FINANCIAL SUCCESS CHECKLIST

☐ Get Organized
☐ Create a folder or binder where you can keep all important financial documents.
☐ It is important to have easy access to all important records, including: bill payments; checking and savings account information; financial aid documents; copy of your FAFSA; tax returns; scholarship applications; insurance information; loan and credit records; receipts and warranties from major purchases.

☐ Think about Financial Planning
☐ Create a budget and stick to it.
☐ Track your spending using tools offered by your bank or online budget tools such as Mint.com.

☐ Saving
☐ Creating a budget will help you map out your financial plan for the semester, but it is important to leave a “cushion” in your budget should unexpected expenses occur.

☐ Complete the FAFSA
☐ The FAFSA is available every year beginning January 1st. Students must complete the FAFSA every year to receive federal aid.
☐ As a law student you do not need to use your parent’s financial information when completing the FAFSA.
☐ Call the Office of Financial Aid at 419-772-2272 if you have questions or problems completing your FAFSA.

☐ Scholarships
☐ Read the fine print. Understand deadlines to accept scholarship offers and the requirements to maintain eligibility.
☐ Search the web for private scholarship opportunities. Use popular websites such as fastweb.com and careerinfonet.org.

☐ Housing
☐ Weigh the pros and cons of on and off-campus living.
☐ When considering housing options, take the following additional costs into consideration and factor them into your budget: rent (plus deposit), utilities, phone, internet, cable, food, laundry, transportation, renter’s insurance, household furnishings, and parking fees.

☐ Working
☐ The ABA allows law students to work no more than 20 hours/week. As a law student you will have very little time to focus on anything other than your studies.

☐ Credit
☐ A credit check is required to qualify for all private loans and the Federal Grad PLUS loan.
☐ Make all bill payments on time to avoid unnecessary drops in your credit score.
☐ Check your credit score annually at annualcreditreport.com or myfico.com.
☐ Check your educational loan history on NSLDS.ed.gov to make sure that none of your loans are in default, and are deferred until after graduation from law school.
☐ Seek credit counseling should your credit score be too low.

☐ Loans
☐ Use your budget to determine exactly how much money you need to take out in student loans. Attempt to keep the amount of loans you take out to a minimum.
☐ Review the terms and conditions of your loan and use the payment calculator to determine what your monthly payment will look like when you begin repaying the loans.
☐ Borrow all possible federal loans before seeking private loans. Federal loans qualify for repayments programs not offered by private loan companies.

☐ Protect Yourself
☐ Secure important personal information such as Social Security number, credit card number, bank account numbers, and computer login information.
☐ Shred papers that include important account information or other personal information.