



ILLINOIS | LAW

University of Illinois
College of Law

STRATEGIC PLAN
2014-2017



STRATEGIC
PLANNING
COMMITTEE:

John D. Colombo (Chair)
Margareth Etienne
Matthew W. Finkin
Melissa Frydman
David A. Hyman
Kurt T. Lash
Robert M. Lawless
Shannon M. Moritz
Jennifer K. Robbennolt
Arden Rowell
Janelle Sharpe

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Introduction

The University of Illinois was founded in 1867 and today ranks as one of the largest and best universities – public or private – in the world. Its law school, the University of Illinois College of Law, is one of the oldest and best-known law schools in the nation. The College boasts a long and distinguished tradition of advancing knowledge and research, training students in the knowledge, skills, and temperament to achieve professional excellence and leadership, and seeking beneficial change in law and society. The College’s history is consistent with its mission as adopted by the faculty in 2006:

Our mission is to serve as a preeminent site for the study of law, legal institutions, and legal culture; to educate our students effectively and comprehensively in legal principles and skills; and to advance justice and the public good.

Holding fast to these commitments, this document represents a short-term plan to guide the College through the next three years. While our mission has not changed, the environment for legal practice, legal employment, and legal education has shifted dramatically in the last decade. Accordingly, this plan charts our future course with these new opportunities and challenges in mind. In general, the plan proposes that the College respond to changes in the legal market by emphasizing and leveraging the existing comparative strengths of the College and the University of Illinois. This strategy will help us stay true to our mission as an institution of ideas and of scholarly inquiry; will help us carve out distinctive areas of comparative advantage over peer institutions; and leverage our limited resources.



The Planning Process

The strategic plan summarized here represents the communal efforts of faculty and staff during a year-long process. The process began in spring 2013 with a series of workshop presentations for faculty led by senior administrators on issues such as budget and finance, development, admissions, and job placement. Informed by these presentations, faculty and staff met off-site for a half-day retreat in fall of 2013 highlighting concerns, aspirations, and goals for the College. Faculty and staff were then invited to submit written proposals and ideas for the College’s strategic plan.

Throughout the fall of 2013, the Strategic Planning Committee met bi-weekly, either as a whole or in subcommittees, to research, deliberate on, and draft a plan for the short-term future of the College. The Committee submitted an initial draft of the plan to the entire faculty and senior administrative staff for discussion. The Committee chair led weekly open brown-bag discussions to weigh and examine the plan in great detail. The Committee then met to incorporate changes to the draft. The final draft of the document was adopted by the faculty on May 19, 2014.

The faculty considers the Strategic Plan to be a document that will guide the College over the next three years. We expect that the items in the plan will be executed in due course through administrative action or, where appropriate, via the College’s regular committee process or specific proposal to the faculty. The Plan should be considered the strong sense of the faculty for action on the items contained in the Plan, and we would expect implementation of these items over the three-year period unless significantly changed circumstances dictate otherwise.



PART ONE:

RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP

Foster scholarship, discovery, and innovation

Despite the challenges to legal education, faculty expertise remains the most important determinant in the College of Law's overall reputation. The faculty remains a strength of the institution, often assessed well above the College's overall ranking and performing well on metrics such as citation counts and SSRN downloads. In the coming years, the College and its faculty will need to secure the resources necessary to sustain a high level of scholarly activity as well as capitalize on strengths within the College and across the University of Illinois to develop areas of expertise that our external constituencies recognize as valuable.

Prioritize interdisciplinary strengths

- Consistent with maintaining a faculty with diverse backgrounds, including significant numbers of faculty with practice experience, prioritize interdisciplinary research agendas and interest in bringing interdisciplinary perspectives to the classroom in future tenured/tenure-track appointments and participate in appropriate cluster hires with other units on campus.
- Enhance interdisciplinary courtesy appointments by extending new invitations to faculty in other units with a specific interest in law-related interdisciplinary work, reviewing the distribution of departments from which we draw faculty with a courtesy appointment in the College, and assessing whether all faculty with a courtesy appointment in the College should be maintained in that status.
- Increase the number of faculty that are affiliated with institutes on campus, including the Beckman Institute, the Institute for Genomic Biology, and the Institute of Government and Public Affairs.

Increase grant activity

- Educate the faculty on the opportunities that grants provide for supplementing summer research grants, providing teaching release time for research projects, and contributing to the overall fiscal health of the College.
- Develop resources to support faculty grant and fellowship applications.
- Increase the number of faculty who apply for external grant and fellowship awards.
- Develop and implement standard policies on items such as grant-funded teaching release time and supplementation of existing College summer research grants.
- Include grant and fellowship application activities as one of the many activities relevant to hiring, tenure, and promotion decisions and annual performance reviews, with due regard for the availability and relevance of grants to the specific faculty member's research work.

Configure the library to meet the challenges of the 21st century, supporting technology in the building as well as providing research support beyond books and texts

- Hire library staff with technical expertise.
- Make available research databases of original source material and data.
- Support research tools for empirical work, such as online survey software and statistical software.





PART TWO:

ACADEMICS & PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Enrich the student experience while strengthening the curriculum to better prepare students for the changing legal world

The College of Law has done much over the last several years to improve the student experience while at the College and improve placement opportunities for graduates. In particular, the College has made important strides in the delivery of career services and counseling, has expanded international and externship opportunities for students, has broadened the range of specialized courses and clinical offerings, and has expanded the delivery of courses offered in Chicago. Given what will likely be a constrained budgetary situation over the next several years (see Part 4), the College must hold fast to these gains while investing strategically in limited areas that will most benefit our students and our stature.

Prepare students to play transformative and leadership roles in the changing world of law and policy

CURRICULAR RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Legal Research and Writing** – Prioritize a cohesive legal research and writing program through the following initiatives:
 - As soon as reasonably possible, require grades in the first year legal writing courses.
 - During the 2014-2015 academic year, put in place a process that permits legal writing faculty to attain clinical professor status.
 - During the 2014-2015 academic year, have the Curriculum Committee or an ad-hoc committee review the structure of the overall legal writing program with specific attention to (a) the content of the first-year legal research and writing courses; (b) the integrity of the upper-level writing requirement; and (c) increasing upper-level writing and research course offerings and other opportunities for writing experiences in the second and third years, particularly writing experiences that are tied to specific practice areas and skills.
- **Advanced Skills Offerings** – During the 2014-2015 academic year, have the Curriculum Committee or an ad-hoc committee undertake a study of our offerings in advanced skills courses in areas including, but not limited to, live-client clinics, moot court, negotiation, trial advocacy, law practice management, professionalism, accounting for lawyers, and legal technology to determine whether sufficient offerings exist to meet student demand and if the overall pedagogical content meets the needs of modern law practice.
- **Externships** – Enhance student opportunities to gain practical legal experience by increasing externship and practicum opportunities and expanding the geographical range of such opportunities.
- **Global Legal Practice** – Enhance student awareness of foreign law by offering additional courses with global content and additional foreign externship opportunities.

- **First-Year Curriculum** – Add three or four credits of additional coursework to the 1L required curriculum. In creating a plan for this coursework, the Curriculum Committee should consider the benefits of providing first-year training and exposure to statutory construction, legal technology, legal methodologies, the regulatory state, and elective courses.
- **Foundations Program** – Consider developing a faculty-led “foundations program” to create a foundation for students to begin law school with the basic theoretical, social, and professional skill set they need to succeed. This program could supplement or replace the existing orientation program. In addition to connecting students with College and University resources, the program might be used to establish norms of professionalism and ethics, orient students to the theoretical legal landscape (e.g. through introduction to key legal methodologies), convey behavioral and psychological findings about how students can be successful in their law school and legal careers, and address career and technology preparedness.
- **Required Courses** – Have the Curriculum Committee or an ad-hoc committee review whether the College should have additional required courses beyond those in the first year.

STUDENT ADMISSIONS

- **JD Program** – Consistent with the other strategic goals in this plan (e.g., a Law and Technology program, increased global preparedness, and stress on empirical and interdisciplinary research in law) and with College and campus goals and commitments to student diversity, the College should take all reasonable steps to enroll a JD class at least comparable in quality with peer institutions and of a size that reflects the market for legal placement opportunities. Such steps may include (but should not be limited to) reduction in class size and/or increasing student financial aid.
- **LLM Program** – Move aggressively to diversify the geographical pool of students. In determining the optimal class size, the College should balance concerns regarding student quality, faculty resources, instructional goals, and classroom dynamics with budget considerations. During the 2014-2015 academic year, the Graduate and

International Programs Committee should review the academic structure of the LLM program with particular attention to the considerations enumerated above.

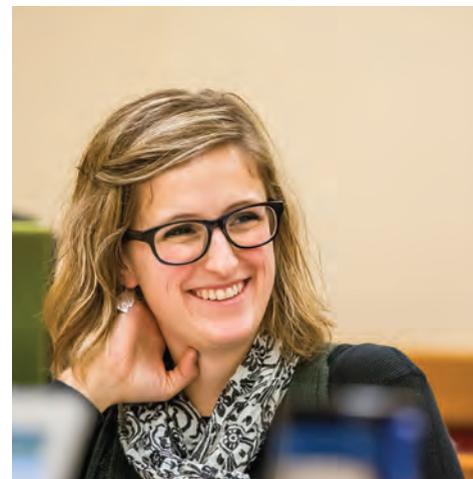
- **Coordination of Admissions with Career Services** – The Admissions Office and Office of Career Planning and Professional Development should develop data regarding what potential student backgrounds are particularly good indicators of success in legal careers, and the Admissions Office should take these indicators into account in making admissions decisions.
- Develop the capacity for enhanced data analysis in the Admissions Office.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

- During the 2014-2015 academic year, appoint an ad-hoc faculty committee to evaluate issues and address concerns relating to the student experience including, but not limited to, the delivery of student services, student advising and mentoring, the law school environment, and issues of diversity.

Target technology as an area of competitive advantage and market relevance

- **Develop a multi-faceted program in Law and Technology** – This program would include development of an organized curriculum in law and technology (including a cohesive packaging of existing College and University offerings and systematic identification of core areas not currently covered by a faculty member, such as Legal Informatics and Prediction and E-Discovery), as well as an admissions strategy that focuses on recruiting students with technology, engineering, and information science backgrounds.
- **Technology audit** – Undergo a technology audit with the assistance of a technology consultant to evaluate and make recommendations regarding the College’s classroom, library, common-space, website, and research technology infrastructure and access, in comparison to peer institutions and to large modern law firms.



Deliver legal education in increasingly flexible ways to diversify student pool and respond to changing legal market

- Begin immediate execution of the Master of Studies in Law. This program may help diversify the pool of students. It can also be deployed to target particular types of students, e.g. students who wish to take the patent bar, consistent with other recommendations.
- Further study the possibility of a two-year JD and/or six-year combined BA-JD program.
- Develop online and strengthen remote course delivery. Develop guidelines for the establishment of online, live-cast and blended courses with the goal of increasing such offerings while maintaining the quality of courses offered. In many instances, students would benefit from a curriculum that allows greater flexibility in the locations from which they can learn and study. The Chicago Program is an important first step in this strategy but guidelines should take a balanced approach to assessing the benefits and limitations of long-distance and web-based learning models.
- Strengthen and stabilize the Chicago Program while exploring the possibility of expanding the concept to Washington, D.C. and elsewhere.
- Explore the possibility of expanding offerings at the undergraduate level and educating faculty about the opportunities to teach undergraduates.



Focus career services efforts on career advising, increasing connectivity between students and potential legal employers (and employment references), and expanding geographic and market-segment scope of placement efforts

- Continue to pursue (and the College should invest resources as necessary in) an activist counseling and advising regime by the Office of Career Planning and Professional Development to ensure that all students and recent graduates have individualized plans for maximizing placement opportunities and personal career development.
- Promote outreach opportunities between students and legal employers/references on- and off-campus. Such opportunities include but are not limited to semester-long internships and practicums, practitioner-led courses or lectures, post-graduate fellowships, as well as alumni events.
- Insure that the curricular offerings and extra-curricular programming include training on subjects such as professionalism, marketing and business development for attorneys, negotiation, accounting for lawyers, upper-level legal writing, and other skills demanded by the current legal market.
- Coordinate Career Services and Advancement contacts with alumni.
- Establish a Clerkship Committee charged with facilitating student placement in state and federal clerkships.



PART THREE:

COMMUNICATION & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Make a significant and visible societal impact

The College of Law must develop and execute an integrated, coordinated, and sustained marketing and communications effort to both stakeholders and the broader legal community: students, alumni, lawyers, judges, business, and government leaders to ensure that these stakeholders are aware of the College's strengths in research, teaching, and presenting real-world solutions to legal problems. Doing so requires a comprehensive public engagement strategy to maximize our impact in the practice of law, the shaping of public policy, and the development of legal reform.

Improve communication to the wider community about the contributions of the College to research, teaching, and public policy discussions by insuring that the Communications Office is fully staffed to execute the strategic goals of that office

- Maintain a high-quality web site for both external and internal audiences.
- Publicize accomplishments of the College and faculty in research, teaching, and shaping public policy in appropriate traditional and social media outlets.
- Provide printed materials for College publicity efforts.
- Increase media hits.
- Train faculty about developing media contacts and effective engagement with the media.
- Increase the number of faculty participating in social media portals (blogs, Twitter, Facebook).

Define and encourage increased levels of public engagement by the faculty





PART FOUR:

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT

Steward college resources and develop additional resources for strategic investment

Recent changes in the market for legal education – most notably decreases in law school applications and entry-level positions at law firms that have traditionally hired recent graduates in large numbers – will place continuing budgetary pressure on the College of Law. The College must respond to this pressure by actively managing expenses and identifying new opportunities to provide legal education to a diverse and accomplished student body. Doing so will enable the College to implement its strategic initiatives, support its core operations, and continue its commitment to high-quality teaching and research.

Adjust cost structure of the College as necessary to bring annual costs (including a “cushion” to build the strategic reserve noted below) in line with projected annual revenues

- Adjust permanent faculty size as appropriate to implement this goal.
- Analyze budgetary impact of current and proposed curricular and programmatic offerings, properly account for the budgetary impact of any new or changed programs in implementing the general goal and eliminate or restructure programs and/or curricular offerings that do not advance the strategic goals of the College in a cost-effective manner.
- Prioritize participation in campus programs that allow the College to share salary costs through joint appointments, cluster hiring initiatives, “target of opportunity” hires and others, consistent with the recommendations in Part 1 of this plan.

Diversify and increase revenue streams

- Actively pursue diversification of the College’s educational programs, including (1) alternative degree programs (e.g., MSL, Executive LLM, others), (2) online and in-person certification courses and other similar programs; (3) increased undergraduate teaching offerings consistent with the recommendations in Part 2 of this plan; and (4) continuing legal education offerings, particularly in Chicago.
- Continue the Advancement emphasis on expanding annual giving and targeting student scholarships, endowed faculty positions, and program endowments over funds for a new building. Review annually whether Advancement resources are appropriately allocated between annual giving and endowment gifts.

Over five years, accumulate a strategic reserve equal to 10% of the College’s annual personnel costs



We will measure our progress in achieving our goals by tracking and comparing the following data points:

PART 1:

Research & Scholarship

- Number and dollar amount of grant and fellowship applications submitted.
- Number of downloads and citations of faculty scholarship.
- Number of consultations, seminars, and other types of expert assistance opportunities and learning resources made available to scholars in the College of Law.
- Number of digital resources available to scholars to support more collaborative, interdisciplinary, and empirical scholarly inquiry.
- Resources made available to law faculty for grant applications.

PART 2:

Academics & Professional Training

- Number of upper-level legal research and writing courses and student enrollment.
- Number of advanced skills courses and student enrollment.
- Number of law and technology courses and student enrollment.
- Number of blended or online courses and student enrollment.
- Number of externships secured and geographical distribution, including international.
- Country of origin for LLM students.
- Comparison of LLM (current and alumni) survey regarding goals and experiences.
- Comparison of Law School Survey of Student Engagement.
- Percentage of students with science and technology degrees or majors.
- Percentage of students enrolled in Chicago Program (or similar programs).
- Number of undergraduate law courses offered and enrollment.
- Number of students enrolled in Master of Studies in Law program.

PART 3:

Communication & Public Engagement

- Number of alumni engaged in the Chicago Program.
- Comparison of placement data as reported to the ABA vis-à-vis peer institutions.
- Comparison of student credentials vis-à-vis peer institutions.
- Comparison of publicly-reported statistics on class diversity vis-à-vis peer institutions.
- Percentage of students accepting clerkships.
- Number of media hits in outlets of national reputation.
- Number of regular faculty bloggers.
- Number of national academies memberships.
- Number of public engagement activities.

PART 4:

Resource Development & Management

- Number of tenure track/tenured faculty and other permanent faculty.
- Budget projections through fiscal year 2018, including strategic reserve funding.
- Summary of new revenue streams generated.
- Summary of annual giving and endowment gifts, including pledged and deferred giving commitments.



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504 East Pennsylvania Avenue
Champaign, IL 61820

law.illinois.edu