

Call for Participation in a Discussion Group on
A UNIQUE APPROACH TO ACCESS TO JUSTICE:
TRAINING LAWYERS READY TO SERVE

Abstracts due: August 25, 2017

The Annual Meeting Program Committee for 2016 introduced a new program format, Discussion Groups, to facilitate scholarly discussion and engagement. Discussion Groups provide a small group of faculty with the opportunity to engage in a sustained conversation about a topic of interest. Discussion Group participants are expected to write and share a short presentation abstract (3 pages) as part of their participation. The Discussion Group sessions, however, will not feature formal presentations. Instead, the abstracts are intended to facilitate a lively and engaging real-time discussion among the participants. Participants in this Discussion Group will consist of a mix of the people identified in the original proposal submitted to the Program Committee along with additional individuals selected on the basis of this call for participation. There will be limited audience seating for those not selected in advance to be discussion participants.

The following is a Call for Participation in a Discussion Group on *A UNIQUE APPROACH TO ACCESS TO JUSTICE: TRAINING LAWYERS READY TO SERVE* to be held at the AALS Annual Meeting, Friday, January 5, 2018, from 1:30-3:15 p.m., in San Diego.

Description

This session is designed to promote discussion about implementing key ABA initiatives for training lawyers who are ready to serve the underserved and are competent to do so. For justice to be accessible, lawyers must be ready and able to perform their role in both a cost-effective and economically-sustainable manner. Moreover, law students must understand the nature of the problems, both legal and societal, and embrace their calling to serve and lead those who need our professional services.

Most programs look at access to justice from the client perspective—how to get clients to the resources from which they could get help. To compliment those programs, this panel will focus on training lawyers who are ready to provide affordable, meaningful legal service to the

poor and middle class through a practice-ready curriculum combining simulation, clinic experience and a philosophy of servant leadership while emphasizing the role technology plays in an efficient and effective practice. Many law schools struggle to meet the technological competence, practice readiness and access to justice expectations of the ABA; this discussion will explore a possible template for accomplishing all three benchmarks through proven programs.

This session is designed to provide a meaningful toolkit for change. After opening remarks, discussion will begin with a brief overview of pro bono and public service law school models. The focus will then shift to center on the development of courses, integration between departments, and post-graduate training that creates lawyers ready and able to serve the public. The panel will address the challenges of changing traditional teaching modes (legal writing focused on memos or appellate briefs) to more useful products (demand letters, petitions, discovery) that indigent clients are more likely to need. The panel will also discuss the integration of the written product with simulation courses, clinic experiences, and the Legal Mapmaker solo/small firm jump-start program for graduates.

Call for Abstracts

The Annual Meeting Program Committee invites faculty and administrators who would like to join this Discussion Group to submit a three-page abstract **by August 25**. Current organizers and confirmed discussion participants include [James Wren, Baylor Law School](#), [Elizabeth Fraley, Baylor Law School](#), [Royal Ferguson, UNT School of Law](#), and [Jeanne Charn, Harvard Law School](#).

Space in this Discussion Group is limited; the Committee, along with the faculty who proposed this discussion, will select the remaining discussion participants from the abstracts submitted. At the AALS Annual Meeting in January, selected participants will make a one-two minute presentation during the Discussion Group. The remaining time will be devoted to a moderated, roundtable group discussion.

Each submission for this Discussion Group should include:

- The title of the submitted presentation/paper;
- The name, school and email of the applying participant;
- A three-page, double-spaced abstract; and
- The curriculum vitae of the applying participant.

In reviewing the submitted abstracts, the discussion group organizer and selection committee will consider the following:

- The fit and overall quality of the abstract for the Discussion Group;

- The diversity that the applying participant may bring in terms of a variety of factors including viewpoint diversity, institutional affiliation and status (tenure-track, non-tenure track, tenured); and if applicable
- The applying participant's willingness to publish his or her paper along with other Discussion Group papers.

Abstracts are due by **August 25, 2017** and should be submitted using the [online submission form](#).