

A faint, light blue silhouette of a pair of scales of justice is centered in the background of the slide. The scales are balanced, with two pans hanging from a central beam.

Virtual Interviews & Internships

Abraham S. Ovadia Career Planning & Placement Office

Ana P. Bierman, Assistant Dean

Randee G. Breiter, Director

Jessica M. Ciminero, Associate Director

Laura Sarmentero, Administrative Assistant

A faint, large-scale illustration of the scales of justice is centered in the background of the slide. The scales are rendered in a lighter shade of blue than the background, creating a subtle watermark effect. The entire slide has a deep blue gradient background.

VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS

Video Communication Platforms

- Similar advice to typical interviews also applies to virtual interviews (on Zoom or other video communication platforms)
 - Have a designated quiet space to conduct the interview without distractions/anyone walking by/background noise/etc. (to the extent that you can)
 - Unplanned things can happen on either your end or the interviewer's when in this environment, so be patient if any glitches/distractions occur
 - Test your Internet and your mic/camera prior to the interview
 - Select somewhere at home or wherever you are with a good background to sit in front of, or you can set up a virtual background if you have that capability on your computer (basically just be aware of whatever background they are seeing behind you)
- If you are unfamiliar with video communication platforms, do a practice interview with a member of the CP&P or with a family member or friend to become more comfortable using a video chat.

Telephone Interviews

- Be ready ten minutes early to avoid feeling rushed
- Prepare your space to ensure it is as quiet and comfortable as possible
 - Turn off distracting visuals
 - Let others at home know you will be interviewing and should not be disturbed
 - Have a glass of water ready
- Slow down – you may have a tendency to speak too fast without visual cues – be aware and speak slowly
- Listen – it is OK to ask the interviewer to repeat something you didn't catch
- Standing while speaking may help calm your nerves and allows your voice to project better
 - If you prefer to sit, do so at a desk or other table
- Use headphones to cut out noise and enable the interviewer to hear you better
- Dress the part – put yourself in the right mindset by dressing professionally
- Keep copies of the materials you sent and the job description handy

General interview advice still applies...

Prepare for the interview

- Preparation is the same as if you were going to a face-to-face interview - please see our **Introduction to Interviewing** @ <https://law.fiu.edu/careers/recruiting/>
 - Conduct the same pre-interview preparation of researching both the interviewer(s) and the firm/office
 - Prepare questions for the interviewers
 - Dress as though you are going to an actual interview (the full outfit)
 - Put your phone on silent before the interview (or even leave it out of the room!)

During & After the Interview

- Imagine that you are in the room with the interviewers – this may help to keep any fidgeting under control
 - Ex: even though they can't see your legs/may not be able to see your hands, if you're shaking your legs or tapping your fingers, that may come across somehow in the video
 - *Do not take notes during the interview
- After the interview make sure to send thank-you notes to all of the interviewers

Some differences...

- Eye contact: pay attention to where you are looking (at the camera to make eye contact, not at the image of the one speaking!)
 - <https://www.northeastern.edu/graduate/blog/virtual-interview-tips/>
- What you bring to an interview: have your documents (resume, transcript, writing sample, etc.) very handy/accessible in PDF format on your desktop in case an interviewer asks for it
 - You can email it right away, or if the platform allows for attachments to be sent via a chat box, that way you are prepared for whichever option the interviewer prefers

But what if...

- The dog barks, the phone rings, the kids scream.....AHHHH

And what happens when...

- The computer or phone drops the call or loses the feed; or the Internet goes down.....

BREATHE! This is new to you and may also be new to the interviewer. Things happen. Don't let it throw you. Apologize, call back if you need to, and move on.

- Showing that you can handle adversity could be what sets you apart from the rest.

Technical Difficulties

- FIU IT Help – Getting Started With Zoom
@ https://fiu.service-now.com/sp?id=kb_article&sys_id=d70ca142db9c37484968fbf9af961920
 - For other IT Help topics, please visit <https://fiu.service-now.com/sp?id=index>

A Few Additional Tips

- <https://lawschooltoolbox.com/podcast-episode-241-tips-for-virtual-job-interviews/>
 - Transcript version @ <https://lawschooltoolbox.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Episode-241-Tips-for-Virtual-Job-Interviews.pdf>

A faint, large-scale illustration of a balance scale, symbolizing justice and equity, serves as a background for the title text.

VIRTUAL INTERNSHIPS

Communication

- When meeting with your supervisors for the first time, make a clear plan for the best form of communication (Microsoft Teams, Skype for Business, etc.)
- Discuss with your supervisor(s) whether they prefer e-mail, phone calls, or texts for questions
- Take initiative – make an effort to communicate
- Make sure to ask about deadlines and priorities
- Be involved
 - Plan virtual/online lunches with fellow law clerks
 - Reach out to any attorneys who you want to build a relationship with to see if they would like to schedule a virtual lunch or meeting
 - Have online check-ins with your employer
 - Show a genuine interest in the work of the firm and of your supervisor – the more you learn, the more you can contribute!

Professionalism on a Webcam

- Dress as if you are in the office
 - Communicate with your supervisor regarding the appropriate work attire if you are unsure what to wear for an upcoming virtual meetings
- Similarly to virtual interviews, understand that unplanned events can happen (dogs barking, children coming into frame, etc.) – try to prepare for it on your end and be patient and understanding when it happens on their end!
- Mute yourself when not speaking during formal meetings with multiple people

Addressing Issues Online (Without Overstepping Boundaries)

- If you receive negative or unclear feedback it is ok to ask for clarification
 - Send an email to your supervisor asking things like “Was there something more you wanted me to do with the assignment?” or “Would you like another draft?” or ask for a specific clarification so that your continued work will be more on point
 - Remember – this is new to you, but it is a new way for them to operate as well!
- Setup a calendar event for whichever date your supervisor will get back to you so that you are ready for it
 - If you do not hear back on that date, it is ok to follow up the next day
 - Remember, your supervisor may have several things going on!

Work-Life Balance

- Talk with your supervisor about the hours you are expected to work
 - Some people are inclined to work longer hours when work is easily accessible at home
 - It is important to make a good impression, but you are not expected to work 24/7!
- Respect your own boundaries and know when it is time to work and when it is time to be home (even if those are both the same physical location)
 - If work tasks take longer than your scheduled hours, communicate with your supervisor to assess the situation (the same way you would if you were physically present at the office)
- If billing, make sure to bill your hours accordingly
 - Make sure to know how many hours are allocated for individual projects and do not go over without permission

Key Take-Aways

- Put your best foot forward
 - Remember, this is a new format for them too!
- Acknowledge when you need help
 - It is always good to ask questions!
- Speak up!
 - Talk about what you're most excited about, what you look forward to during the internship – it is ok to politely ask if you can sit in on a meeting or a hearing – if you don't ask, they may not think to include you!
- Set goals early – what do you expect out of the internship?
 - But be flexible and open to new opportunities!
- Be patient
- Try and enjoy the experience.

Remember, this is the beginning of your career!