeks after the recruitment letter mailing, career coordinators call each employer with the goal of securing on-campus interviews, résumé collections, direct submission job postings, and employer meetings.

Primarily through the Employer Recruitment Campaign, but also through employer outreach meetings and online sources, CPD has obtained the following number of on-campus interviews (OCIs), resume collections, and direct submissions from 2009 through June 2016:

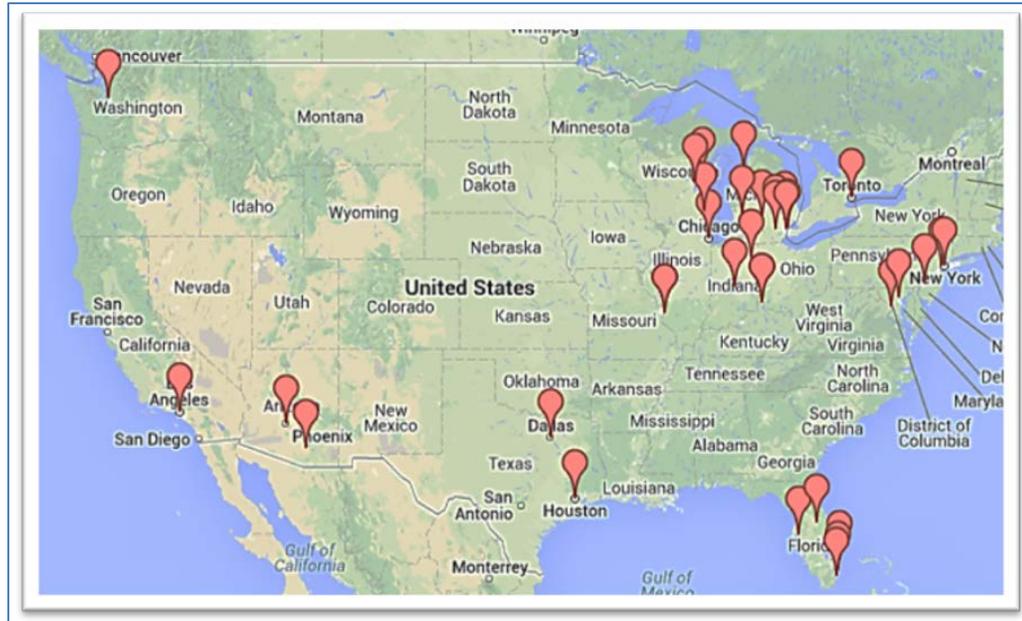
2009 to June 2016 OCIs, Resume Collections, and Direct Submissions

Year	On-campus Interviews	Resume Collections	Direct Submissions
2009	39	64	97
2010	44	53	75
2011	39	52	956
2012	23	58	2,483
2013	25	30	2,657
2014	47	33	1,995
2015	40	25	1,925
2016	21	18	1,110

11) Alumni Networking Receptions. The law school’s alumni are employers and they are very committed to helping other WMU-Cooley graduates with their job searches. Career coordinators attend these law school alumni mixers to network with alumni about employment opportunities and the legal job market in their location. The Associate Dean of CPD sometimes hosts law school alumni networking receptions during employer outreach trips. When the Associate Dean of Career and Professional Development does host a reception, his talking points to alumni are in this order: news of what is happening at the law school; the importance of maintaining a close alumni network; employment opportunities; supporting the law school; and joining the alumni association.

In 2014, three career coordinators attended 15 alumni networking receptions in five states. In 2015, five career coordinators attended 16 receptions in 5 states and Canada. Through June 2016, five career coordinators attended nine receptions in three states. A list of alumni networking receptions attended by career coordinators is attached as **Appendix 5-E**. The following chart illustrates the location of the alumni networking receptions for the period 2009 to June 2016 that were attended by career coordinators.

Alumni Networking Receptions Attended by CPD Career Coordinators 2009 to June 2016



*Multiple Alumni Networking Receptions were attended in the following locations from 2009 to June 2016:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| -Auburn Hills, MI: 5 | -Lansing, MI: 17 | -Toronto, Ontario: 2 | -Traverse City, MI: 3 |
| -Tampa, FL: 5 | -Washington, DC: 6 | -Brighton, MI: 4 | -Kalamazoo, MI: 2 |
| -Indianapolis, IN: 5 | -Grand Rapids, MI: 8 | -Petoskey, MI: 3 | -Houston, TX: 2 |
| -Ft. Wayne, IN: 4 | -Chicago, IL: 3 | -Detroit, MI: 3 | -Baltimore, MD: 2 |
| -West Palm Beach, FL: 3 | -Miami, FL: 3 | -Atlanta, GA: 2 | |

The law school's career coordinators are devoted to serving students, often helping students after hours; providing students with personal cellphone numbers to allow students access to career help at nearly anytime; driving students to interviews, bar association meetings, and other networking events; and implementing 24-hour resume review turnaround time to provide students with prompt resume feedback and other career assistance. One career coordinator allowed a student to borrow a suit so the student would look professional for an interview.

Another career coordinator paid for a hotel room in Louisville, KY so a student was not required to begin driving at 2:00 a.m. to attend a 9:00 a.m. interview in a city 6 hours away.

The Career and Professional Development Office also works closely with the Externship Office to encourage students to see their externships as supporting their career plans. Although primarily designed to achieve pedagogical goals, the school's robust Externship Program also provides the opportunity of introducing students to employers under circumstances where the students are able to establish working relationships in which they prove their skills and worth. Many students have obtained employment through their externship placements, either directly or through connections made and references earned.

C. Career and Professional Development Office Collaboration with Faculty

The law school's faculty members understand the challenging employment market and are engaged in assisting the Career and Professional Development Office in student externship and career placement efforts. Faculty members carry on much of this support work in collaboration with Career and Professional Development Office initiatives, such as CPD career week that was explained earlier in this narrative. Career coordinators concentrate programming during Career Week. Faculty members complement this programming by devoting a brief period of class time during the week to their own career development success strategies while highlighting opportunities for students. For example, a professor teaching Secured Transactions will highlight opportunities to engage in upcoming debtor-creditor bar functions so that students with an interest in this area may begin to develop their professional network while still in law school. This coordinated, school-wide effort highlights career-building strategies and opportunities.

Faculty members and career coordinators also remain active in bar associations, hold leadership positions in bar associations, and receive awards from those associations. Service to the bar is a strategic faculty and career coordinator effort to remain familiar with the issues of everyday practice and leverage contacts for student placement.

Preparing students for solo and small firm practice has been the focus of several faculty members. To prepare students for solo and small firm practice, the law school created the General Practice Solo and Small Firm Concentration. The Concentration features and builds on a series of five Law Practice elective courses taught by full-time and adjunct faculty, helping students develop practice plans, and featuring guided exercises and practitioner speakers.

The core Law Practice course is Law Office Management, using the ABA's Jay Foonberg text *How to Start and Build a Law Practice*. Students in the course complete a business plan and practice strategy to form their own solo practice. Another Law Practice course is Technology, helping students develop a technology plan for their solo or small firm practice and featuring the latest in technology shown at the ABA Tech Shows. Another Law Practice course is Business Development, using the book *Entrepreneurial Practice: How Lawyers Reach Underserved and Emerging Client Populations*, and in which students write business-development plans. Another Law Practice course is Finance for Lawyers in which students write personal and law-firm

financial plans. Another Law Practice course is Transition to Practice, in which students perform a series of guided exercises and discuss practice with practitioner speakers, while serving in externships.

Another faculty member has developed a directed study focusing on marketing for solo practitioners. In that directed study, students become familiar with the most recent materials from Michigan's Institute of Continuing Legal Education Solo Institute, the ABA Tech Show, and related seminar materials. They then interview four solo practitioners within their field of interest. One solo must have over 10 years of practice, while one must have three years or less, and the other two can have any experience. Students then meet as a group to discuss their experiences and learn from one another's interviews. By the end of the course, students submit interview summaries along with their own plan for starting law practice. The interviewed solos often become mentors for the students.

Another faculty member has established a Google Group "Solo by Design" that currently has over 306 subscribers who are current students or recent graduate solo practitioners. The group links students to practitioners in online discussion forums. The group allows graduates to communicate about current issues and experiences while building networks of individuals with common professional interests.

The principle faculty member behind many of these solo and small firm practice initiatives is Professor Gary Bauer. The ABA [Solo, Small Firm and General Practice Division](#) honored Professor Bauer with its Solo and Small Firm Trainer Award, which recognizes attorneys who have made significant contributions to educating lawyers or law students regarding the opportunities and challenges of a solo and small firm practice. Professor Bauer was recognized at the Solo and Small Firm Awards Luncheon in May 2016 during the [Division's Joint Spring Meeting](#) in Key West, FL.

D. Required Clinic Experience

All WMU-Cooley graduates have practiced law in a supervised setting before graduation because we require all students to complete at least 3 credit hours in a clinical experience. Each year, between 12% and 16% of positions obtained by WMU-Cooley's graduates are the direct result of their externships. Because externships often lead to job offers, CPD staff members at each campus assist with placing students in externships and develop relationships with those employers. The academic and faculty supervision elements of all externships and clinics are overseen centrally by the Associate Dean of Academic Programs.

3. A Note on Employment Data and Rates

WMU-Cooley posts 3 years' worth of graduate employment [data on our website here](#). This section uses that data, and our ABA data for the years 2011-2015 to show perspective from year to year.

First, the table below shows the school’s percentage of graduates who reported their status nine months after graduation as “unemployed and seeking work.” Note that beginning with the 2012 Employment Questionnaire, the ABA required students who reported that they were not seeking employment because they were studying for the bar exam to be classified as unemployed-seeking. The 2012 Employment Questionnaire instructions stated: “A graduate who is studying for the bar exam and is not employed as of February 15, 2012 is considered to be seeking employment unless classification of the graduate as “not seeking” can genuinely be supported by the graduate’s particular circumstances.” Before 2012, there was no specific instruction on whether to report those not employed due to studying for the bar examination.

WMU-Cooley % Unemployed Seeking (of Total Graduates)	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	11.0%	19.9%	27.9%	24.2%	23.5%

National figures from the National Association of Law Placement (NALP) reflect a similar trend that WMU-Cooley experienced from 2011 to 2015. The table below shows the in national figures, unemployment increased from 2011 to 2013--the years hardest hit by the economic recession--and decreasing each year since:

NALP Nationwide % Unemployed-Seeking	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	9.6%	10.7%	11.2%	9.7%	9.6%

It comes as no surprise that a law school’s bar passage rate directly impacts its employment rate. In 1999, NALP reported that only 13% of recent law school graduates obtained their employment offers after receiving their bar results. By 2005, 16% of job offers were obtained after bar results. By 2010, that figure increased to 22.6%, and that figure has not been lower than 25% since 2011. Employers are no longer willing to take the same risk on new law graduates that they did back in the 1990s.

Without question, Michigan’s huge decrease in state-wide bar passage that occurred in 2012 has impacted the ability of recent graduates to obtain employment. Historically, the largest portion of WMU-Cooley graduates sit for the Michigan bar examination. Our [bar passage rates are addressed separately here](#).

Michigan First-Time Bar Pass Rate	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	82.0%	89.0%	85.0%	82.0%	64.0%	69.0%	72.0%	72.0%

Source: NCBE 10-year data for ABA Law Schools

The quality of the services provided by WMU-Cooley’s Career & Professional Development Office is reflected by the types of jobs WMU-Cooley graduates are obtaining. With remarkable consistency during a rocky and unstable economic period in our country, WMU-Cooley graduates obtained full-time, professional positions. The table below shows that for the years 2011 to 2015, between 92 and 95% of WMU-Cooley’s employed graduates obtained Bar Passage Required, JD Advantage, or other Professional Positions. Of those positions, between

82% and 89% were full-time, long-term, even during the toughest job national market years in recent history.

	Year				
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
TOTAL GRADUATES	999	1079	1143	871	688
# GRADUATES with KNOWN EMPLOYMENT STATUS	736	976	1075	809	629
WMU-Cooley # EMPLOYED	583	680	715	574	456
WMU-Cooley % Employed	79.2%	69.7%	66.5 %	71.0 %	72.5%
% Employed in Bar Passage Required Positions	70.2%	51.8%	46.4 %	49.1 %	45.2%
% Employed in JD Advantage Positions	13.6%	23.5%	23.9 %	27.5 %	26.5%
% Employed in Professional Positions	11.7%	18.2%	21.7 %	16.2 %	20.2%
Total % Employed in Bar Passage Req'd, JD Advantage, or Professional Positions	95%	94%	92%	93%	92%
% of Above that is Full-Time, Long-Term	89%	84%	82%	87%	87%

Unlike some other law schools, WMU-Cooley has never inflated its employment rate by hiring its own graduates in bogus positions created for that purpose. Since 2012, we have employed only eight of our own graduates. Typically the graduates we did employ were those who kept their student jobs while enrolled in our bar preparation courses, worked part-time while they were simultaneously enrolled part-time in one of our LLM degree programs, or kept their Innocence Project internship after graduation (the Innocence Project is in part funded externally by a grant). We hired one 2013 graduate to a full-time position, and he is still employed full-time at our Tampa Bay campus. In 2015, WMU-Cooley hired none of our own graduates.

4. Looking Forward

WMU-Cooley's newly adopted strategic plan ([available in full here](#)) also both directly and indirectly addresses the school's commitment to preparing its graduates for success after law school. In line with our mission, our goal is to help our graduates find careers that are personally rewarding. Both through the curriculum and through strategic extra-curricular programs, we help students develop a commitment to professionalism and service and a strong work ethic that sets our graduates apart from other schools.

The following vision statements are directly related to career development and professionalism:

1.C. Prepare Graduates for Contemporary Careers

- (1) Assure that academic programs are integrative, interdisciplinary, and promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity.
- (2) Provide course options and placement services that mirror the diverse career options available to those with law degrees.
- (3) Engage every student in a meaningful, supervised field placement.
- (4) Offer curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs that are student-centered, incorporate leadership development, and reinforce professional empowerment.
- (5) Require students to attain working proficiency in technology most commonly used in contemporary legal careers.
- (6) Involve alumni with students in the curriculum, co-curricular offerings, professionalism programs, and career development.

2.A. Emphasize the Importance of Personal Responsibility

- (1) Instill a commitment to professionalism and good character.
- (2) Reinforce the need for and value of self-reliance, work ethic, and personal responsibility.
- (3) Recognize that the pathway to success is a journey that begins in law school and continues throughout a lawyer's career.
- (4) Reward WMU-Cooley Community members who lead by example, demonstrate initiative, accept personal responsibility, and make a positive impact.

2.B. Perpetuate the WMU-Community Culture of Professionalism and Service

- (1) Enhance current and develop new programs that will help graduates practice law with professionalism and good character.
- (2) Build and strengthen the communities in which we live through leadership, community and professional service, and dedication to the rule of law.
- (3) Help students find meaningful community service opportunities.
- (4) Emphasize professional and ethical standards in our clinical internship and externship programs.
- (5) Provide students with the tools to find rewarding and fulfilling career paths.
- (6) Foster continuous commitment to professional and ethical behavior by all members of the WMU-Cooley Community.

The prominence of career development in our strategic plan is evidence of WMU-Cooley's commitment to ensuring our graduates are ready for the legal careers they choose to pursue.