

Fordham  
Law School  

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New York, New York

GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

GPDP GUIDE TO  
RESUME WRITING  
FOR  
LL.M. AND M.S.L. STUDENTS

**OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AND NON-J.D. PROGRAMS**

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## I.

### Why a Great Resume Matters

Your resume often will be the first thing a prospective employer sees of you. Remember that an employer will view the resume as a sample of your very best work product. If your resume is only mediocre, prospective employers will expect mediocre work from you as an employee and will go no further with your application. On the other hand, a stellar resume will show that you are organized, thorough, and professional, with strong communication skills and a keen eye for detail. It is critical that your resume be internally consistent in use of fonts, formatting, and other elements; and that it be free of any errors. The visual aesthetics of your resume are important, and the style and content should make the resume easy to access and understand.

A good resume will also demonstrate to a prospective employer the skills you would bring to the organization. A resume is not just about listing your credentials; it is about demonstrating your skills. Your experience should be presented in a way that suggests how you can add value to a prospective employer.

Take a close, objective look at your resume. What does it convey? Does it show that you are organized, or does it demonstrate a lack of focus? Is it concise and easy to read, or are there grammatical errors and inconsistencies? Is it well formatted? In the competitive U.S. legal job market, a flawless resume is absolutely critical.

**International students should note that it is important that you have a resume that conforms to the U.S. style.** One of your greatest strengths in the job market is your ability to move fluidly between two cultures, two legal systems (for LL.M. students), and multiple languages. If your resume does not conform to U.S. style, you are signaling that you are not well immersed in the culture of the U.S. legal market and you negate this important quality. The advice in this guide will help you produce a flawless U.S.-style resume.

## II. Overview of a U.S.-Style Resume

Before you begin reading this guide, take a moment to skim the sample resumes in Appendix A to get a sense of how they are organized, the length, and the level of detail included. In the U.S., a resume is almost always limited to one page and includes brief descriptions of your relevant education and experience written in a persuasive and active voice.

Before drafting your resume, take a few moments to reflect on the skills and qualities you have that make you a strong candidate for the position for which you are applying. In developing your resume, try to highlight those skills and qualities. Resumes that convey clarity, organization, a positive attitude, and a sense of self-confidence are more likely to be better received.

Note that a resume differs from a *curriculum vitae* (CV) in several ways. A CV provides comprehensive background information on a candidate, while a resume is much more abbreviated and tailored for a particular position. If it helps, you can think of a CV as a full biography, whereas a resume is more like a short advertisement. In a resume, you must be much more selective about the information you provide.

To make your resume an effective marketing piece, it must be easily readable in an instant. Think of a busy law firm partner or general counsel of a company with a stack of resumes before her. At this stage, it is unlikely that she will read the resume completely but instead will scan it to get a sense of your experience and skills. If she cannot get this sense in 5 seconds, your resume is not working for you in the way that it should.

While the resume is a marketing tool that should place your experiences in the most favorable light, honesty is critical. Remember that your resume will serve as the basis for an interviewer's questions, and you must be prepared to discuss anything included in your resume. For example, if you list "scuba diving" as one of your interests, you must be prepared to have a conversation about different types of dives, the places you have been diving, etc.; if you indicate proficiency or fluency in a language, be prepared to conduct an entire interview in that language.

One principle to keep in mind as you draft your resume is that it should be readily understandable both to a person with no experience of your home country's legal or educational system and to someone who is from your home country. Within a large organization, your resume may be passed from a U.S. reviewer to someone from your home country. Make sure both of those people can understand your credentials as presented in the resume.

For foreign lawyers, one big challenge is listing credentials from another system that are expressed in a foreign language. As you draft your resume, try to avoid translating. Translating a degree or award rarely conveys the meaning accurately. Instead, *describe* your credentials in simple, understandable terms in English.

Remember also that a resume is a fluid document which changes as you earn degrees, gain professional experience, and acquire new interests and career directions. It is important to update your resume regularly to ensure that it is current and responds to specific positions for which you are applying.

This guide contains a step-by-step process that will enable you to produce a professional resume. We ask that all students follow the steps exactly. This will ensure (1) that you have a well-formatted resume that is appealing to a U.S. employer; and (2) the efficiency and integrity of our resume review process.

### III. Resume Drafting, Step by Step

Use the guidelines below to begin drafting your resume. While it is important to keep in mind the one-page limit, it is best to be over-inclusive at the outset of the drafting process. If you end up with more than one page, you can edit later.

#### A. Technical Specifications

Before you begin drafting your resume, make sure your page is set up appropriately. We recommend that you create your resume using Microsoft Word and use the following rules to set up your page:

- Page Size: U.S. letter size page
- Margins: 1" on all sides.
  - Font: Use a font that is clear and easy to read, such as Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman
- Spacing (use the "Paragraph" dialogue box):
  - Line Spacing: Single space
  - Make sure the box "Don't add space between paragraphs of the same style" is unchecked.
- Text Alignment: left or center

#### B. Heading

Your heading should be centered at the top of the page and should be typed into the header. In Word, you can usually get to the header by viewing your document in "print layout" and double clicking the very top of your page. Align your text to center. Your heading will contain the following elements in the following order: Name, Address, Phone, Email. In lieu of a full address, you may simply include the city and state. It may look like one of the following examples:

<p><b>Barack Obama</b> 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Apt. 1 Washington, DC 20500 (202) 555-1212 potus@email.com</p>
--

<p><b>Barack Obama</b> 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Apt. 1 Washington, DC 20500 202.555.1212 potus@email.com</p>
--

**Barack Obama**

Washington, DC  
202.555.1212  
potus@email.com

**Barack Obama**

Washington, DC ♦ 202.555.1212 ♦ potus@email.com

Please note the following as you draft your heading:

- Name:
  - May be in bold and larger than 12 pt font.
  - If your name is one that is difficult to pronounce in the U.S. and you have a nickname you prefer to use, you may put that name in parentheses after your first name.
  - Do not use titles or salutations.
- Address:
  - Use only your local (New York) address.
  - As indicated, you may omit the street address.
  - Pay close attention to address formatting, including placement of punctuation, use of abbreviations, and capitalization, to ensure that your address is written in proper U.S. form. Look to the sample resumes for guidance. A few tips:
    - If you use a full address and have an apartment number, you can indicate it in one of two ways:
      - Apt. 1D
      - #1D
    - Abbreviate U.S. states using the U.S. postal two-letter abbreviation (*e.g.*, “NY”, “CT”, “NJ”).
    - Do not abbreviate the city of New York, only the state.
    - The zip code comes after the city and state. The format is always [City], [State] [Zip Code].
      - Note that there is a comma between the city and the state, but no comma between the state and zip code.
- Phone Number:
  - Use a local (U.S.) phone number in the following format (note placement of parentheses, spacing, etc.):

- (212) 636-6883; or
  - 212.636.6883
- Do not label your phone number, as it serves no informational function.
- Email Address:
  - We recommend that you use your Fordham Law School email address for correspondence related to employment. If you use a different address, ensure that it has a professional look and sound to it (*e.g.*, do not use an address such as SusieSmile@hotmail.com).
  - Right click to remove the hyperlink, which usually appears automatically when you type an email address into Word.
  - Do not give your LinkedIn url.

### C. Section Headings

After you create your heading, go to the main body of your document and create your section headings. We recommend that section headings be in bold font and/or ALLCAPS, and they may be underlined. The headings may be left justified or centered on the page. For example, they may appear in one of the formats shown below:

<b><u>EDUCATION</u></b>
<b><u>EXPERIENCE</u></b>
<b><u>BAR ADMISSION</u></b>
<b><u>MISCELLANEOUS</u></b>

<b>EDUCATION</b>
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>
<b>BAR ADMISSION</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>

### D. Education

The “Education” section contains pertinent information for each university-level school attended in reverse chronological order; do not include information about your primary or secondary school. For current students, this section should begin with your studies at Fordham Law School. Normally, you would list all degree programs. However, you may omit non-relevant non-degree programs, or degree programs that you failed to complete, so long as the omission does not leave any time period in your history unaccounted for.

For each entry in the Education section, include the following information:

- School name
- School location
- Month and year that your degree was conferred or will be conferred, and
- Title of the degree/certificate program

It may look like one of the following:

<p><b><u>EDUCATION</u></b></p> <p><b>Fordham University School of Law, New York, NY</b> LL.M. in Banking, Corporate, and Finance Law (expected May 2017)</p>
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<b><u>EDUCATION</u></b>	
<b>Fordham University School of Law</b> M.S.L. in Fashion Law	<b>New York, NY</b> Expected May 2017

- “Fordham University School of Law” must be written exactly like this (not “Fordham Law School,” for example).
- Double check the name of each program to be sure you make no errors (noting punctuation, capitalization, etc.). Here are the proper names for all of our master degrees:
  - LL.M. in Banking, Corporate, and Finance Law
  - LL.M. in Corporate Compliance
  - LL.M. in Fashion Law
  - LL.M. in Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law
  - LL.M. in International Business and Trade Law
  - LL.M. in International Dispute Resolution
  - LL.M. in International Law and Justice
  - LL.M. in U.S. Law
  - M.S.L. in Corporate Compliance
  - M.S.L. in Fashion Law
- Graduation dates are February for those completing their studies in December and May for those completing their studies in April/May.
- If you are in the dual concentration program, list your degree as follows:

## **EDUCATION**

### **Fordham University School of Law, New York, NY**

LL.M. (dual-concentration) (expected February 2017)

*Concentrations:* Banking, Corporate, and Finance Law; Corporate Compliance

The concentration that is most relevant to the position you are applying for should be listed first.

- If you are a part-time student, you may include that information in parentheses after the name of your degree program (*e.g.*, LL.M. in Banking, Corporate, and Finance Law (part-time) (expected May 2017)).

After the Fordham entry, list your other degrees in reverse chronological order (beginning with the most recent). Each school entry will follow the same general format:

- The name of the school:
  - If the school name is foreign, you may want to use an English translation of the name. Look on the school's English language website to see whether it indicates a preferred English translation.
- The location of the school:
  - If the school is in the U.S., list the city and state (*e.g.*, New York, NY).
    - U.S. states must be abbreviated using their two-letter postal abbreviation.
  - If the school is in a foreign country, list the city and country (*e.g.*, Sao Paulo, Brazil).
    - Do not abbreviate country names (except that you may abbreviate United Kingdom "UK").
    - Do not list the province or region (an exception to this rule is for Canadian provinces, which are well known to Americans – in this case, you can eliminate the country).
- The month and year that your degree was conferred or will be conferred:
  - There is no comma between the month and year.
  - Do not specify a range of dates of attendance; list only the month and year of graduation.
  - If you have not yet received your degree, you must insert the word "expected" or "anticipated" before the month and year, or write that you are a "Candidate for the M.S.L. in Fashion Law," with the date you expect to receive your degree.
- The title of the degree/certificate/program:
  - Abbreviate the degree when possible. Common degree abbreviations are:
    - LL.M.
    - LL.B.

- B.A.
- B.S.
- M.A.
- M.S.
- M.S.L.
- M.B.A.
- Ph.D.
- S.J.D.

If there is no common abbreviation, write out the degree title.

- In general, do not attempt to translate your foreign degree. Rather, state the degree in your native language, and use a parenthetical to describe the degree:
  - Languages that do not use the Roman alphabet are an exception to this rule.
  - Do not state “J.D. Equivalent” (see box on the following page).

You may also wish to include the following information, in this order:

- Honors:
  - An “Honor” is anything for which you were competitively selected, such as a scholarship or membership on a journal.
  - If you have one “honor,” use “Honor:” in the singular; if you received more than one honor, you may say “Honors:”
  - Examples:

<p><b><u>EDUCATION</u></b></p> <p><b>Fordham University School of Law, New York, NY</b>          LL.M. in Banking, Corporate, and Finance Law (expected May 2017)  <i>Honor: Editor, Fordham International Law Journal</i></p>
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<p><b><u>EDUCATION</u></b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 60%; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Fordham University School of Law</b>            LL.M. (dual-concentration)  <i>Concentrations: Banking, Corporate, and Finance Law; Corporate Compliance</i>  <i>Honors: Editor, Fordham Journal of Corporate and Financial Law; Recipient, John Smith Scholarship</i></p> </td> <td style="width: 40%; text-align: right; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>New York, NY</b>            May 2017 (expected)</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>Fordham University School of Law</b>            LL.M. (dual-concentration)  <i>Concentrations: Banking, Corporate, and Finance Law; Corporate Compliance</i>  <i>Honors: Editor, Fordham Journal of Corporate and Financial Law; Recipient, John Smith Scholarship</i></p>	<p><b>New York, NY</b>            May 2017 (expected)</p>
<p><b>Fordham University School of Law</b>            LL.M. (dual-concentration)  <i>Concentrations: Banking, Corporate, and Finance Law; Corporate Compliance</i>  <i>Honors: Editor, Fordham Journal of Corporate and Financial Law; Recipient, John Smith Scholarship</i></p>	<p><b>New York, NY</b>            May 2017 (expected)</p>	

- Grades:

- If your grades place you at or near the top of your class, you should include them.
- You must put them in context. Grades without context are meaningless. State how your grades place you in relation to your peers (ideally) or in relation to a fixed scale (if no comparison to your peers is available).
- Examples of subheadings for this would be:
  - *GPA: 4.0*
  - *Class Rank: 10/154*
  - *Class Standing: top 10%*
- **Activities:**
  - Any club or association in which you participate without being competitively selected is considered an activity.
  - If you list one activity, use the singular “Activity”; if you list more than one activity, use the plural “Activities.”
  - Examples follow:

**EDUCATION**

**Fordham University School of Law, New York, NY**

LL.M. in Banking, Corporate, and Finance Law (Expected May 2016)

*Honor: Editor, Fordham International Law Journal*

*Activity: Member, Global Law Society*

**EDUCATION**

**Fordham University School of Law, New York, NY**

LL.M. (dual-concentration) (Expected May 2016)

*Concentrations: Banking, Corporate, and Finance Law; Corporate Compliance*

*Honors: Editor, Fordham Journal of Corporate and Financial Law; Recipient, John Smith Scholarship*

*Activities: LL.M. Representative, Student Bar Association; Member, Fordham Compliance & Ethics Society*

### ***Comparing Law Degrees and Other Credentials***

Many international students are tempted to state a U.S. equivalent to their degrees in order to make their resumes more understandable (for example, by calling their degree a “J.D. equivalent”), but often this creates confusion. In what way is your degree “equivalent?” Is it a three-year degree like the J.D. degree? Is it a graduate-level degree that requires completion of a bachelor’s degree? Does it fulfill a requirement for U.S. bar admission? To say that a degree is “equivalent” does not answer these questions.

Similarly, word for word translations can be messy and misleading, especially when dealing with degrees and academic credentials. Rather than translating or trying to find a U.S. equivalent, students are advised to *explain* or *describe* their foreign credentials in English-language terms. It is best to state your degree in your native language and use a parenthetical to describe the degree in English.

#### Example

In Poland, lawyers typically graduate with a five-year *magister* degree. In a resume, you might describe the degree as follows:

*Magister* (five-year law degree)

Note the following:

1. The foreign word “*Magister*” is italicized. Foreign words always should be italicized.
2. The parenthetical describes the degree, rather than trying to make it the equal of something in the U.S. system of education (further examples of such descriptions might be “two-year certificate program in commercial law,” “one-year advanced degree program in private international law,” “two-year graduate degree with a one-year thesis in intellectual property law”).
3. “*Magister*” might be translated to “Master” in English, but in the U.S. system, a master degree implies a one or two-year degree that follows a first degree rather than a single five-year degree. Translating would create confusion about the degree.

The same principles of explanation apply to honors and awards that you list in the Education section. Explanatory notes that put grades or awards into context or demonstrate a comparison with other students are especially helpful, such as “honors awarded to top 20% of class.”

## E. Experience

The “Experience” section of your resume should contain all relevant work experience, whether paid or unpaid, including full-time jobs, part-time jobs, internships, and volunteer activities. Like Education, Experience should be listed in reverse chronological order, with the most recent position first. For each employer or organization, you should list the following information:

- The entity’s name.
  - This will be in bold font.
- The entity’s location.
  - Separated from the entity name with a comma or separated by tabs.
  - As in the Education section, list city and state for employers in the U.S. and city and country for employers outside of the U.S.
- Your title or position.
  - Italicized, on a new line just below the name and location of the employer.
  - If you worked in a specific department and that information is relevant, you may list it after the title/position, separated by a comma and italicized.
  - This is another place where you need to be careful about translating. The immediate translation may not correctly indicate your position. For example, in many countries a “Legal Assistant” is someone who is in law school or who has just completed a law degree, but is not yet admitted to practice. A person with this title normally performs legal research or other law-related tasks. In the U.S., however, a “Legal Assistant” often is a secretarial position – someone who answers the phone, schedules appointments with attorneys, makes photocopies, etc. The following definitions will help you to properly “translate” your position:
    - Legal Assistant: A secretary or administrative assistant to a lawyer; tasks include answering phones, making photocopies, and scheduling appointments, but generally do not include legal work.
    - Paralegal: Someone who assists with low level legal tasks, such as organizing and submitting court documents or regulatory filings; no formal legal education is required for this position; paralegals in large law firms tend to have bachelor’s degrees from prestigious universities; in small firms, paralegals may have a paralegal degree earned from a trade school or may have no formal training.
    - Legal Intern: Someone who is working at a law firm or other organization doing legal work while attending law school.

- Law Clerk: Someone who has graduated from law school, but is not yet admitted to practice law; performs work similar to a junior lawyer.
  - Judicial Clerk: Someone who has graduated from law school and may or may not be admitted to practice law, who works in a judge’s chambers performing legal tasks.
  - Lawyer or Attorney: Someone who is fully admitted to practice law in their jurisdiction and is authorized to give legal advice to clients.
- Dates of employment.
  - The date range should be separated from the job title by parentheses and should not be italicized.
  - List a range of dates by month and year, separated by an em dash:
    - The date format should be the same as for the degrees (e.g., May 2015, April 2010)
    - Check the length of your dashes (note the difference between “-” and “–”, and use the latter (an “em dash”).
    - There should be a space on either side of the dash.
- A brief description of your job responsibilities/accomplishments.
  - Below is a sample job description.
  - See the box on the following page regarding crafting job descriptions.
  - There should be no space before the job description.

**White & Case LLP, Milan, Italy**

*Associate Attorney, Corporate Transactions Group (Jan. 2007 – Aug. 2011)*

Advised clients with respect to transnational corporate transactions, especially involving cross-border mergers and acquisitions. Prepared and reviewed various contracts, including merger agreements, stock and asset purchase agreements, shareholder agreements, employment agreements, and disclosure schedules. Conducted due diligence.

When listing a temporary position, you should be clear about the nature of the position. If the job title does not make it clear (*i.e.*, the job title is not “Legal Intern” or something similar), you should indicate the temporary nature of the position in a parenthetical (*e.g.*, “Associate Attorney (temporary position)”). If you have more than one or two internships and they are obscuring your long-term employment positions, you may move them into a separate section called “Internships.” Since those experiences are typically only a few months each, U.S. employers may be concerned about the short duration unless it is clear that they were intended to be temporary positions.

## ***Crafting Job Descriptions***

Although the job description is often the most difficult part of the resume to draft, it remains one of the resume's most important elements. The writing must be precise, concise, and must reflect excellent grammar as well as mastery of English legal terminology. At the same time, the job description must communicate specific and transferrable skills.

Every description should begin with an active verb (e.g., "advised," "prepared," "conducted"). For prior jobs, the verbs will be in the past tense. For current jobs, the verbs will be in the present tense. Follow the active verb with a specific description of a responsibility or accomplishment. It is a good idea to be specific so that employers have a good sense of your skills. The more relevant the position to the job for which you are applying, the more specific you should be.

Choose a strong action verb to emphasize your specific experience and highlight your skills. For example, it is more effective for resume purposes to write "researched and drafted legal briefs and memoranda" than to say "prepared legal briefs and memoranda" because preparation may involve non-legal tasks such as stapling, collating, or proofreading. Likewise, "participated in" is not a strong action verb; it is very vague and should not be used in your job descriptions. A paralegal and a partner at a law firm would both "participate" in a transaction, but the nature of their participation would be very different. A list of action verbs can be found in [Appendix B](#) of this guide.

You should also be specific about your tasks and responsibilities. For example, "drafted legal documents" is a vague, unhelpful description that could refer to any number of things. A "legal document" could mean a shareholders' agreement or it could mean a stock certificate—the level of skill involved in preparing each of these is very different; this difference matters to an employer reviewing your resume. "Drafted various legal documents in connection with private equity transactions, including share and asset purchase agreements, due diligence reports, shareholder agreements, employment agreements, and corporate formation documents" is much more informative. Similarly, "performed legal research" is very vague; "Performed legal research and drafted memoranda on issues relating to bankruptcy law" provides more useful detail.

Responsibilities should be separated by bullets, periods, or semi-colons. Periods in paragraph form are the safest, most conservative choice. If you have several categories of responsibility (for example, you did both litigation and transactional work, and you had several responsibilities within each of these categories), you may use punctuation to differentiate the categories. For example, you may put all your transactional work in one sentence and litigation work in another sentence, with responsibilities within each sentence separated by semi-colons.

Note that paragraphs longer than five lines tend not to be read. If your descriptions are longer than five lines, you must break them up by using bullet points. When you use bullets, make sure the information is organized in a way that makes sense.

**F. Bar Admissions**

If you are admitted to the bar of a particular jurisdiction, indicate the jurisdiction in which you are admitted and the year of admission. Use the following guidelines to convey your bar status:

Status	Formulation
You plan to sit for the NY bar exam.	Intend to sit for the [July 201X] New York Bar Examination
You have taken the NY bar exam and are awaiting results.	Sat for [July 201X] New York Bar Examination (awaiting results)
You have passed the NY bar exam, but have not yet submitted your application for admission	Passed [February 201X] New York Bar Examination
You have passed the NY bar exam and have submitted your application for admission but have not yet been approved by the Character and Fitness committee.	New York (application pending)
You have passed the NY bar exam and have passed the Character and Fitness evaluation, but have not yet been sworn in.	New York (admission pending)
For a non-U.S. jurisdiction, you have fulfilled all but some simple administrative formality (such as filing registration papers with a government agency) for admission to your home jurisdiction.	Eligible for immediate admission to the bar of _____.
You have been sworn in and are admitted to practice.	New York (201X)
Your home country has no formal “admission” of attorneys.	Eligible to practice law in _____ (2015).

**G. Miscellaneous**

In your Miscellaneous section, you may include up to 3 subheadings that draw attention to skills such as languages and/or unique personal interests. Each subheading should be italicized and followed by a colon. You can separate items in each section with commas or with bullet points. Use common sense and see what looks and works best.

Some examples of headings/information you might put in this section include the following:

- Languages:
  - List languages – including English – in order of proficiency, with your native language(s) first.
  - For each language, the language followed by the level of proficiency in parentheses.
    - “Native”
    - “Fluent”
    - “Proficient”
  - List a language only if you would feel comfortable conducting an interview in that language.
  - Anything less than the above levels of proficiency should not be listed unless the language is particularly unique, in which case you may list “Basic” or “Conversational” abilities.
- Interests:
  - An “Interests” section in your resume can be a great way to break the ice during an interview, and can give the interviewer a better appreciation of you as an individual.
  - Avoid generic descriptions that are true of most people, such as “Reading, traveling, and music.” Give life to these descriptions by adding details such as “Reading biographies, adventure travel, and playing the bassoon.”
  - List things you can speak passionately about and be prepared to discuss them in an interview.
- Publications:
  - If you have many publications, you may wish to select a few that are especially impressive or relevant. In that case, you should call the section “Selected Publications” to indicate that you have published more extensively.
  - Include full and correct citations for your publications.
- Lecturing Experience
- Memberships:
  - Include memberships in bar associations or other professional organizations.
    - Note that by “bar association,” we refer to a professional organization of lawyers and law students; this is not necessarily an organization that is charged with admission of attorneys to practice. Bar admissions should be listed in the “Bar Admission” section.
- Volunteer Experience (other than legal experience listed in the “Experience” section)
- Professional Licenses (other than legal licenses)

Other headings may be used depending on what skills you choose to highlight. Note that significant lecturing experience or publications are particularly impressive to potential

employers; you may wish to highlight these by including each under a separate heading rather than grouping them under a miscellaneous heading.

## **H. Items Not to Include on Your Resume**

Do not include the following information on or with your resume:

- *Photograph* – Under state and federal laws on nondiscrimination in employment practices, it is illegal for employers to require photographs. Do not include them.
- *Employment objective* – Legal resumes generally do not contain an objective section.
- *References* – Do not include either references or the phrase “References furnished upon request.” You should have a List of References prepared as a separate document so that it can be produced upon request.
- *Personal data* – Omit personal data such as height, weight, marital status, gender, religious affiliation, or place of birth.
- *Computer skills* – It is assumed that you possess basic computer skills, including experience with the Microsoft Office suite, as well as research skills using Lexis, Westlaw, and Bloomberg.
  - *Other “Soft Skills”* – Do not include soft skills such as being organized, hard working, detail oriented, motivated, etc. These are qualities that should be demonstrated in your job descriptions and throughout your resumes.

## IV. Drafting Tips, Common Errors, and Polishing your Resume

### A. Drafting Tips

- If printing your resume, use resume quality 8 ½" x 11" (not A4) paper in either white or off-white (cream or ivory). Resume paper is available for purchase at any office supply store.
- Do not abbreviate words or use acronyms in your descriptions unless they are widely known in the legal community (*i.e.*, FINRA or SEC). The names of foreign countries should always be written out, unless commonly known (*e.g.*, U.K.).
- Think carefully before including interests or activities that reveal sensitive information, such as religious or political views.
- If you email your resume, convert it to PDF format (unless the employer specifically requests otherwise) in order to keep your formatting intact on various computer systems. After converting to PDF, check to make sure the formatting is still clean, as the conversion itself can alter your formatting. Make sure also that the file name contains only your name and the word "resume."
- For specific tips on crafting a resume in connection with a public interest job search, review PIRC's *Public Service Job Search Guide* available at <http://law.fordham.edu/public-interest-resource-center/2600.htm>.
- Proofread. Then proofread again. Then have a friend proofread. Then have your resume critiqued by the GPDP.

### B. Common Mistakes

Here are a few mistakes we see frequently. Double-check your resume to ensure that you do not make these errors:

- Do not use an ampersand ("&") unless it is part of a proper noun (*e.g.*, "Smith & Co.").
- Do not use "etc." in a resume.
- Be sure that you use the correct preposition (words such as "in," "on," "of," "for," etc.). Prepositions tend to be very tricky for non-native English speakers, so carefully double-check all of your prepositions.
- Use U.S.-style capitalization. Different countries have different rules for when things should be capitalized. Be sure that you are not following your home country rules, but rather U.S. rules of capitalization.

- Use U.S. spellings and be sure that the spell check feature on your computer is set to U.S. English.
- Italicize foreign words in your resume.
- Be consistent in your use of the Oxford comma. The Oxford comma is a comma that appears before the last item in a list (*e.g.*, “red, white, and blue”). The Oxford comma is a stylistic choice (*i.e.*, “red, white and blue” would also be correct), but you must be sure to be consistent in your use (or non-use).
- The plural of “memorandum” is “memoranda.” Do not shorten “memorandum” to “memo” in a resume.
- The plural of “research” is “research” (not “researches”).
- The plural of “due diligence” is “due diligence” (not “due diligences”).
- Do not sign your resume.
- A legal “opinion” in the U.S. is a specific type of document that attaches liability to the law firm issuing the opinion. When you draft a document for a client informing them about the law in a particular area, this is called a memorandum.

### **C. Finishing your Resume**

Once you have followed all the steps in this guide, you can expect to go through several drafts before you have your final resume in hand. If you have been inclusive, you may find that your resume is longer than one page. You then should begin the process of editing your resume down to one page.

Once you have followed these steps and carefully reviewed and proofread your resume, please send a copy in Word format to [GPDP@law.fordham.edu](mailto:GPDP@law.fordham.edu). You may also make an appointment to meet with a career counselor to discuss your resume. Appointments can be made through [bit.ly/GPDPsignup](https://bit.ly/GPDPsignup). If no appointments are available, or if you cannot make any of the posted times, please email [GPDP@law.fordham.edu](mailto:GPDP@law.fordham.edu), indicating your ability and the services you need.

**APPENDIX A:**  
**SAMPLE RESUMES**

# **YUJIA (JULIA) WANG**

100 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue Apt. 10  
New York, NY 10010  
(212) 555-6666  
ywang1257@fordham.edu

## **EDUCATION**

### **Fordham University School of Law, New York, NY**

LL.M. in Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law, *cum laude* (May 2015)  
*Activities*: Deceptive Advertising Project; Fashion Law Pop-up Clinics

### **Wuhan University, Wuhan, China**

Master of Laws in Jurisprudence (June 2014)  
*GPA/Honors*: 3.9/4.0; Outstanding Graduate Student Award; Scholarship for academic achievement

### **Johns Hopkins University, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies Center for Chinese and American Studies, Nanjing, China**

Certificate in International Relations (one-year program, conducted in English) (June 2013)  
*GPA/Honors*: 4.0/4.0; Academic Scholarship; Commencement Ceremony Class Speaker  
*Activity*: Fashion Law Society (founder)

### **Wuhan University, Wuhan, China**

Bachelor of Laws, Double Major in Law and French Literature (June 2012)  
*Honor*: Annual Scholarship Award, 2008 – 2012  
*Activities*: Student Union (President); School Newspaper (Editor); *The Voice of Law School* (Art Editor); Public Interest and Development Law Institute (Program Assistant, Art Editor)  
*Study Abroad*: Lille II University of Health and Law, Lille, France (2010 – 2011)

## **EXPERIENCE**

### **Coach, Inc., New York, NY**

*Legal Intern* (September 2014 – December 2014)  
*Summer Associate, Legal Department* (June 2014 – August 2014)  
Researched and drafted legal briefs and memoranda on issues relating to trademark litigation; improved the complaint system of copyright/trademark infringements on taobao.com and alibaba.com. Monitored intellectual property infringements on American and Chinese shopping platforms; filed successful complaints on copyright/trademark infringements; conducted URL Watching Project against cyber-squatting.

### **Asia Law Resource Center Legal Exchange Program, Hong Kong, China**

*Legal Intern* (September 2010 – November 2010)  
Assisted with criminal cases at Qing Hong Law Firm; observed proceedings at the Equal Opportunities Commission and other NGOs working for social equality.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

*Languages*: Mandarin (Native); English (Fluent); French (Fluent)  
*Interests*: Planar design, fashion sketching, photography, blogging

# **DIEGO GARCIA**

60 West End Avenue Apt. 1A  
New York, NY 10023  
(212) 555-1234  
dgarcia999@fordham.edu

## **EDUCATION**

**Fordham University School of Law**, New York, NY Expected May 2016  
*LL.M. in Banking, Corporate, and Finance Law* (part-time)

**Austral University**, Buenos Aires, Argentina June 2007  
*Título de Abogado* (five-year law degree)

## **EXPERIENCE**

**JPMorganChase Bank**, New York, NY August 2014 – present  
*Junior Lawyer, Office of General Counsel*  
*Law Clerk, Office of General Counsel* September 2013 – August 2014

- Draft corporate resolutions
- Perform internal corporate due diligence
- Revise final commercial lease terms
- Prepare and organize litigation documents

**Dewey & LeBoeuf LLP**, New York, NY Mach 2008 – September 2013  
*Corporate Paralegal*

Researched background information of target companies in proposed acquisition or merger transactions, including information with respect to such companies' capital structures

- Collected, organized and managed databases containing confidential and publicly available documents for pending transactions
- Managed the logistics of negotiations, conferences and transaction signings and closings held at the New York and London offices
- Translated and summarized agreements and other documents from Spanish to English

**Corporation XYZ**, Buenos Aires, Argentina August 2007 – December 2008  
*Assistant Attorney*

Drafted various agreements in the ordinary course of business, including employment agreements and non-disclosure agreements

- Negotiated aerosol valve volume purchases with clients
- Translated documents between Spanish and English

## **BAR ADMISSION**

Argentina (2007)

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

*Languages:* Spanish (native); English (fluent); Portuguese (fluent)

*Interests:* photography and classical guitar

# CLARA SCHUMAN

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(917) 555-1010  
cwshumann@fordham.com

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## EDUCATION

**Fordham University School of Law**, New York, NY Expected February 2016  
*Masters of Law (LL.M.) in Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law*  
*Honor*: Staff Member, Fordham Intellectual Property, Media and Entertainment Law Journal

**Albert-Ludwigs University of Freiburg**, Freiburg, Germany July 2012  
*4 ½ year program of legal study*  
Second State Examination, vollbefriedend (approx. top 10%) September 2014  
First State Examination, befriedend (approx. top 30%) July 2012

## EXPERIENCE

**Albert-Ludwigs University of Freiburg**, Freiburg, Germany September 2014 – December 2014  
*Research Fellow, Prof. Johannes Brahms*  
Performed research on issues related to international patent law.

**Mandatory Legal Clerkship, Germany** August 2012 – September 2014  
*Rechtsreferendar*

- **Volkswagen AG**, Munich, Germany  
Drafted trademark applications; corresponded with the European Trademark Office regarding the company's trademark applications; researched issues related to trademark infringement and drafted related memoranda.

- **Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP**, Düsseldorf, Germany  
Researched issues related to patent litigation and drafted memoranda related thereto.

- **Shearman & Sterling LLP**, Düsseldorf, Germany  
Performed due diligence investigation of contracts and other legal documents in connection with merger and acquisition transactions; drafted corporate resolutions.

- **Regional Court of Wuppertal, Office of the District Attorney**, Wuppertal, Germany  
Researched and drafted memoranda on issues related to criminal law, including armed robbery and assault and battery.

- **Regional Court of Wuppertal, Chamber for Commercial Matters**, Wuppertal, Germany  
Drafted summaries of court decisions for official publication on the court website.

**XYZ Law**, Frankfurt, Germany January 2010 – July 2010  
*Legal Intern*

Assisted managing partner in the establishment of limited liability companies, incorporations and sole proprietorships in Europe. Supported managing partner in cross-border mergers and acquisitions. Conducted legal research on VAT compliance matters and strategic VAT analyses for multi-country business operations. Conducted research and drafted memoranda on commercial law and general contract matters.

**ABC Law**, Frankfurt, Germany January 2009 – July 2009  
*Legal Intern*

Conducted legal research on European and multi-country business operations. Conducted research and drafted memoranda on commercial law and general contract matters.

## VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

**New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)**  
December 2015 – Present  
Immigration Protection Unit (IPU)

**Civil Legal Advice and Resource Office (CLARO)**  
December 2015 – Present  
Consumer Debt Protection

## BAR ADMISSIONS

Germany (2014)  
New York Bar Exam (planned  
July 2016)

## LANGUAGES

German (native)  
English (fluent)  
Spanish (fluent)

# PIERRE PETIT

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(212) 555-1212  
ppetit@fordham.edu

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## EDUCATION

**Fordham University School of Law**, New York, NY February 2016  
*LL.M. in International Business and Trade Law*  
Honors: *magna cum laude*

**Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana**, Medellin, Colombia April 2011  
*LL.B.*

**Université Paris II, Panthéon-Assas**, Paris, France  
*Master in Private Law (Master 2)* September 2009  
*Master of Laws (Maitrise)* September 2008  
Full Merit Based Scholarship

## EXPERIENCE

**The Law Offices of Jane Jones, P.C.**, New York, NY April 2015 – Present  
*Associate*  
Prepare motions and applications for relief in immigration court. Represent clients in master calendar and individual hearings. Draft appeal briefs for the Board of Immigration Appeals. Handle PERM (labor certification) cases for professional and skilled workers and counsel employers on recruitment steps.

**The Law Offices of Pedro Torres, P.C.**, Paris, France January 2010 – July 2010  
*Legal Intern*  
Assisted managing partner in the establishment of limited liability companies, incorporations and sole proprietorships in Europe. Supported managing partner in cross-border mergers and acquisitions. Conducted legal research on VAT compliance matters and strategic VAT analyses for multi-country business operations. Conducted research and drafted memoranda on commercial law and general contract matters.

## VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

**New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)** December 2014 – Present  
Immigration Protection Unit (IPU)

**Civil Legal Advice and Resource Office (CLARO)** December 2014 – Present  
Consumer Debt Protection

## BAR ADMISSIONS

New York (passed February 2016 bar examination)

Colombia (2011)

## LANGUAGES

Spanish (native)

English (fluent)

French (fluent)

# **ALLAN PINEDA**

New York, NY  
(212) 555-1212  
apineda145@fordham.edu

## **EDUCATION**

### **Fordham University School of Law, New York, NY**

LL.M. in International Business and Trade Law, *magna cum laude* (February 2009)

### **University of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines**

LL.B. (May 2008)

## **EXPERIENCE**

### **The Law Offices of Jane Jones, P.C., New York, NY**

*Associate* (April 2016 – present)

- Prepare motions and applications for relief in immigration court. Represent clients in master calendar and individual hearings. Draft appeal briefs for the Board of Immigration Appeals.
- Handle PERM (labor certification) cases for professional and skilled workers and counsel employers on recruitment steps.

### **Law Offices of John Stewart, New York, NY**

*Of Counsel* (November 2014 – March 2015)

*Associate* (November 2012 – November 2014)

- Prepared immigrant and non-immigrant visa petitions, including H-1B, O-1, L-1, EB-1 to EB-3, and EB-5 petitions, PERM applications and responses to audits, and employment-based adjustment of status applications.
- Prepared family-based petitions, Violence Against Women Act self-petitions, I-601 waiver applications, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals requests, and naturalization applications.
- Accompanies client to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services interviews and hearings in immigration court.

### **The Law Offices of Pedro Torres, P.C., New York, NY**

*Associate* (February 2009 – September 2012)

- Drafted pleadings and briefs in employment discrimination and wage and hour cases.
- Interviewed clients and witnesses, and assisted in mediations, arbitrations and disciplinary hearings involving public sector employees.
- Prepared brief in an improper practice petition against the NYC Department of Transportation which was granted by the Office of Collective Bargaining and on appeal upheld by the New York State Supreme Court.

## **BAR ADMISSIONS**

New York (2012)

Republic of the Philippines (2009)

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

*Memberships:* American Bar Association; New York County Lawyers' Association

**PABLO NERUDA**  
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New York, NY 10033  
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pablo.neruda@fordham.com

## **EDUCATION**

**Fordham University School of Law, New York, NY**  
LL.M. in Banking, Corporate, and Finance Law, *cum laude* (May 2016)

**Universidad Diego Portales, Santiago, Chile**  
Bachelor of Laws (honors) (July 2010)

## **EXPERIENCE**

**Arias, Fabrega & Fabrega, Panama City, Panama**  
*Senior Associate* (June 2012 – June 2014)  
*Junior Associate* (May 2011 – May 2012)

- *Capital Markets*: Assisted in the drafting of information memoranda, underwriting agreements, terms and conditions of notes, collateral trust agreements and other security agreements, listing agreements, and ancillary documents for offers of debt and equity instruments, both in the local Panamanian market and in cross-border transactions; assisted in filings with the Panamanian Securities Commission.
- *Mergers and Acquisitions*: Worked on several domestic and regional acquisitions, including due diligence review, negotiation meetings, and drafting of stock purchase agreements, asset purchase agreements, merger agreements, joint-venture agreements and ancillary documents; ensured satisfaction of conditions precedent to closings, including securing governmental approvals.
- *Project Finance*: Worked on the financing of infrastructure projects and assisted in the drafting of loan agreements, concession assignments, mortgages, pledges and other security package documentation.

**Legal Assistance Corporation, Santiago, Chile**  
*Professional Practice* (August 2010 – March 2011)  
Provided legal assistance to indigent citizens on labor and employment relation disputes.

**Eyzaguirre y Compañía, Santiago, Chile**  
*Paralegal* (July 2007 – June 2009)  
Assisted lawyers in labor, civil, criminal, and consumer protection claims.

## **BAR ADMISSION**

Republic of Chile (2011)

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

*Languages*: Spanish (native); English (fluent)  
*Interests*: Soccer coach for children at Colegio San Benito; volunteer work in disadvantaged communities

# **LUCIANO PAVAROTTI**

300 East 70<sup>th</sup> Street Apt. 1G  
New York, NY 10021  
(917) 555-1234  
lpavarotti@gmail.com

## **EDUCATION**

### **Fordham University School of Law, New York, NY**

LL.M. in International Business and Trade Law (Expected May 2017)

*Activities:* Global Law Society (Board Member); Tortfeasors (law school *a cappella* group)

### **King's College, Centre for European Law, London, UK**

Postgraduate Diploma in European Union Law (August 2008)

### **University of Milan, Milan, Italy**

*Laurea in Giurisprudenza* (five-year law degree), concentration in Commercial Law (April 2006)

*Final Grade:* 110 out of 110

## **EXPERIENCE**

### **White & Case LLP, Milan, Italy**

*Associate Attorney, Corporate Transactions Group* (January 2009 – August 2013)

- Advised clients with respect to transnational corporate transactions, especially involving cross-border mergers and acquisitions.
- Prepared and reviewed various contracts, including merger agreements, stock and asset purchase agreements, shareholder agreements, employment agreements, and disclosure schedules.
- Conducted due diligence.
- Drafted international commercial contracts for Italian companies transacting abroad, as well as foreign companies transacting in Italy.

### **Studio Legale Domingo, Carreras & Associati, New York, NY**

*Attorney Trainee* (June 2006 – December 2008)

- Prepared a wide variety of corporate legal documents, including employment contracts, corporate and partnership formation documents, shareholder agreements, non-disclosure agreements, and powers of attorney in connection with a wide variety of domestic and transnational transactions. Negotiated commercial agreements under supervision or senior attorney.
- Prepared documents for filing with the Italian competition authority.
- Conducted legal research in connection with litigation involving labor disputes and other employment issues; coordinated case management.

## **BAR ADMISSION**

Milan (2009)

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

*Languages:* Italian (Native); French (Fluent); English (Fluent)

*Membership:* New York City Bar Association (International Trade Law Committee)

**APPENDIX B:**  
**ACTION VERBS**

Use the following action verbs to describe past or present job experiences:

accelerate	close	elect	increase	perform	scrutinize
accomplish	combine	employ	indicate	persuade	seek
account for	communicate	encourage	initiate	pioneer	select
achieve	compare	enjoy	innovate	place	sent
acquire	complete	enlarge	inspect	plan	serve
add	compose	enlist	instruct	play	set
adjust	conceive	ensure	insure	police	ship
administer	conclude	enter	interpret	prepare	show
advise	conditioned	establish	interview	present	sift
aide	conduct	estimate	introduce	prevail	simplify
analyze	construct	evaluate	investigate	process	smooth
anticipate	continue	excel	join	produce	solve
apply	contract	execute	kept	profit	spearhead
appoint	control	exercise	labor	program	specify
appraise	convince	expand	launch	prohibit	speak
arbitrate	coordinate	expedite	lecture	project	study
argue	copy	explain	lead	promote	submit
arrange	correct	explore	license	proof	suggest
assess	counsel	familiarize	locate	prove	summarize
assist	count	file	look	purchase	supervise
assume	craft	finance	made	put	support
assure	create	forecast	maintain	qualified	surmount
attend	critique	foresaw	manage	quicken	survey
author	dealt	formulate	map out	ran	target
authorize	debate	forward	maximize	rate	teach
award	decide	foster	meet	realize	test
began	define	found	modify	receive	tighten
bolster	delegate	gain	monitor	recognize	take over
boost	deliver	gather	motivate	recommend	total
bought	demonstrate	give	move	reduce	tour
brief	design	grade	name	relate	track
brought	determine	greet	negotiate	renovate	train
budget	develop	grossed	net	report	transfer
built	devise	guide	observe	rescue	transform
calculate	did	handle	open	research	translate
catalog	digest	hasten	operate	result in	travel
caught	diminish	heighten	order	return	treat
cause	direct	help	organize	reveal	tutor
chair	discover	highlight	overcome	review	type
change	draft	identify	oversee	revise	uncover
check	dramatize	implement	pay	said	update
chose	drew up	improve	paint	save	welcome
classify	earn	include	participate	see	work
clear up	edit	incorporate	perceive	screen	write