

## Book Review: *The All-Inclusive Guide to Judicial Clerking* by Abigail L. Perdue: A Must-Have Resource for Prospective Judicial Clerks and Advisors

By Elyse Diamond

Abigail L. Perdue's comprehensive and thoroughly readable soft-covered treatise, *The All-Inclusive Guide to Judicial Clerking* (West Academic Publishing, 2017), is a window into the meticulous and methodical work ethic needed to succeed as a federal judicial law clerk. Drawn from her own early career experiences as a judicial clerk in the Federal Circuit and Federal Claims Courts, and her current role as an Associate Professor and Founding Director of the D.C. Summer Judicial Externship Program at Wake Forest University School of Law, Perdue's detailed guide ambitiously seeks to serve as an exhaustive resource on the clerkship application process, as well as the clerkship experience. It succeeds.

The book's first chapter includes a helpful checklist laying out the pros and cons of a judicial clerkship, and guides those considering clerking through a self-evaluation to determine if clerking is a good fit for them. The included analysis is easily adapted to other legal positions. While somewhat less-refined for a clerkship experience than the rest of the book, the analysis is still a helpful resource for law school clerkship advisors working with students who are unsure about whether to pursue clerkship opportunities.

Other early chapters address each aspect of the often-intimidating clerkship application process, including researching prospective judges and courts, preparing strong application materials (sample resumes and cover letters included), interviewing, and post-interview follow-up. These chapters may be most useful, again, to law school judicial clerkship advisors, along with those leading a judicial externship class or program (meaning those more likely to read and dissect the detailed information, rather than busy law students). Advisors and faculty can easily direct students to the sections or excerpts that are most relevant to their individual needs.

One perhaps unnecessary caveat to the cover letter and resume samples provided in the book would be my advice that any candidate work closely with the career advisor at their own law school to personalize these materials — but the general advice included for application materials is certainly sound. Another unique highlight in these early chapters is a chart of “Common Complaints about Applicants.” Additionally, several chapters throughout the book contain helpful lists of supplemental resources, along with the extensive advice already included.

The bulk of this thoroughly valuable book — and I would argue greatest strength — is meant to prepare those who have secured a clerkship to perform in that role at the highest level. Anyone heading into a clerkship position, particularly, in federal court, would be well-advised to devote themselves to studying chapters 5 through 18 prior to their clerkship. Perdue's meticulous guidance on drafting judicial documents, from general correspondence in chambers to formal bench memoranda, orders, and judicial opinions bespeaks her clerkship and faculty experience.

One can sense Perdue's personal fondness for the clerkship experience reflected in the care and attention to detail in these sections, and throughout, and this makes the substance an even more appealing read. The text is complemented by numerous useful samples, charts, and tip lists throughout that help readers to synthesize and apply her advice. Chapters devoted to ethics and professionalism and pro se litigants, as well as post-clerkship life, round out this masterful guide. I firmly expect this book will be a mainstay on many judicial law clerks' desks throughout their term, as it will certainly be on mine as I work to advise and prepare students and alumni pursuing post-graduate judicial clerkships. ■

### About the Author

Elyse Diamond ([ediamond@law.pace.edu](mailto:ediamond@law.pace.edu)) is the Director of Public Sector Careers for the Public Interest Law Center and Center for Career & Professional Development and an Adjunct Professor of Law at the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University in White Plains, NY. This book review was submitted on behalf of the NALP Judicial Clerkship Section.