

PLACEMENT REPORT — CLASS OF 1982

While our overall placement percentage rose over last year's figure (95.9% compared to 94.3% in 1981) it is fair to say that the Class of 1982 actually faced a tighter market than in 1981. The economy was in a full recession, and governmental units, normally a substantial employer of our graduates, faced severe budget restrictions. General economic weakness caused problems not previously encountered: the overall amount of legal business seemed to decline, at least as measured by the demand for new lawyers particularly by large law firms. Law firm cash flow problems noted last year did not seem to contribute as greatly to hiring problems. As the economic slump continued the growth of in-house corporate legal staffs came to a stop, and, in some cases, reversed in direction. Corporate bankruptcies and mergers, while creating some legal work, appears to have had a negative net effect on the demand for new graduates.

Want ad indexes became more fashionable as politicians displayed newspaper ads to show that jobs were indeed available. Our own want-ad index, however, continued to show a decline. The number of positions posted here in recent years fell from a peak of 432 in 1978-79 to 295 last year for permanent jobs and from 334 in 1980-81 to 241 last year for part time and summer positions.

Another sign of the tight market is a decline in the number of on-campus interviewers. In 1980-81, 167 employers visited on campus. Last year the figure dropped 5.3%, to 158. The number of interviews conducted actually climbed slightly from 3500 to 3600. This appears to reflect both greater interest in interviewing from our students as well as a stronger commitment by employers to finding the "right" employee from a larger group of applicants.

Although the lateral market has also been tight we continue to

list about 200 positions annually for experienced alumni. These listings are compiled and mailed every other month to 150-200 alumni.

Despite all these negative signs we are able to report more than 95% of our graduates placed within 6 months of graduation and a healthy 14.2% increase in the average salary reported. Over the past two years, salaries have risen almost 30% despite a tightening market.

Placement Summary

Table 1 reports the composition and placement of the class of 1982 and compares it to the previous three years. Men, women and minority students all reported about 95% success in obtaining positions. The 114 women who graduated in 1982 is an all-time high.

Table 2 indicates the types of positions taken by the class of 1982 and again compares it to several recent classes. We see that while there is little significant

**TABLE 1
Placement Status**

Four year comparison:

	1982	1981	1980	1979
Number in class	273	319	281	305
Women students	114(41.7%)	110(34.5%)	106.(37.7%)	108(35.4%)
Minority students	16(5.9%)	23(7.2%)	14(5.0%)	17(5.6%)
Employed	216	270	230	265
Bar exams	12	10	7	9
Not seeking	4	1	8	4
TOTAL	232(95.9%)	281(94.3%)	245(96.8%)	278(95.9%)
Seeking work	10	17	8	12
Unknown	31	21	28	14

Class of 1982:

	Men	Women	Minorities	Total
Number in class	159	114	16	273
Employed	134	82	9	216
Bar exams	5	7	4	12
Not seeking	0	4	1	4
TOTAL	139(97.2%)	93(93.9%)	14(100.0%)	232(95.9%)
Seeking work	4	6	0	10
Unknown	16	15	2	31

TABLE 2
Types of Practice

Four year comparison:

	1982	1981	1980	1979
Private firms	127	129	109	102
Self employed	7	13	1	8
TOTAL	134(62.0%)	142(52.6%)	110(47.8%)	110(41.5%)
Public service/interest (inc. legal service, public defender, etc.)	6(2.8%)	15(5.6%)	17(7.4%)	20(7.5%)
Business/corporate	14(6.5%)	23(8.5%)	19(8.2%)	25(9.4%)
Government	21(9.7%)	15(5.6%)	31(13.5%)	22(8.3%)
Prosecutors	7(3.2%)	10(3.7%)	15(6.5%)	20(7.5%)
Judicial clerkships	21(9.7%)	27(10.0%)	19(8.3%)	28(10.6%)
Military	2(0.9%)	3(1.1%)	n/a	n/a
Academic	6(2.8%)	15(5.6%)	n/a	n/a

Class of 1982:

	Men	Women	Minorities	Total
Private firms	84 (62.7%)	43 (52.4%)	3 (33.3%)	127
Self employed	4 (3.0%)	3 (3.6%)	1 (11.1%)	7
TOTAL	88 (65.7%)	46 (56.1%)	4 (44.4%)	134
Public service/interest	2 (1.5%)	4 (4.9%)	0 (0.0%)	6
Business/corporate	8 (6.0%)	6 (7.3%)	0 (0.0%)	14
Government/prosecutors	15 (11.2%)	13 (15.9%)	4 (44.4%)	28
Judicial clerkships	13 (9.7%)	8 (9.8%)	0 (0.0%)	21
Military	1 (0.7%)	1 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	2
Academic	3 (2.2%)	3 (3.7%)	1 (11.1%)	6

difference in the placement pattern for men and women, minority graduates to tend to follow a different pattern.

While the percentage of graduates taking government positions increased from last year's all-time low of 5.6% to 9.7% this year, it is still well behind our average of about 13%. On the other hand, the 62% going into private practice shows not only a 10% increase over last year but also sets an all time high mark. The average percentage entering private practice over the last eight years is about 45%. While some of this may be attributed to an increased level of student interest in private practice, it would also seem that the private sector has simply absorbed graduates who might have gone to public interest, corporate/business or government jobs. While the private sector may be able to absorb those displaced from alternative positions in the short run, it is unlikely to be able to continue doing so for any prolonged period.

In the most part, graduates in 1982 followed established geographic patterns. About 70% stayed in Wisconsin, including 26% in Madison and 18% in Milwaukee. Of the 30% who left Wisconsin, the majority stayed in the midwest, with the greatest absolute number locating in Illinois. As could be expected, there was a marked decline in placements in Washington, DC. The southwest showed continuation of recent interest and strength; five graduates went to Texas and another five to Nevada. In all, graduates located in at least 19 different states.

Table 3 gives selective comparisons for some years back to 1965.

Table 4 shows reported starting salaries. Salary information is voluntarily supplied by about half of our graduates or by their employers. This year's figures can only be described as surprising. Despite all the negative indications noted earlier in this report, salaries increased in all categories,

and increased significantly in most. The largest increase (33%) was shown by "public interest/service" employment. There was, however, only one salary reported of the six students who went into this area and that position was in New York City. In other categories, increases ranged from 11% (Federal government) to 16% (small private practices). The increase in this later category appears to be an effort by these employers to attract more well qualified attorneys. It may also indicate that smaller firms have been less affected by adverse economic conditions than other employers. While the average salary, particularly in small firms, has climbed substantially in recent years, it should be noted that the lowest salaries offered have not increased by a similar amount.

The Future

As this is written we are finishing placement of the Class of 1983. The market does not appear to have improved, nor, fortunately,

TABLE 3
Selected Comparisons
(in percentage)

	1965	1970	1975	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
Placed in-state	74	52	74	76	68	71	66	71
Placed out-of-state	26	48	26	24	32	29	34	29
Types of practice								
Private	34	42	53	45	42	48	53	62
Government	12	21	21	15	8	14	4	10
Public interest	n/a	5	6	6	8	8	6	3
Judicial clerks	3	10	5	10	11	8	10	11
Business/corporate	14	6	5	7	10	8	8	6

TABLE 4
Starting Salaries
(voluntarily reported)

	Range	1982 Ave.	1981 Ave.
Private practice			
Small firms (2-25)	\$12,000 to 30,000	\$18,000	\$15,500
Large firms (26 —)	\$22,000 to 46,000	\$29,000	\$25,000
Government			
Federal	\$22,000 to 24,000	\$23,000	\$20,700
State/local	\$18,000 to 28,000	\$21,000	\$18,600
Business/corporate	\$22,000 to 36,000	\$25,000	\$21,700
Public interest/service	\$20,000 to 22,000	\$21,000	\$15,000

to have worsened. Economic indicators have finally turned up giving hope that the market for graduates will improve shortly. There is a theory, however, that the legal hiring cycle lags about two years behind the business economy. Since our graduates did not face unusually difficult conditions at the start of the current recession, it may be some time before the market improves significantly.

We have offered two semesters of our career planning seminar on a non-credit basis. Attendance was very disappointing, but the reaction of those who did attend reinforced our conviction that the program does have merit. Next semester we will audio tape each session, and make the tapes available to those with schedule conflicts. Possible incorporation of these sessions into some other course, such as first semester

legal writing or into a new "legal profession" course will also be studied.

We also feel that, until the market does improve to its pre-recession status, extra effort needs to be given to alternative careers and locations outside our usual placement areas. Better resource material on alternative careers is becoming available and, to the limits of our resources, will be acquired for our library. We also intend to encourage more on-campus recruiting by employers who have not recruited here in the past. This effort is indirectly enhanced by our on-going Capital Fund Drive. Alumni throughout the country are being asked to remember their School with a contribution. Once having remembered, however, some of them are making inquiries about recruiting here.