VI. Writing Samples

Many employers request a writing sample in addition to your other application materials. When applying as a 1L, you will likely use something from your Legal Practice course. When applying as a 2L or 3L, you can use something you drafted for one of your classes or something you wrote for an employer. If you use something you drafted for an employer, YOU MUST get the employer’s PERMISSION and redact any information that would identify the client.

Use what you think is your best example of legal research and writing, whether that is a brief or a legal memorandum. Employers want to see that you can apply the law to the facts, analyze the issues and reach a reasoned conclusion.

Although the CSO cannot review and critique writing samples, your legal writing professor will likely assist you in turning a piece of coursework into a writing sample.

Writing samples should be between 5 and 10 pages (no more than 10 pages), doubled-spaced and use 12 or 11 point font size. If the piece of writing you have selected is more than 10 pages, you can choose only a portion of the piece to submit as your writing sample. Be sure to choose a section that shows your analytical abilities and your conclusion. Include a cover memo to explain to the employer any redactions and to summarize the facts applicable to the writing sample. In the body of the writing sample, leave the headings for those sections but replace the analysis with the word “REDACTED.”

Example:

Steven R. Smith
3737 Rosewood Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63105
(314) 555-3737 (mobile)
ssmith@wulaw.wustl.edu

Writing Sample

The attached is a memorandum I drafted for my first-year legal writing course. The memorandum originally analyzed four issues under California law resulting from ______________. In the interest of brevity, I have redacted the second and third issues which dealt with _______________ and ________________, respectively.

The facts applicable to the remaining two issues are as follows: . . . . .

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If you would like a copy of the memorandum in its entirety, please do not hesitate to contact me.