

## AALS COMMITTEE ON CURRICULUM

### SURVEY OF INNOVATIONS IN LAW SCHOOL CURRICULA

The AALS has decided to focus on the issue of curriculum reform in American Law Schools, and would like to set up a process that enables law schools to share information about what is being done, help each other develop new initiatives, and generally catalyze the effort to bring law teaching into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The first step in this process is a survey of current curriculum reform efforts. We understand that surveys come thick and fast these days, but we promise that this is not an effort to collect information that will then sit on someone's shelf, or in someone's hard drive. First, you'll receive information in return, information about new ideas and implementation strategies that other law schools have developed. Second, we'll use the results of the survey to design various settings where law school faculty and administrators can come together to share ideas and develop plans about reforming the law school curriculum.

The following questions are designed to be answered by brief statements, sometimes one or two words, sometimes one or two sentences. We would be delighted if you want to attach a longer description of any program or plan that you regard as particularly worth sharing. In addition, feel free to attach documents you've already prepared for other purposes.

#### I. First Year

1. Do you have an elective in the first year? **No**

If so, what does it consist of?

A limited number of courses specially designed for the first year

A limited number of upper division courses

Any upper division course the student chooses to take

Something else (please describe)

2. Do you offer or require any skills courses or training in the first year other than legal writing and/or Legal Research? If so, please describe.

**No**

If you offer or require legal writing, is it something other than a separate class taught by specially-hired, non-tenure track instructors? If so, please describe.

3. Aside from the electives and skills courses described above, do you require any course other than Torts, Contracts, Civil Procedure, Criminal Law, Property and Constitutional Law?

**No**

If so, what is it?

Legal Methods  
Regulatory Law  
International Law  
Evidence  
Criminal Procedure  
Theories of Law  
Other, please describe

4. Do you offer a separate curriculum in the first year that students can choose, or to which they are assigned? If so, please describe.

**no**

5. Have you made significant changes or innovations in your first year curriculum recently other than those described in response to the foregoing questions? If so please describe.

**We previously offered Torts I in the fall semester as a 2 credit course and Torts II in the spring as a 3 credit course. We have just combined both courses. Torts will now be only offered in the spring as a 4 credit course. We are also in the process of integrating our Legal Methods (writing skills) and Legal Research classes to one course entitled 'Legal Practice.'**

## II. Second and Third Years

1. Do you offer a specialized track or concentration program in any of the following areas?

Business Law  
Public Law  
**International Law**  
Transnational Law  
Social Justice  
Criminal Law and Procedure  
Other, please describe

## **Environmental**

### **International Law**

Requires courses that other students can take as well (please specify)

#### **International Law**

Offers special courses (please describe) **3 credits from a list of courses including: Asian Comparative Law, Law & Society in CHina, Law & Society in Japan, Native Hawaiian Rights, Pacific Islands Legal Systems**

Requires special courses (please describe) **8 cred. from a list: Adv. Legal Studies (variety of topics), Asian Comp. Labor Law, Chin. Bus. Law, Dom, Ocean & Coastal Law, Externship, Immigration Law, Imm. Clinic, Int Bus. Trans, Int' Env. etc.**

Provides placements, internships or clinical program (please describe) **12 credit externships in Pacific and Asia**

Grants a certificate (please tell us for what) **yes Pacific Asian Legal Studies Certificate (PALS)**

Other features (please describe) **lectures, programs, guest speakers, social, extracurricular, community services,**

### **Environmental Law**

Requires courses that other students can take as well (please specify)

#### **Environmental law, Admin. Law**

Offers special courses (please describe) **8 cred. from Land Use Mgmt, Water Resources Control, Domestic Ocean & Coastal, Env. Lit. Sem., Intl Env. Law, Hazardous Waste, Env. Compliance & Reg. Industries, Wildlife & Nat. Resources Law, Topics**

Requires special courses (please describe) **Complete 1 of the following: Native Hawaiian Rts. Remedies, Neg. & ADR, Con Law II, Federal Courts**

Provides placements, internships or clinical program (please describe) **yes**

Grants a certificate (please tell us for what) **Environmental Law**

#### **Certificate - with list of requirements**

Other features (please describe) **lectures, programs, guest speakers, extracurricular (eg. stream cleaning), social (eg. hikes), community activities, participation in national programs, moot court competitions**

2. Apart from the standard live client clinics, and the clinical programs described in your answer to the previous question, do you offer any other kinds of clinical programs? If so, please describe.

**no**

3. What joint degree or accelerated degree programs do you offer?

\* Asian studies \* business administration \* history \* library and information science \* political science \* psychology \* social work \* urban and regional planning

4. Other than the programs described above, do you have any other interdisciplinary programs of note?

no

5. Have you made significant changes or innovations in your second and third year curriculum recently other than those described in response to the foregoing questions? If so please describe.

**Yes, we just completed our second 'January term' - three weeks of mini- 1 credit courses. January 2005 we offered 3 courses and January 2006 we offered 5 courses. They start one week before the regular term and overlap two weeks into the regular term. Distinguished visiting professors come to Hawaii to teach in the program. We also will be offering our own Summer Law Program beginning this summer 2006. We offered a program many years ago but in recent years, it has been run by the Univ. of Mississippi. Other innovations - we have offered many more courses recently under 'Avanced Legal Studies' - one time offerings either by visitors or on an experimental basis. We recently received federal funding for Center of Excellence in Native Hawaiian Law, allowing us to expand our Native Hawaiian/Indigenous Law program.**

### III. Curricular Reform Process

1. Did you gather data in connection with any of the curriculum reforms described earlier? If yes, and if you can share them, please attach a copy or describe their general findings.

**Not really. We had several professors expressing an interest in coming to Hawaii in January. Enrollment has not been a problem during our January term.**

2. How did the most significant curricular change in your school in the last 10 years come about - - who initiated the change and by what process?

**1. Our student enrollment, number of full-time faculty and resources have increased over the last 10 years, enabling us to be more creative and responsive to changes in our curriculum. 2. Our new Dean, who started in fall 2003, brought new initiatives,e.g. the January term and bringing the Summer Law Program back to our Law School for full-time administration rather than continuing to partner with another Law School. The new Center of Excellence in Native Hawaiian Law was also started under his leadership, expanding the number of courses offered in this area. 3. Our 2003 ABA Self Study was preceded by a year long review of our curriculum spearheaded by our former dean and carried out by the Academic**

**Standards Committee. Among the results of the study were the goals to formalize and add more structure to our legal writing program (including adding a writing component across the curriculum), expand in areas like business/commercial related courses, and add professionalism/ethics components in all courses across the curriculum. 4. Our Curriculum Committee also receives and reviews suggestions for new courses.**

#### IV. Next Steps

1. What information would you like to receive about curricular reform?

**anything you have.**

2. Would you be interested in presenting any curricular reform(s) that you are undertaking in a special session at an AALS annual meeting? Which one(s)?

**no**

If so, would you be interested in doing so at the next (2007) meeting? It will be held in San Francisco, and spec