Michigan State University College of Law
Career Readiness Guide - Mock Interview* Checklist

Interviewee: ___________________  Mock Interviewer: ___________________  Date: ____________

- Immediate First Impression
  - □ Smile, eye contact, firm handshake
  - □ Greeting (“Nice to meet you, [Mr./Ms. Last Name]” and “Call me [preferred name]”)
  - □ Professional attire/grooming (show up as you would dress for the actual interview)
  - □ Appropriate accessories (no backpacks, jewelry)

- Presentation
  - □ Exude confidence through body language (good posture, no fidgeting, hair out of face)
  - □ Demonstrate strong communication skills by giving short, articulate, organized answers
  - □ Demonstrate strong communication skills through appropriate voice projection/tone
  - □ Avoid verbal tics, such as “um,” “ok,” “you know,” and “like”
  - □ Answer difficult questions (e.g., GPA, geographic location, professional weaknesses/limitations, with composure and confidence by mainly focusing on positive aspects)
  - □ Convey practicality in answering questions about salary expectations

- Response to typical questions
  - □ Tell me about yourself.
    - □ Provide a career-focused bio: 2-3 minutes prepared pitch; possible subjects include:
      - Where from/geographic connections
      - Undergraduate or other degrees: major & why
      - Why law school/law?
      - Reference a few things from resume (not everything)
      - Something interesting or memorable about yourself
      - Explain things not evident (e.g., resume gaps, locations, transitions)
  - □ Why should we hire you? / What skills add value to the employer?
    - □ Substantive legal skills (e.g., research/writing, problem-solving, advocacy)
    - □ Competencies like work ethic, detail oriented, communication, project management
    - □ Concrete examples of how these skills were developed
    - □ Communicate how your skillset would fit the employer’s needs
    - □ Demonstrate interest in the employer’s work through responses to questions
  - □ Behavioral interview question: Tell about a time when you had to a) balance multiple tasks, b) manage a project, c) solve a conflict with a person, or d) work on a team.
    - □ Respond using the STAR organizational framework
      - □ Situation, Task, Action, Result
  - □ Show problem-solving skills

- Questions for interviewer(s)
  - □ Research the employer and prepare 3-4 open-ended questions

- Tips for actual interview
  - □ Research the employer
  - □ Bring updated resume, writing sample (be prepared to discuss), and list of references
  - □ Everyone in the building is evaluating you (be humble, gracious, and polite)
  - □ Send thank you card/email to each interviewer within 24 hours, or less

*CSO plays the role of an attorney in a mid-size to large firm in Detroit, unless you request otherwise.  Version 1.00  January 11, 2016