INFORMATION AND FAQS FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS

The 2018 Transfer Student Write On Competition, mandatory for all incoming transfer students desiring membership on a law journal, will officially begin at 10:00 a.m. EDT on May 25, 2018.

Admitted students will be e-mailed a login id and password by the Office of Journal Administration (OJA) at the e-mail address provided by the Registrar. YOUR COMPETITION LOGIN AND PASSWORD WILL BE DIFFERENT FROM YOUR OFFICIAL GEORGETOWN NETID AND PASSWORD. Starting on May 25, transfer students will be able to log on to the competition website and purchase and download all the competition materials. All transfer students will have seven days, to the hour, from the point at which they purchase their packet, to complete the Write On. The last day to purchase and download the packet will be July 5, 2018. All packets must be completed and out of students' hands by Thursday, July 12, 2018.

If you are having difficulty logging in to the Transfer Write On site after receiving your competition login, please contact OJA at lawwriteon@georgetown.edu. Please note that you will not be able to purchase before the competition period begins (May 25, 2018), and because you will have only seven days from the moment of purchase to complete your competition, you should not purchase until you are ready to start. Choose your block of 7 days within the competition period (May 25 – July 12) wisely.

The online packet itself contains material such as cases, newspaper and law review articles, statutes, and commentary all relevant to a recent court case. Students deciding to participate in the competition are required to use only these materials to write their own case commentary. Students are also required to complete a special Bluebook test as part of their competition packet. In addition, journals may also require the composition of a separate personal statement, in which the candidate describes his or her assets and how those might prove beneficial to the journal, and/or a redacted resume.

HOW MANY JOURNALS CAN I TRY TO JOIN?


Participants in the Write On competition indicate the journal(s) for which they wish to be considered for membership by ranking those journals on the Write On website. The preferencing area of the website will open May 25, 2018 at 10:00 AM EDT, but it will only be accessible once you purchase your packet. Preferencing will stay open through the full competition period, regardless of your individual deadline.

Each journal will announce its criteria before the start of the competition. For example, the Georgetown Law Journal will only consider students who preference it as their first choice. For more detailed information that may be useful while you are preferencing the journals, please download the Journals Comparison Chart from gtlwriteon.org. Please see the question below, “Are there any strategies I can follow to increase my chances of being accepted to a journal?” for tips on preferencing.
IS THE TRANSFER PACKET THE SAME AS THE PACKET USED IN THE REGULAR WRITE ON COMPETITION?

For the most part, yes. The central case and supporting materials are all taken from the packet used for the regular competition. However, we will provide somewhat fewer materials to offset the abbreviated length of the competition. You will still have everything you need to write an effective case comment, but will need less time for reading/planning at the outset.

WHAT DOES THE COMPETITION REQUIRE ME TO DO?

The Write On Competition requires you to write a case comment using only materials provided in the online packet, available from the Write On Competition site for $40. You are also required to complete a Bluebooking test online, and some journals also require the submission of separate personal statements and/or resumes by any prospective members.

You can review a set of sample instructions and a list of the materials from a previous competition on our website. Please note: instructions are provided for informational purposes only and are subject to change.

During the Write On Competition period, students must rely entirely upon the materials provided in the packet, plus the following sources: a dictionary, a law dictionary, a thesaurus, and the 20th Edition of the Bluebook. Students may not refer to any other materials during the Write On period unless those materials are included in the packet. Students may neither discuss the contents of the packet with anyone during the Write On period, nor may they receive editing or proof-reading assistance. While writing, students may use a spell-check and grammar-check.

HOW LONG WILL I HAVE TO COMPLETE THE WRITE ON?

You will have exactly seven days, to the hour, from the point at which you first purchase your packet to complete the competition. This means that if you purchase your packet at 11:15 am EDT on June 20, all of your completed materials must be out of your hands no later than 11:15 am EDT on June 27. The last day for transfer competition packet downloads is July 5; all packets completed by July 12.

DO I HAVE TO BE IN DC TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WRITE ON?

No. The Write On competition is run entirely through the competition website, which you can access through the OJA website. When you complete your packet, you have the choice of uploading your completed paper to the website, hand-delivering it to OJA, or sending it by mail with a time- and date-stamp. Should you wish to hand-deliver your packet, please contact OJA to make arrangements.

WHO JUDGES THE WRITE ON PAPERS?

The judges are rising senior staff members from each law journal. Each paper is read by three judges, each from a different journal. The judges score each paper on analysis, structure, and creativity, and enter their scores directly into the Write On database. A sample score sheet is available in the Materials section of the competition website after purchase.

IS MY PAPER SCORE MADE PUBLIC?
OJA does not release Write On paper scores to anyone. Editors and judges will only be able to identify individual papers by their packet number. The competition is completely anonymous.

**WILL MY GRADES FROM MY CURRENT SCHOOL COUNT IN THE COMPETITION?**

No. Because no two schools use the same grading system, individual grades do not count in the Write On competition. Instead, you will be assigned a set number of points for grades. The same number is given to all transfer students and, when calculated with your paper score, represents your final overall competition score. You must have taken and passed Legal Research and Writing. If you have not passed the class, you are not eligible to participate. You must, therefore, provide OJA with a copy of your transcript. The transcript can be submitted to our office via mail, e-mail or fax (202-347-2570); an unofficial transcript is fine and may be received at any point during the competition, May 25 - July 12.

**HOW DOES THE WRITE ON SYSTEM MATCH ME TO A JOURNAL?**

Once the judges score your paper, those scores are averaged and a final paper score is generated and combined with your Bluebook test score. In addition, some journals will factor in a personal statement score. The total of these is your raw score. Your raw score will probably be different across several journals, since journals weight the various components of the score at different levels. This raw score then becomes the main component in a complex algorithm that takes into account both how the journal ranked you (i.e., how your score compares to others') and how you preferenced it (i.e., if it was your first choice, you'll be more likely to place than someone with an equal raw score who preferenced it third). This is why you should be sure to preference highest the journals you want to be on the most.

The system first attempts to place everyone on their first-place journal, then on their second-place journal, and so on until all the journal slots are allocated.

**HOW WILL I KNOW IF I MADE IT ONTO A JOURNAL?**

Once the final matching is run by OJA, results will be available on the [Transfer Write On website](#). All Write On participants will receive an email when final results are available (late July).

**IS IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO MAKE IT ONTO MORE THAN ONE JOURNAL?**

We will match you to one journal. If, after being offered membership, you decide that you do not wish to be a member of that journal, you may decline membership. You will not be offered any other journal memberships. If you decline membership with the matched journal, you decline journal membership entirely. Thus, you should only preference journals in which you have a sincere interest. Remember, journal membership is a two year commitment. Please participate in the competition only if you are willing to commit to journal membership for two years.

**WHAT IF I'M NOT MATCHED TO A JOURNAL? CAN I TRY AGAIN NEXT YEAR?**

Unfortunately, not everyone who participates in the Write On Competition will be matched to a journal. There are limited spaces and competition is strong. If you are not accepted to a journal, there is no other opportunity, the competition is only open to incoming transfer students, ensuring a level playing field. Keep in mind, Georgetown Law offers many other activities that carry equal resume value. Career Services can provide excellent assistance in evaluating non-journal extracurricular options. The NALP guide also offers unique and valuable guidance specific to particular firms.
WHAT IF I AM AN EVENING STUDENT OR A JOINT-DEGREE STUDENT AND WANT TO DEFER MEMBERSHIP IN A JOURNAL UNTIL THE FOLLOWING YEAR?

Only first-year students are eligible to participate in the Write On Competition. If you are an evening student or a joint-degree student, **YOU MAY NOT DELAY YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPETITION**, although if you are accepted for membership, and the journal consents, you may defer participation on the journal.

Allowing students to participate in the Write On after additional coursework or after summer legal experience, would offer unfair advantages. Thus, our policy is that evening students and joint degree students must compete after their first year, but may defer membership, if offered, for one school year.

If you plan to defer journal membership, please notify OJA before the end of the competition (July 12). Deferral plans will affect neither your score nor how you are placed on a journal. We will use the information solely to facilitate staff planning for the next two years. If you have any questions about this process, please contact OJA at LawWriteOn@georgetown.edu.

WHAT IF I WANT TO STUDY ABROAD?

Because of the time commitment involved in journal membership, participation in study abroad programs may affect your ability to hold editorial positions in your second year of journal membership and may preclude participation on a journal altogether. Because editorial processes differ, journals have substantial autonomy in responding to requests for accommodation of study abroad opportunities. Some journals may be accommodating, and some study abroad opportunities may mesh more easily with journal membership. [Inform yourself about study abroad policies of journals you wish to join.](#)

ARE THERE ANY STRATEGIES I CAN FOLLOW TO INCREASE MY CHANCES OF BEING ACCEPTED TO A JOURNAL?

The best strategy is to write the best competition packet that you can and to do well on the Bluebook test. Every journal considers these two components in its ranking of prospective members.

Be honest with yourself about your scores. If you feel you did not write a strong paper, you should not rank first a journal that places high value on the paper score. The system factors in your preferences when generating your placement. The higher you rank, the more likely you'll be offered membership.

If you preference journals that require personal statements, be sure to spend time on them. It's easy to create a "boilerplate" personal statement to send to each journal after only minor modifications, but this approach will rarely net you good scores—it is better to individualize each statement. OJA suggests that you write your personal statement at the start of the competition period, before you are heavily invested in writing your case comment. Students are often so tired after the comment that they have little desire to put more time into crafting original, thoughtful personal statements.

We also provide additional preferencing tips in the instructions.

HOW MANY SPOTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS?

This number varies from journal to journal. Every journal, however, reserves spots specifically for transfer students, so you will have a chance of getting on any journal that you choose to preference.
DO I NEED TO BE ADMITTED BEFORE I CAN PURCHASE A PACKET?

No. You may purchase and complete a Write On packet even if you have yet to be admitted. You must, however, be admitted before we post results. Any transfer student who participates but is not admitted by July 26, 2018, will be dropped from the competition and may not compete the following year. Please note that if you do not purchase the packet and are admitted after this year’s purchasing deadline of July 5, 2018, you will be eligible to compete in the 2019 Transfer Write On Competition.

I SEE THAT SOME JOURNALS REQUIRE A RESUME AND/OR PERSONAL STATEMENT. HOW DOES THAT WORK?

Resumes and/or personal statements must be written and uploaded before your individual deadline. Personal statement details are included in the letters posted for relevant journals (Materials page). Some journals will not provide a prompt, but will have suggestions for length and formatting. In the absence of a prompt, you are encouraged to write on your experience with or interest in that journal’s topic of focus.

Redact your personal information from personal statements/resumes. Personal information includes:

- your name and any contact information
- any positions you hold in Georgetown Law organizations
  - Law Fellows – list but do not identify day or night division
  - RAs – just list that you will be an RA for the summer, not where you did so
- any awards that would be obviously traceable back to you
- the name of your undergraduate institution
- any publication titles and citations
- the name of your summer firm
- anything else that would be searchable or otherwise common knowledge in the student body

Our primary goal is to ensure anonymity in the competition. Where an item to be redacted is related to the nature of the journal, include a brief note describing the nature of the item. For instance, if your undergraduate thesis is titled, “‘Three Things Very Dull Indeed’: Class, Poverty, and Welfare in Jane Austen’s England”, you might need to redact the title but add, “used the novel Emma as a springboard for exploring the pernicious and pervasive problem of poverty in early 19th-century England”.

WHAT IS JOURNAL? WHAT WILL I BE DOING AS A JOURNAL MEMBER?

For more information about what journals are and the role student staff plays, please see our Journals 101 info sheet. While the responsibilities and time commitments vary from journal to journal, this document gives a general idea of what to expect.