

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 21st 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.

Yes, the course is taught by tenure track, substantive law faculty members, including the dean.

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?

Yes

If so, what is it?

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

Appellae Advocacy, Professional Responsibility, Busniess Organizations, Lawyering Skills Practicum, Wills and Trusts

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.

N/A

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.

N/A

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

- Requires courses that other students can take as well (please specify)
- Offers special courses (please describe)
- Requires special courses (please describe)
 - Provides placements, internships or clinical program (please describe)
 - Grants a certificate (please tell us for what)
- Other features (please describe)

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.

Our Lawyering Skills Practicum, a 3-credit, required 3d year course, provides a clinical experience. A simulated case commences when a student client, who has previously been given a script, describes the client's legal problem. The student client interviews a student law firm. During the interview the student firm determines the nature of the problem and arranges for representation and fee. The firm is responsible for routine preparation of the lawsuit. It typically begins with research of the problem and the filing of a complaint or petition, or alternatively, an answer or response in either a civil or a domestic matter. Discovery follows with written interrogatories, oral depositions, motions for admissions, affidavits, independent investigation, and all other usual discovery methods. At the conclusion of discovery, the litigant chooses mediation or arbitration as the means of terminating the litigation. Thereafter, a judgment must be prepared and the judge's approval attained. Retired judges and full-time faculty members teach the course. We also offer an extensive externship program.

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

JD/MBA and JD/MPA

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.

N/A

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.

N/A

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?

The Lawyering Skills Practicum course, described previously, was implemented 9 year ago and was the result of an effort by the entire faculty to require skills training for graduates.

IV. Next Steps

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

Whatever information that arises.

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