

A Farewell to Professor and Advisor Christopher J. Walker

It is truly bittersweet to recognize the departure of Professor Christopher J. Walker from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law.¹ He has been an invaluable asset to the *Ohio State Law Journal*, where he served as faculty advisor from 2017 to 2022. And while we regret to see the conclusion of his tenure as our advisor, we join in celebrating this exciting next step in his academic career.

It would be a fool's errand to attempt a detailed catalogue of the enumerable contributions Professor Walker has made to our academic community. Doing so would surely occupy an entire volume of these pages, and so we will restrain ourselves to mention just a few of his many contributions to our *Journal* and our school.

As advisor to the *Ohio State Law Journal*, Professor Walker has been a constant source of sage advice. Many Editors in Chief have relied on his guidance on topics ranging from article selection and editing to operational challenges. Like many student-run legal publications, we suffer from a lack of long-term institutional knowledge and academic experience; we regularly turned to Professor Walker's to make up for that gap. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the challenges for the *Journal* multiplied, yet Professor Walker helped to steer our *Journal* through even the most difficult issues. There is no aspect of our operation that has not benefited from his counsel. Yet his contributions to Moritz reach far beyond the pages of the *Ohio State Law Journal*.

Over the years, Professor Walker became an invaluable advisor for Moritz students pursuing federal and state judicial clerkships. For those ambitious students pursuing the most prestigious clerkships, the advice has remained the same over the last ten years: Get good grades, join a journal—and then go talk to Professor Walker. As students braced themselves for the daunting uncertainties of OSCAR, screeners, and call-back interviews, Professor Walker provided a calming voice and steady counsel. His letters of recommendation were coveted, and many judges to this day respect and respond to his words of praise. A litany of former law clerks from every level of the judiciary followed his advice.

Even outside the halls of Moritz, Professor Walker's voice projected around the country in his prolific scholarship. Currently among the top twenty most cited scholars in the field of administrative law,² he has developed a body of

¹ Professor Christopher Walker first joined The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law in 2012, became faculty advisor to the *Ohio State Law Journal* in 2017, and was named the John W. Bricker Professor of Law in 2020. While this piece is written largely from the vantage of the *Ohio State Law Journal*, it should suffice to say that his extensive service to the University, the federal judiciary, and our democracy as a whole goes far beyond this tribute.

² Brian Leiter, *20 Most-Cited Administrative and/or Environmental Law Faculty in the U.S., 2016–2020*, BRIAN LEITER'S L. SCH. REPS., <https://leiterlawschool.typepad.com/leiter>

scholarship to rival even a much more seasoned academic.³ His publications have appeared in, among others, the *California Law Review*,⁴ *Duke Law Journal*,⁵ *Georgetown Law Journal*,⁶ *Michigan Law Review*,⁷ *Stanford Law Review*,⁸ and *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*.⁹ His article *Legislating in the Shadows*¹⁰ was selected as the recipient of the 2017 American Association of Law Schools Scholarly Papers Competition Award.¹¹ He also worked to lift up others. In 2014, Professor Walker helped found the *Yale Journal on Regulation Notice and Comment* blog, offering scholars a new avenue to connect theory to practice.¹² Moreover, he assisted with the launch of the Administrative Law New Scholarship Roundtable, an annual gathering for emerging voices in the field to gather feedback on their work.¹³ Professor

/2021/11/20-most-cited-administrative-and-or-environmental-law-faculty-in-the-us-2016-2020.html [https://perma.cc/4NLE-5BRV].

³ See, e.g., CHRISTOPHER J. WALKER, *CONSTRAINING BUREAUCRACY BEYOND JUDICIAL REVIEW* (forthcoming 2022); KRISTIN E. HICKMAN, RICHARD J. PIERCE & CHRISTOPHER J. WALKER, *FEDERAL ADMINISTRATIVE LAW: CASES AND MATERIALS* (4th ed. forthcoming 2023); Christopher J. Walker & James R. Saywell, *Remand and Dialogue in Administrative Law*, 89 GEO. WASH. L. REV. 1198 (2021); Christopher J. Walker & Rebecca Turnbull, *Operationalizing Internal Administrative Law*, 71 HASTINGS L.J. 1227 (2020); Aaron L. Nielson & Christopher J. Walker, *A Qualified Defense of Qualified Immunity*, 93 NOTRE DAME L. REV. 1853 (2018); Christopher J. Walker, *Modernizing the Administrative Procedure Act*, 69 ADMIN. L. REV. 629 (2017); Aaron L. Nielson & Christopher J. Walker, *Strategic Immunity*, 66 EMORY L.J. 55 (2016); Christopher J. Walker, *Toward a Context-Specific Chevron Deference*, 81 MO. L. REV. 1095 (2016); Stephanie Hoffer & Christopher J. Walker, *Is the Chief Justice a Tax Lawyer?*, 2015 PEPP. L. REV. 33; Stephanie Hoffer & Christopher J. Walker, *The Death of Tax Court Exceptionalism*, 99 MINN. L. REV. 221 (2014); Peter M. Shane & Christopher J. Walker, *Foreword—Chevron at 30: Looking Back and Looking Forward*, 83 FORDHAM L. REV. 475 (2014); Christopher J. Walker, *Avoiding Normative Canons in the Review of Administrative Interpretations of Law: A Brand X Doctrine of Constitutional Avoidance*, 64 ADMIN. L. REV. 139 (2012).

⁴ Christopher J. Walker & Melissa F. Wasserman, *The New World of Agency Adjudication*, 107 CALIF. L. REV. 141 (2019).

⁵ Christopher J. Walker & Shoba Sivaprasad Wadhia, *The Case Against Chevron Deference in Immigration Adjudication*, 70 DUKE L.J. 1197 (2021).

⁶ Christopher J. Walker & Aaron Nielson, *Qualified Immunity and Federalism*, 109 GEO. L.J. 229 (2020).

⁷ Christopher J. Walker & Kent Barnett, *Chevron in the Circuit Courts*, 116 MICH. L. REV. 1 (2017).

⁸ Christopher J. Walker, *Inside Agency Statutory Interpretation*, 67 STAN. L. REV. 999 (2015).

⁹ Christopher J. Walker, *Legislating in the Shadows*, 165 U. PA. L. REV. 1377 (2017).

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *AALS Announces 2017 Scholarly Papers Competition Winners*, ASS'N OF AM. LAW SCHS. (Dec. 1, 2016), <https://www.aals.org/aals-newsroom/aals-announces-2017-scholarly-papers-competition-winners/> [https://perma.cc/V4VP-6XSZ].

¹² YALE J. ON REGUL.: NOTICE & COMMENT, <https://www.yalejreg.com/nc/> [https://perma.cc/97T2-ZVUY].

¹³ *Administrative Law New Scholarship Roundtable*, YALE L. SCH., <https://law.yale.edu/administrative-law-new-scholarship-roundtable> [https://perma.cc/74HL-NHVV].

Walker instinctively knew that the entire legal academic profession benefits when a junior scholar finds their voice.

In the classroom, Professor Walker was a student-focused professor. At Moritz, he taught an impressive array of topics, including Administrative Law, Constitutional Litigation, Civil Procedure, Federal Courts, State & Local Government, Legal Analysis & Writing, and Legislation & Regulation.¹⁴ Always keen for open discussion and debate, he encouraged his students to see common issues in a new light. Professor Walker created classroom environments where students from all backgrounds could respectfully disagree and could walk away with new perspectives. He regularly brought cutting-edge legal scholarship into the classroom and encourage students to engage with and critique it. Professor Walker viewed us not as mere students but as potential future colleagues and enthusiastically nurtured our love of learning. In short, he trained tomorrow's lawyers to tackle tomorrow's problems. And Professor Walker regularly championed the virtues of a career in public service. He was always excited to facilitate placing students in government and political internships for those enrolled in Moritz's Summer D.C. Program. A public servant himself at heart, he was thrilled to help his students find fulfilment through positions that allowed them to act in service for others. Both in Ohio and abroad, many Moritz alumni in public service can trace their career's trajectory to his advice and assistance.

We are not the first to recognize Professor Walker's excellence. (Nor will we be the last.) Just this year, he was awarded the 2022 Joseph Story Award by the Federalist Society, an annual award recognizing a young academic who has "demonstrated excellence in legal scholarship, a commitment to teaching, a concern for students, and who has made a significant public impact in a manner that advances the rule of law in a free society."¹⁵ It is hard to image anyone more befitting of this award.

The *Ohio State Law Journal* joins the chorus in congratulating Professor Walker. While we are sad to see him go, we are proud that he has been part of our Ohio State family and we are thrilled to be a part of his continuing successes. And while he has accomplished much, he has so much more still to do. We cannot wait to see where this next chapter takes him. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we are confident that no matter where his journey takes him, he will always be instinctively prepared to respond when prompted with a hearty "O-H!"

¹⁴ Once word got out that Professor Walker was teaching Administrative Law for the first time in spring of 2022, the initially planned forty-person class had to be expanded to over eighty seats to accommodate the massive influx of students joining the waitlist.

¹⁵ *The 2022 Joseph Story Award*, FEDERALIST SOC'Y (Mar. 7, 2022), <https://fedsoc.org/commentary/fedsoc-blog/the-2022-joseph-story-award> [<https://perma.cc/B398-MG62>].