

Strategic Plan Stakeholder Submissions: Law Students' Society

Submitted to FAC: November 10, 2015 (UPDATED November 12, 2015)

Background:

The Faculty Advisory Committee (“FAC”) asked the Allard Law Students’ Society (“LSS”), as an identified stakeholder (namely, JD students) to submit initial feedback regarding the 2016 Strategic Plan. In particular, the FAC asked the LSS to submit feedback in relation to which items and initiatives on the 2010 Plan it considered essential and optimal, as well as submit any items the LSS believed are essential or optimal, but are not included in the 2010 Plan. An index of these submissions is provided at the end. This is only the first phase: the FAC intends on using this feedback to create a first draft, which will be put to student-wide consultation in 2016.

Coordinated by an informal subcommittee of the LSS, comprising of Kristy Tymos (President), Matthew Tse (VP – Academic Affairs), and Joshua Abaki (Senator), this LSS Submission was compiled after consultation with the elected members of the ALSS Executive and the Academic Council. These JD students were asked to submit written feedback on the same question posed by the FAC. This group of students are all elected and comprise of students from all three years of the JD program. In addition to written feedback, the LSS conducted an in-person executive meeting on November 5, 2015, and organized a Town Hall with Dean Dauvergne, which was attended by students-at-large. The following is a list of the students from the LSS Executive and Academic Council from whom written submissions were sought and consolidated:

- 1) Kristy Tymos (President), 3L
- 2) Matthew Tse (VP – Academic Affairs), 3L
- 3) Joshua Abaki (Senator), 2L
- 4) Mischa Smolkin (Director of Sports and Clubs), 2L
- 5) Allanah Smith (Director of Communications), 2L
- 6) Benjamin Fischer (Co-VP – Student Affairs), 2L
- 7) Scott Whitley (Co-VP – Student Affairs), 2L
- 8) Jennifer Horton (VP – Finance), 2L
- 9) Benjamin Israel (Director of AMS Relations), 2L
- 10) Nicole Iaci (Co-Director of Indigenous Affairs), 3L
- 11) Carly Teillet (Co-Director of Indigenous Affairs), 2L
- 12) Catriona Dooley (Ombudsperson), 3L
- 13) Alyssa Leung (Academic Director), 2L
- 14) Megan O’Neill (Academic Director), 2L
- 15) Daniel Schipper (Academic Director), 2L
- 16) Erica Zacharias (Academic Director), 2L
- 17) Aashish Kohli (1L Academic Representative), 1L
- 18) Gia Bogetti (1L Academic Representative), 1L
- 19) Alexei Paish (1L Academic Representative), 1L
- 20) Alex Roberts (1L Academic Representative), 1L

Vision 1: Access to Education

*The LSS submits that ensuring access to legal education for students from a broad range of backgrounds, interests, aspirations and circumstances should be an **essential** part of the Strategic Plan. In particular, financial obstacles should not inhibit otherwise qualified candidates from attending Allard Law. Nor should financial factors restrict the freedom of students to pursue a variety of meaningful career paths. To this extent, the LSS urges the FAC to improve availability and amount of financial aid coupled with strategic recruitment are included in the 2016 Plan.*

Strategic Recruitment

- 1) Attract academically outstanding, intellectually curious, domestic and international JD students who are committed to professional practice and serving society
 - a. Essential: A.1.I.
- 2) Promote legal education as an achievable and appealing goal for a broad range of students, including students from underrepresented groups such as indigenous communities and first generation university students.
 - a. Essential: A.2.I., C.2.II.
 - b. Optimal: A.2.IV.

Financial Aid

- 1) Develop comprehensive financial support to attract the most highly qualified domestic and international incoming **JD** students.
 - a. Essential: this is a JD variation of A.2.III.
- 2) Ensure sufficient needs based aid for J.D. students that addresses barriers to legal education and facilitates freedom of career choice after graduation.
 - a. Essential: A.2.II.
- 3) Provide in-program and exit scholarships to encourage students to pursue public interest career options.
 - a. **This is a new item not on the 2010 Plan. The LSS believes it is ESSENTIAL.**
- 4) Partner with the university, government, donors and other groups to ensure student access to legal education, regardless of financial and other barriers
 - a. Essential: A. 5. IV.
 - b. Optimal: A.5.V.

Vision 2: Excellence in Educational Experiences

*The LSS submits that ensuring a high quality legal education is the cornerstone of any law school, and related initiatives are **essential** to the Strategic Plan. In particular, excellence in educational experiences are a function of a broad curriculum that (i) provides thorough training in substantive law; (ii) encourages an appreciation of legal theory; (iii) provides “hands-on” training of practical skills; and (iv) promotes a culture of professional ethics. The LSS submits that this can be achieved through emphasis on curriculum design, experiential learning opportunities, pedagogical considerations in appointments, and adequate resource support for educators.*

Ensure a Broad Curriculum

- 1) Ensure that the J.D. program offers a broad range of courses in substantive law, legal theory, skills, and ethics.
 - a. Essential: A.3.I.
- 2) Enhance opportunities for integrating faculty research into teaching, such as through student involvement in research centres or specialized seminars.
 - a. Increase opportunities for JD students to be involved in research
 - i. See *e.g.* optimal B.3.IV (JD research assistantships for credit)
 - b. Increased faculty support for journal articles by JD students
 - i. This is a new item that the LSS considers **optimal**.
- 3) Deliver a broad and relevant program that prepares students for professional legal practice, service to the community, and leadership locally, nationally and internationally (A.3)
 - a. Essential: A.3.I., A.3.II
 - b. Optimal: A.3.III., A.3.IV.
- 4) Develop summer programs or intensive courses for J.D. students to facilitate flexibility.
 - a. Optimal: A.3.IV.
- 5) Ensure continued excellence in training in legal research and writing for JD students, starting with the first year of the program and including an intensive research experience in the upper years
 - a. Essential: A.3.II
- 6) Promote and facilitate inter and multi-disciplinary research and teaching by collaborating with other faculties to develop multi-disciplinary courses
 - a. Essential: B.3.VI.
 - b. Optimal: A.3.III.
 - c. *Commentary*: tangible measurement and projects could include measuring amount of collaboration with other faculties for research funding submissions to increase funding base
- 7) Strengthen and expand on current specialization opportunities
 - a. **This is a new item not on the 2010 Plan. The LSS believes it is ESSENTIAL.**
 - b. *Commentary*: The LSS believes that strategic faculty appointment is critical to achieving this goal, and notes for example the present situation concerning the Centre for Law and Environment.

Experiential Learning

- 1) Develop options for J.D. students to serve as research assistants for credit
 - a. Optimal: B.4.IV.
- 2) Ensure that the J.D. program offers enhanced opportunities for experiential learning and public service through clinics, externships and other forms of community service learning.
 - a. Essential: A.3.I.
 - a. *Commentary*: The LSS suggests related optimal metrics or measures such as: (i) providing each student with an experiential learning opportunity before graduation; and (ii) setting up an office of experiential education with dedicated staff to help coordinate both internal and external opportunities.

- 3) Expand opportunities for UBC Law students to provide legal services to underserved communities through clinical and externship programs (e.g., by providing greater support to LSLAP as part of experiential learning program)
 - a. Related (essential): D.1.I.

International Experience

- 1) Strategically evaluate and create student opportunities for international engagement (e.g., exchange opportunities, joint program agreements), especially with renowned international partner institutions.
 - a. **This is a new item not on the 2010 Plan. The LSS believes it is OPTIMAL.**
 - b. *Commentary:* The LSS believes that the Law School should consider its objectives in relation to international partnerships, and in particular, explore opportunities with renowned institutions using the UBC brand and connections from our renowned faculty members.

Delivery of Curriculum

Faculty Support

- 1) Develop and encourage faculty participation in a program of teaching workshops along with individualized support for faculty members
 - a. Essential: A.4.IV.
- 2) Develop a program of teaching support for full-time and part-time faculty members, including drawing from strong graduate students who may provide teaching support (e.g., TA).
 - a. Essential: A.4.II.
 - b. *Commentary:* The LSS notes that support for faculty members is essentially linked to the effective delivery of curriculum. To this extent, the LSS urges the Law School to consider creative use of existing resources (e.g., TAs, students) in light of financial constraints.

Appointments, Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure

- 1) Attract, recruit and retain effective, experienced and innovative teachers.
 - a. Essential: A.4.I.
 - b. *Commentary:* The LSS suggests strategic appointment could expressly take into account the following optimal considerations to achieve this essential goal:
 - 1) Demonstrated Commitment to Teaching Expectations
 - c. Implement community-wide expectations with respect to teaching including office hours, stated learning objectives, syllabi, methods of evaluation, and uniform educational experience – essential: A.4.V.
 - 2) Demonstrated Commitment to Pedagogy
 - a. Engage committed teachers and students in an active learning environment informed by research and effective approaches to pedagogy – see generally, A.4

Dynamic Faculty, Alumni, and Student Engagement

- 1) Foster a culture of engagement among students, faculty and alumni
 - a. This is generally based on Vision C in the 2010 plan
 - b. Optimal: **B.4.II.**
 - c. *Commentary:* The LSS suggests express inclusion of certain metrics for reference, such as student feedback on surveys (e.g., the LSSSE), and alumni office observations
- 2) Essential: C.2.I.
 - a. Strengthen opportunities for faculty, alumni and senior students to provide student mentorship and advice
- 3) Essential: C.2.III.
 - a. Support and encourage faculty participation in student activities and public and professional events

Vision 3: Promote Wellbeing and Inclusion

*The LSS submits that promoting student well-being and inclusion are **essential** to the Strategic Plan of any law school that seeks to produce mentally stable and respectful professionals. This includes instituting tangible support measures as well as general promotion of a collegial culture that recognizes, accepts, and supports the diverse interests of JD students.*

Supports

- 1) Assist students to meet their academic and career goals, including non-traditional and academia paths.
 - a. Essential: A.5.I, A.5.IV.
- 2) Increased focus and support of students mental health and well being
 - a. This is a new item not on the 2010 Plan. The LSS believes it is **ESSENTIAL**.
- 3) Ensure support for library staff to keep the Law Library equipped with up-to-date technology and clean and ample facilities for law students.
 - a. This is a new item not on the 2010 Plan. The LSS believes it is **ESSENTIAL**.
- 4) Recognize and support the needs of students entering UBC Law from a broad range of backgrounds and life experiences.
 - a. Optimal: A.2.IV.
 - b. Optimal (new item): Increased staffing for Student Services in order to provide adequate support to JD students

Culture

- 1) Encouraging and fostering a strong, collegial sense of community among students.
 - a. In general, see Vision C on 2010 Plan
 - b. Essential: C.1.I., C.1.III.

Vision 4: Facilitate the Transition from Outstanding Students to Distinguished Alumni

*The LSS submits that alumni are an integral part to the success of the law school, and having a committed body of distinguished and supportive alumni benefits all stakeholders, including current students. The LSS considers it **essential** that the Law School provides support in making current students become future distinguished alumni.*

- 1) Assist students to meet their career goals
 - a. Essential: A.5.IV.
 - b. Optimal: A.5.V.
 - c. *Commentary:* Suggested metric includes percentage of students seeking articling positions who obtain one within 6 months of graduation (e.g., 99%).
- 2) Foster a culture of engagement and build relationships between students, recent alumni, and distinguished alumni, such as through mentorship opportunities
 - a. This is a new item not on the 2010 Plan. The LSS believes it is **ESSENTIAL**.

Vision 5: Expand the Faculty's Prestigious Reputation

*The LSS submits that students and alumni benefit from the increased prestige of the school's national and international reputation, and that measures towards this goal are **optimal**. The LSS believes that enhanced reputation creates synergistic effects for student and faculty recruitment objectives as well as procuring financial resources that enhance the student experience.*

Outreach

- 1) Conduct outreach in order to raise the profile of UBC Law in the local, national and international legal communities.
 - a. **This is a new item not on the 2010 Plan. The LSS believes it is OPTIMAL.**

Renowned Faculty Research

- 1) Improve the quality and increase the quantity of research and scholarship to establish UBC Law as a world-leading centre of legal research
 - a. Optimal: B.1.I.
- 2) Develop and implement a strategy to increase the number of external awards to faculty for their research and scholarship
 - a. Optimal: **B.2.V.**
- 3) Increase opportunities for faculty to share with students their outstanding research that influence scholarly and public policy debates and the development of the law.
 - a. This is a new item not on the 2010 Plan. The LSS believes it is **OPTIMAL**.
 - b. *Commentary: LSS members consulted arrived at this formulation after considering B.3.I., but thought that it would be **optimal** if there were other opportunities for faculty to share their research with students outside the classroom. Examples include sharing through student groups that may have congruent topical interests (e.g., the Entertainment Law club, the IP law club, the Asia Pacific Law Club, etc.) The LSS also submits that faculty could involve students in research through research assistant positions (this is discussed in other parts of the LSS submissions). The clause regarding "influence scholarly*

and public policy debates" was added to accentuate faculty research that may be of particular topical interest at the time, which may involve projects for faculty with certain groups like the BC Law Institute, law reform commissions, or the media. The LSS submits that students can also be enlisted to assist in these "extracurricular" projects, as they would both be an enriching experience and also of assistance to the faculty member's research agenda.

Improve the faculty's website and online presence

- a. **This is a new item not on the 2010 Plan. The LSS believes it is OPTIMAL.**

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ESSENTIAL ITEMS

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A.4.I., A.4.II., A.4.IV.
A.5.I, A.5.IV.,
B.3.VI
C.1.I., C.1.III.
C.2.I., C.2.II., C.2.III.
D.1.I.

OPTIMAL ITEMS

A.2.IV.
A.3.III., A.3.IV.
A.5.V.
B.1.I., B.2.V., B.3.IV., B.4.II. B.4.IV

NEW ITEMS

Essential:

- Provide in-program and exit scholarships to encourage students to pursue public interest career options.
- Foster a culture of engagement and build relationships between students, recent alumni, and distinguished alumni, such as through mentorship opportunities
- Increased focus and support of students mental health and well being
- Ensure support for library staff to keep the Law Library equipped with up-to-date technology and clean and ample facilities for law students.
- Strengthen and expand on current specialization opportunities

Optimal:

- Strategically evaluate and create student opportunities for international engagement (e.g., exchange opportunities, joint program agreements), especially with renowned international partner institutions.
- Increased staffing for Student Services in order to provide adequate support to JD students
- ~~Develop and implement a strategy to increase the number of external awards to faculty for their research and scholarship~~
- Conduct outreach in order to raise the profile of UBC Law in the local, national and international legal communities.
- Improve the faculty's website and online presence
- Increased faculty support for journal articles by JD students
- Increase opportunities for faculty to share with students their outstanding research that influence scholarly and public policy debates and the development of the law.