THE OSCAR Update

November/December 2021
Non-Judiciary

Access Dates for the Class of 2023

Applicants from the class of 2023 gain access to OSCAR at 8:00 a.m. EST on February 2, 2022. Applicants can register for accounts, search for positions, upload their documents, and build online applications. OSCAR will store applications until 12:00 p.m. EDT on June 13, 2022, which is the application release date determined by the Federal Law Clerk Hiring Plan.

OSCAR Release 2.0 is Coming

On December 6, 2021, the Administrative Office of the United States Courts (AO) deploys OSCAR release 2.0 with a number of enhancements for judges, chambers staff, staff attorney offices, and court unit administrators (CUAs).

Will There Be Downtime?

OSCAR will be unavailable for approximately one hour beginning at 4:00 p.m. EST on Sunday, December 5, 2021 to implement system changes necessary for the release.

What are the Changes?

Applicant Demography

With release 2.0, applicants can voluntarily identify their sex, ethnicity, and race as part of their applicant profile. The data in these three fields will not be available to hiring judges or staff attorneys. Instead, the data will be available in aggregate form to the federal judiciary as a tool to help analyze and improve diversity in law clerk hiring. Applicants who wish to self-identify their demographic information should login to OSCAR after the release to update their OSCAR accounts.

Other Changes

In addition to collection of applicant demography data, release 2.0 introduces the following changes, features, and enhancements:

- Applicants are now prompted to identify their citizenship status when registering for an OSCAR account.

- Applicants can set the order that writing samples appear in application packets through their Documents tab.

- When applicants use custom tags to mark positions, the tags now display with their

assigned background colors rather than as plain text.

- Users can save selected items or a selected page of the Positions List to an Excel file in addition to the option to save the entire list.

- OSCAR now requires applicants to identify where they found out about a position on the online application form.

- OSCAR now displays the status of positions (Available, Filled, or Expired) on the Applications List and when the user edits an application.

- OSCAR now prevents users from editing draft applications to filled or expired positions that are no longer accepting applications. If the position does re-open, applicants can edit and submit draft applications.

- Applicants can now see the status of recommendation letters from their Applications List by hovering over a recommendation letter icon.

- Users can no longer apply Batch Options to withdrawn applications.

- LSAs can now approve accidentally rejected registration requests from alternate graduate date (AGD) students instead of needing to contact the OSCAR Program Office.

- OSCAR now restricts notifications of AGD requests to LSAs with full administrator rights.

- Users can select multiple judge types when searching the Judicial Directory.

- The Recommender interface includes improvements to the look and feel.

Training & Resources

Resource Highlight: Upload a Recommendation Letter as a PDF or Word Document

Do you need to assist recommenders with submitting letters of recommendation? We created some short videos to guide users through the process of submitting a letter of recommendation in OSCAR. Click to learn about uploading a letter as a PDF or Word document, and go to our training video library to find out more about the recommendation process.

Need Help?
OSCAR Training Resources

Did you know that training for LSAs is available? The OSCAR Program Office offers one-on-one or group training sessions to help users become familiar with the system. If you want training for your school admin users, then click the Request a training session option on your homepage and fill out the request form in the OSCAR Training Portal. Our trainer will respond quickly and work with you to schedule a session.

Message From OSCAR Management

We're excited for our users to engage with the newest OSCAR release. At the OSCAR Program Office, we strive to ensure that our system remains intuitive and user friendly while also providing advanced functionality tailored to the specific needs of its users. Part of this process is seeking feedback from our users, so we encourage you to visit the OSCAR website and click the "Feedback" button to let us know what you like and what you don't like. Also, be on the lookout for communications about our yearly system archiving, which is just around the corner. We hope everyone has a happy and safe holiday season!

Laura W. Simon
Administrative Office of the
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