Loyola New Orleans

Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan for Loyola University New Orleans College of Law:

“Preparing a diverse community of students to be thoughtful counselors, skilled advocates and compassionate leaders in the Jesuit tradition of academic rigor, pursuit of justice, and service to others.”

1. We will embrace the structural changes occurring in legal education in order to improve and modernize the learning experience of our students and to meet the changing needs of the profession.
   a. We will reduce the incoming 1L class to approximately 180 students each year (including part-time and full time students) and maintain a student-faculty ratio competitive with our peers, which will enable us to offer smaller sections and classes, facilitate student-faculty interaction, and improve our graduates’ employment prospects.
   b. We will study whether the evening program should be transitioned into a part-time program in light of the recent declining student enrollment in the evening program, its financial costs and benefits, the resources required to maintain the program, changing demographics and work patterns, and the mission of the law school.
   c. We will become more technologically advanced.
      i. We will upgrade our teaching and learning technology to be consistent with modern practice, and to facilitate class participation and real-time feedback.
      ii. We will investigate innovative teaching techniques and delivery methods made possible by technology, including but not limited to the production and consumption of distance learning courses.
   d. We will revise our curriculum to better prepare our students for the practice of law in the 21st century, giving consideration to: i) reducing the number of courses in the first year, ii) increasing the amount of writing required of students, iii) expanding experiential opportunities for students, iv) adopting new models for class scheduling, and v) assessing the courses required of upper level students.
   e. We will address the increasingly high cost of legal education, by seeking to raise student scholarship funds, and considering a freeze or reduction of tuition, further reduction of operating costs, and the possibility of offering a JD degree in a condensed timeframe.
2. We will prepare our students to be more practice-ready upon graduation, providing additional experiential learning opportunities and skills training programs, and strengthening our legal writing program.

   a. We will continue to support our nationally recognized clinical program and consider offering new clinics in fields such as community development, entrepreneurship and transactional planning.

   b. We will build our advocacy program, including the full implementation of the recently adopted three hour trial advocacy capstone class and human rights advocacy project, and the continued support of the environmental advocacy project and the gender law in practice course.

   c. We will expand our skills and externship program, that currently requires all students to take at least eight units of skills training, so that more students will have opportunities to gain practical experience outside of traditional classroom settings.

      i. To enable students to develop experience in particular fields, we will establish specific skills tracks in public interest, criminal law, transactional practice, and litigation.

      ii. We will provide course offerings or workshops to enable students to develop non-legal skills that will be necessary for their success, such as finance, team building, negotiations, and law practice management

   d. We will encourage our faculty to conduct interim assessments of students’ progress throughout the semester.

   e. We will support our academic success program and conduct appropriate assessment of the program and of incoming students so that the progress of at-risk students can be monitored and reviewed.

   f. We will ensure that our curriculum appropriately addresses and reinforces subjects covered on the bar exam. We will continue to develop, through our Bar Preparation and Learning Initiatives program, specialized programs to improve bar passage.

   g. We will support faculty initiatives to increase experiential learning opportunities both within and outside of the classroom, including the provision of administrative, training, and financial support for these endeavors.

   h. We will strengthen our legal writing program by:

      i. Developing an enhanced first year writing sequence that will enable students to improve their fundamental writing skills as well as to focus on legal and argumentative writing, and

      ii. Developing upper level courses in legal writing.

   i. To enable students to develop expertise in particular legal fields, we will continue to promote our certificate programs in tax, international, environmental and civil and comparative law, support our new certificate program in law, technology, and entrepreneurship, and investigate offering new certificates in emerging areas of law and practice.
3. We will maintain a community of scholars that advances the just development of law, influences law and public policy, and we will enhance and create centers within which we can concentrate and promote our collective expertise.
   a. We highly value quality scholarship.
      i. Quality scholarship will continue to be one of the primary criteria in determining hiring, promotion and tenure for members of the ordinary faculty.
      ii. Quality scholarship will continue to be part of an ordinary faculty member’s main efforts.
   b. We will provide financial support for faculty who actively engage in scholarship through research assistants, support for travel to conferences, and research stipends.
   c. We will continue to maintain a diverse faculty, in terms of race, gender, religion, sexuality, political orientation, and approach to legal issues.
   d. We will review our current Centers and Institutes to highlight our substantive achievements, reinforce and prioritize successful initiatives such as the Stuart H. Smith Law Clinic and Center for Social Justice and the Center for Environmental Law and Land Use, ensure uniformity of designations within our programming, and reduce or eliminate unproductive programs.
   e. We will develop criteria that can be used to assess whether we create, maintain or eliminate unproductive programs or centers, which may include whether the center or program:
      i. Involves more than one member of the law faculty;
      ii. Provides collaboration opportunities with other centers or institutes;
      iii. Involves other departments within the University;
      iv. Has the potential for a clinical, externship or legal writing component; and/or
      v. Has the potential to stand on its own financially.
   f. We will explore opening new Centers in order to bring together our faculty members who teach and/or conduct research in specific fields.
      i. Potential Centers may include the following fields:
         1. Civil and Comparative Law
         2. Health Law
         3. Business, Commercial and Entrepreneurial Studies
         4. Writing and Advocacy Skills
         5. International Law
         6. Immigration Law
      ii. These Centers will act as organizational focal points for research, position papers, conferences, and engagement with similarly-focused organizations and centers throughout the world.
   g. We will encourage our faculty to promote their published scholarship through presentations at conferences, by producing commentary materials such as op-eds and substantive online commentary, and by serving as experts to the media and involvement in the Louisiana State Law Institute, American Law Institute, American Bar
Association, Association of American Law Schools, and similar professional organizations.

4. **We will strongly support our admissions program.**
   a. We will seek to increase the academic quality of each incoming class.
   b. We will take a holistic approach to admissions by admitting students with a wide range of backgrounds, life experiences, work experience and leadership potential.
   c. We will enroll a diverse student body, thus providing our community with the benefits that come from such diversity.

5. **We will enhance our career development program.**
   a. We will ensure that our career development office is staffed at levels equal to peer schools.
   b. We will:
      i. Ensure that our students obtain first-time jobs in the same or higher quality and quantity as at peer schools.
      ii. Place a greater percentage of students in local, state and federal clerkships.
      iii. Provide additional support for students seeking positions outside Louisiana.
   c. We will provide a working and networking environment for recent graduates, such as a post graduate Incubator Resource Center that could be located in St. Mary’s Hall.
   d. We will continue to provide career counseling and other services to our graduates.
   e. We will involve the entire Loyola community, including alumni, faculty, and staff, in mentoring students and providing networks that will facilitate employment prospects for our graduates.

6. **We will foster an open, student-focused culture where all members of our community are committed to student success and achievement of the Law School’s goals.**
   a. We will prioritize collaboration and not competition in teaching, scholarship, and learning.
   b. We will maintain a culture where ideas and individual points of view are treated with tolerance and mutual respect.
   c. We will support the development of organizations to meet student needs and interests.

7. **We will use this plan to determine priorities in our annual budgeting process and provide the necessary support to implement the plan.**
   a. We will conduct a fundraising campaign to finance some of the initiatives in this plan.
   b. We will improve our outreach to alumni for both their financial and program support.
   c. We will maintain a library sufficient to meet the evolving research, teaching and learning needs of our community.
   d. We will provide opportunities for staff advancement within the law school and/or university.
   e. We will develop and implement a marketing plan with special emphasis on marketing our distinctive strengths in civil law, social justice and advocacy.