

University of California, Irvine
School of Law

Strategic Plan 2016-2021

We believe that in the Law School's first seven years we have laid the groundwork for an outstanding law school. We have attracted superb faculty, students, and staff. We have designed an innovative first-year and upper division curriculum to fulfill our goal of preparing law students for the practice of law at the highest levels of the profession. We have succeeded in raising substantial funds for student scholarships, faculty chairs, programs, and clinics. We have received extensive publicity surrounding our law school and mission.

The Law School faculty are accomplished thought leaders from around the country with a broad range of expertise. Our curriculum is innovative, challenging and hands-on, and emphasizes strategic problem-solving. Clinical education is a cornerstone of the experience at UC Irvine School of Law. Every student must participate in a clinic at the Law School.

We recognize, of course, that this is just a beginning and many challenges lie ahead. The faculty has annually approved a strategic plan, the most important points of which are:

- Expanding the faculty from its current size of 45 to 57. To ensure a student-to-faculty ratio of no worse than 10:1, the expansion must be constant and at a rate of about 3 faculty members a year. The goal is to have a faculty that is outstanding in its teaching, scholarship, and service and comparable in quality to that of a top 20 Law School.
- Expanding the size of the student body from its inaugural class of 60 students to about 180 per year. This is being done slowly so that the expansion occurs only as the quality of the students, as well as the size of the faculty and the facilities, permit.
- Developing and adhering to a financial plan to ensure that the Law School is ultimately financially stable. This requires receiving continued support from the university while enrollment and the endowment grow and adhering to the agreement which will allow the Law School to retain or directly benefit from the fees it generates. A crucial component of the financial plan is continued success in development. The initial priorities for development are a new building, student scholarships, faculty chairs, programs, and clinics. The near-term campaign goal is to raise \$110 million and we are approximately one-third of the way there.

- Expanding the short- and long-term facilities of the Law School to ensure adequate space for outstanding teaching, scholarship, and service. The three-building complex which currently houses the Law School has space to house 57 faculty and 560 students, but it requires careful planning of each area. The library is outstanding, but as planned will need to be expanded and in the longer term off-site storage of books will be needed. There must be continued attention to ensuring that the information technology needs of the Law School will be met.

- Continuing the development of an innovative and effective curriculum. The Law School faculty has spent a great deal of time in developing its curriculum. The faculty must continue its practice of conducting robust ongoing evaluation of the curriculum, and must maintain openness to change and continued innovation.

- Expanding and refining career development services for the students. Career development is an essential function for any law school. The goal is to facilitate each student working in a practice and geographic area of his or her choice. Changing legal markets require flexible strategies, so the Law School is cultivating ties with law firms of all sizes to assist those students who are interested in firm practice. The Law School especially wants to assist students who wish to engage in public service work. This has required aggressive assistance and the development of an outstanding loan forgiveness program. The Law School will continue its commitment to making careers in public service a reality for its students.

- Communicating to the larger community the activities of the Law School and its faculty and students. We should build on the initial outstanding publicity to continue to communicate the accomplishments and activities of the school and its faculty and students.

- Prioritizing community and university service. The Law School needs to develop a continuing legal education program to assist the bar in the area. Our clinics are expanding, in part, to serve our community. We are continuing the development of programs for interdisciplinary work by students and faculty within the University and the Law School remains committed to facilitating faculty service in university governance.

We recognize the challenges in each of these areas. We also recognize the importance of ongoing self-reflection and reconsideration of our mission and our success in achieving it. A great deal of time in our first years of existence has gone to self-study and reflection as we have designed our Law School. Care must be taken to continue this process. This should include:

- Meetings at least once a year of all faculty and staff to discuss matters of common interest and concern. This, of course, is in addition to regular faculty-only meetings throughout the academic year.

- Ongoing reexamination of the first-year curriculum and whether we have succeeded in our objectives. This will include formal evaluations of the program every other year, and eventually, the collection and review of longitudinal data concerning the Law School's graduates to assist in this evaluation process.

- Careful re-examination of the upper-level curriculum and whether we have succeeded in our objectives. This should include discussion at the end of every other year and should incorporate information generated by longitudinal studies of the careers and professional development of our graduating students.

- At least one extended faculty meeting a year devoted to considering our strategic plan and our progress towards achieving it.

- Regularly develop strategic plans to guide its continued operation and development. This process should include careful reconsideration of our goals, our accomplishments, and our shortcomings.

The entire UC Irvine School of Law community remains deeply committed to reaching the lofty goals that were set before the institution opened its doors. To create a professionalism program comparable to UCI's requires a substantial commitment of faculty time and resources. The core elements of the program are faculty and staff time and related resources.