



THE UNIVERSITY *of*
MISSISSIPPI
SCHOOL OF LAW

2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

As the state of Mississippi's flagship and only publicly-funded law school, the University of Mississippi School of Law prepares students for the practice of law, provides legal needs to Mississippians across the state, and expands the breadth of legal knowledge through scholarly research. It is our goal to not only succeed in our mission, but to excel.

In the fall of 2020, our committee of faculty, staff and students began revising the previous strategic plan, introduced in 2016. The result of the newly devised plan will guide our administration through 2025. It will focus on the future of the Law School and the advancement of our institution in an ever-changing landscape of legal education and law practice.

The following are our UM Law 2025 Flagship Goals:

- Achieve a 10% or greater increase in Mississippi resident and non-resident applications over those received in the 2019-2020 admissions cycle
- Achieve a 90% or better bar passage rate for first-time takers
- Achieve a 90% or better ten-month-after-graduation employment rate for graduates
- Increase the rate of alumni participation in annual giving by 100% over the rate attained in 2019-20
- “Top 75 by 2025” – Achieve a rank of 75 in the U.S. News and World Report Law School rankings by 2025

As you all know, we have made incredible strides in these areas over the last few years. The quality of our incoming students has gradually increased, we have seen more diverse classes, our bar passage rate has continued to climb, our students are landing federal clerkships and other fantastic job opportunities, and our institution is now ranked in the Top 100 by U.S. News and World Report. However, we can always improve. We want to continue preparing our students and serving Mississippians in the best ways possible.

I want to sincerely thank everyone who worked diligently to bring this plan to life. I encourage all of you to review this action-based plan, and I encourage any feedback or discussion. We have an amazing faculty and staff at the UM School of Law, and invite all of you to continue your contribution in making our school a better and more inclusive place for everyone.

Sincerely,

Susan H. Duncan

Dean, UM Law

PREFACE

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In the Spring of 2015, the Law School began an intensive strategic planning process emphasizing the governance values of inclusion and deliberation. That process resulted in a proposed strategic plan which endorsed five flagship goals and ten areas of strategic priority.

In the early Spring of 2016, the proposed strategic plan was discussed in a joint faculty-staff meeting, revised in light of comments, and then endorsed in a series of votes by faculty and staff. The administration implemented the strategic plan from 2016-2020, a period which included a successful ABA site visit in 2018-2019.

In the Fall of 2020, a newly-constituted strategic planning committee began its work to update the 2016 Strategic Plan with two goals in mind: (1) to navigate the current challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic that began in the Spring of 2020, and (2) to look beyond the pandemic to plan for the future. The strategic planning committee held regular meetings during the fall and spring semesters, and committee members solicited feedback from faculty, staff, administration, and students. In the late Spring of 2021, the proposed updates to the strategic plan were presented in a joint faculty-staff meeting, revised in light of comments, and then endorsed in votes by faculty and staff.

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The implementation and assessment of the strategic plan is the ultimate responsibility of the Dean's Office. The Dean will designate personnel (e.g., an associate dean, advisory group, or committee) to assist with implementation and assessment. The Dean will also ensure that regular progress reports are made to faculty and staff each semester by appropriate personnel. The Law School will follow this strategic plan through the year 2025 or until revised.

MISSION

As an outstanding public law school, the University of Mississippi School of Law leads, excels, and inspires by preparing students for the practice of law in a changing global marketplace, expanding the horizons of legal knowledge through scholarly research, and serving diverse communities in the state, region, nation, and world. As it pursues its mission, the Law School also has a special responsibility to the State of Mississippi as the State's only public law school and a central component of its flagship university.

The Law School graduates innovative, practice-ready lawyers who enhance the legal profession, promote the cause of justice, and serve the public. The Law School empowers students to reach their highest potential through a curriculum centered on doctrinal courses, legal research and writing, skills training, clinical instruction, externships, and professional ethics. As a state school, the Law School has a special commitment to educate state residents and train lawyers who will serve the needs of the State of Mississippi.

The Law School advances legal knowledge through the publication and presentation of original scholarly research. The Law School's support for scholarship and a vibrant culture of inquiry provides a crucial

foundation for the teaching and service components of the Law School’s mission—in addition to the intrinsic value of the expansion of knowledge.

The Law School serves diverse communities through its programs and personnel in order to transform lives and promote access to justice, legal professionalism, progress, reform, and the public interest. The Law School’s clinics, centers, institutes, and programs are essential to the Law School’s service mission, which has a special emphasis on Mississippi communities.

VALUES

In pursuing its mission, the Law School:

- Affirms its purpose as a professional school
- Strives for excellence in teaching, research, and service
- Provides an affordable and outstanding legal education
- Offers a wide array of high-quality and innovative programs
- Embraces a “students-first” philosophy of education and empowerment
- Promotes a rich culture of scholarship and intellectual inquiry
- Serves the public interest and the cause of justice
- Strives for diversity, inclusion, and outreach—with a special focus on historically underrepresented and excluded groups
- Protects academic freedom and integrity
- Cultivates a civil community of mutual respect and shared governance
- Practices good stewardship of resources
- Commits to energetic engagement with alumni
- Affirms its commitment to the University of Mississippi Creed

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI CREED

The University of Mississippi is a community of learning dedicated to nurturing excellence in intellectual inquiry and personal character in an open and diverse environment. As a voluntary member of this community:

I believe in respect for the dignity of each person.

I believe in fairness and civility.

I believe in personal and professional integrity.

I believe in academic honesty.

I believe in academic freedom.

I believe in good stewardship of our resources.

I pledge to uphold these values and encourage others to follow my example.

PROGRAMS AND PERSONNEL

The Law School encompasses a wide range of components that form a mutually supportive, interdependent, and overlapping set of programs and personnel, all of which contribute to the mission and values of the Law School. The Law School’s components include students, staff, faculty, the Dean’s Office, administrative offices,

faculty and staff committees, the Grisham Law Library, the clinical programs, the advocacy programs, the Academic Workshop Program, law journals, student organizations, the Cambridge Program, the Business Law Institute, the Mississippi Law Research Institute, the National Sea Grant Law Center, the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Legal Program, the Center for Continuing Legal Education, the Mississippi Judicial College, and the LL.M. and non-J.D. Certificate Programs in Air and Space Law.

STAKEHOLDERS

The Law School affirms its deep commitment to its stakeholders: students, alumni, staff, faculty, the University, bench and bar, and the State of Mississippi.

UM LAW 2025 FLAGSHIP GOALS

The following set of flagship goals on issues of overarching importance will receive special attention during the implementation of the 2025 Strategic Plan.

- Achieve a 10% or greater increase in Mississippi resident and non-resident applications over those received in the 2019-2020 admissions cycle
- Achieve a 90% or better bar passage rate for first-time takers
- Achieve a 90% or better ten-month-after-graduation employment rate for graduates
- Increase the rate of alumni participation in annual giving by 100% over the rate attained in 2019-2020
- “Top 75 by 2025” – Achieve a rank of 75 in the U.S. News and World Report Law School rankings by 2025

UM LAW 2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

During the planning process, the Law School identified ten areas of strategic priority. The areas are listed below and numbered to promote easy reading and administrative convenience, not to indicate a ranking of priorities.

1. Admissions & Student Recruitment
2. Student Employment & Bar Passage
3. Alumni Relations & Development
4. Marketing & Communications
5. Diversity & Inclusion
6. Curriculum & Instructional Innovation
7. Research & Intellectual Life
8. Service & Community Engagement
9. Budget & Finance
10. Coordination & Collaboration

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1 – ADMISSIONS & STUDENT RECRUITMENT

We recognize that our students are future lawyers and leaders, men and women who will shape the future—globally and locally. The Law School is committed to recruiting a student body that is both academically strong and diverse. Moreover, as a state institution, the Law School has a particular responsibility to educate residents who will serve the State of Mississippi. With the decline in applications to law schools nationwide, recruitment has become extremely competitive. The Law School has maintained the academic strength and diversity of its class, and we further seek to explore and implement initiatives to continue our historical successes in an increasingly competitive recruiting environment. In addition to the initiatives below, the Law School also adopts a special overarching flagship goal—achieving a 10% or greater increase in Mississippi resident and non-resident law school applications over applications received in the 2019-2020 admissions cycle.

OBJECTIVES FOR ADMISSIONS & STUDENT RECRUITMENT

1. Increase the number, quality, and diversity of applicants to the Law School, with particular emphasis on Mississippi residents.
2. Increase personal contact with the Law School’s applicant pool by utilizing faculty, staff, students, and alumni in student recruitment efforts.
3. Increase scholarship funds for high-achieving and diverse students.
4. Monitor and reevaluate class size in light of the evolving legal marketplace.
5. Ensure that the Law School continues to recruit and admit an increasingly diverse student body.

OBJECTIVE 1. INCREASE THE NUMBER, QUALITY, AND DIVERSITY OF APPLICANTS TO THE LAW SCHOOL, WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON MISSISSIPPI RESIDENTS.

Initiatives.

- A. Expand recruiting visits by admissions staff to undergraduate institutions with a focus on the Law School’s traditional feeder schools as well as regional and national schools known for sending graduates to law schools.
- B. Offer in-person and virtual pre-law courses at HBCUs and other Mississippi colleges and universities.
- C. Build and strengthen relationships with pre-law advisors at undergraduate institutions, including with those within the Southern Association of Pre-Law Advisors and the Southwestern Association of Pre-Law Advisors.
- D. Develop initiatives to recruit students to the LL.M. and non-J.D. Certificate programs in Air and Space Law.
- E. Develop pipeline initiatives targeted toward undergraduate institutions and high schools in the state of Mississippi to increase the number of Mississippians applying to law school.
- F. Invite departments at the University and at the Law School’s traditional feeder schools to bring groups of prospective law students to the Law School for visits and presentations.
- G. Develop robust marketing and communications strategies focused on student recruiting, including web- and social media-based plans and external publications.
- H. Admit a limited number of students as Public Interest Law Fellows with stipends and scholarships.
- I. Host a CLEO program or pre-law boot camp.
- J. Develop an introductory video curriculum similar to Harvard Law School’s “Zero-L”.

- K. Explore increasing resources devoted to the admissions office to ensure sufficient staffing and budget to implement these strategic planning goals.

OBJECTIVE 2. INCREASE PERSONAL CONTACT WITH THE LAW SCHOOL'S APPLICANT POOL BY UTILIZING FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENTS, AND ALUMNI IN STUDENT RECRUITMENT EFFORTS.

Initiatives.

- A. Continue to have the Dean, associate deans, faculty, and staff reach out to prospective and admitted students via emails, phone calls, and in-office visits to provide information about the Law School and its programs.
- B. Schedule more classroom visits by faculty to the Law School's major in-state feeder schools.
- C. Continue to have the Dean, associate deans, and admissions staff contact Mississippi residents and non-residents attending undergraduate institutions in Mississippi after each administration of the LSAT to encourage them to apply to the Law School.
- D. Increase the involvement of current law students and law student organizations, such as the Dean's Leadership Council, in the recruitment of prospective and admitted students.
- E. Increase the involvement of the Law School's alumni in contacting prospective and admitted students and pre-law advisors from their undergraduate institutions.
- F. Increase the number of Law School alumni at recruitment events for prospective and admitted students in their geographic area.
- G. Develop a database of Law School alumni so that the admissions office can involve Law School alumni more actively in recruiting prospective and admitted students.

OBJECTIVE 3. INCREASE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS FOR HIGH-ACHIEVING AND DIVERSE STUDENTS.

Initiatives.

- A. Develop fundraising plans through the Dean's Office and development officers for the Law School to increase the scholarship budget for admitted students.
- B. Explore initiatives with the University administration for supporting and supplementing the Law School's scholarship budget, such as through continuation of non-resident tuition waivers.
- C. Explore initiatives to achieve greater flexibility with existing scholarship funds by loosening and eliminating restrictions on the awarding of those funds.

OBJECTIVE 4. CONTINUE TO MONITOR AND REEVALUATE CLASS SIZE IN LIGHT OF THE EVOLVING LEGAL MARKETPLACE.

Initiative.

- A. Ensure that the Dean's Office, in consultation with the Admissions Office and the faculty, annually considers appropriate admissions targets for the size of the entering class based on the state of the legal job market and the Law School's overall placement rate.

OBJECTIVE 5. ENSURE THAT THE LAW SCHOOL CONTINUES TO RECRUIT AND ADMIT AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE STUDENT BODY.

Initiatives.

- A. Ensure that pipeline initiatives include focus on undergraduate institutions and high schools throughout Mississippi that will assist in the recruitment of diverse students.
- B. Focus the involvement of alumni, current law students, and law student organizations on diversity objectives and initiatives in recruiting prospective and admitted students.
- C. Engage in periodic review, reporting, and recommendations regarding the effectiveness of the University of Mississippi School of Law Admissions Policy.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Some key indicators of performance and progress for admissions and student recruitment are:

- Expanded recruitment efforts with greater involvement among staff, faculty, students, and alumni
- Expanded recruitment efforts focused on Mississippi resident and diversity applicants
- Increased scholarship funds for recruitment
- Increased total number of applicants and number of Mississippi resident and diversity applicants for the J.D., LL.M., and Certificate in Air and Space Law programs
- Improved credentials of class, resident-nonresident balance, and diversity of class
- Improved academic performance of law students
- Improved first-time test-taker bar passage rate
- Improved ten-month student employment rate

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Implementation and assessment of the objectives and initiatives in this section are primarily the responsibility of (1) the Dean's Office, (2) the Admissions Office and the Assistant Dean for Admissions, (3) the Faculty Admissions and Scholarships Committee, and (4) the Faculty Diversity Committee. At least one general report on admissions and student recruitment should be made to the faculty each semester.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2 – STUDENT EMPLOYMENT & BAR PASSAGE

We recognize that student employment and bar passage are foundational to the Law School’s mission as a professional school. The Law School is dedicated to ensuring that students pass the bar and obtain rewarding employment. In particular, we are committed to securing employment opportunities for our students in a wide variety of settings, including private law firms, public interest organizations, government, and business, and in all locations—within the State of Mississippi, across the nation, and beyond.

The Law School has regularly achieved excellence in employment and bar passage. We have routinely secured (1) an 85% or better employment rate for students within ten months of graduation and (2) an 85% or better bar passage rate for first-time takers. However, we are committed to even greater success. In addition to the specific initiatives set out below, the Law School also adopts two special overarching flagship goals in this area of strategic priority: (1) a 90% or better employment rate for its students within ten months of graduation and (2) a 90% or better bar passage rate for first-time takers.

OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENT EMPLOYMENT AND BAR PASSAGE

1. Improve the Law School’s provision of placement services.
2. Increase faculty involvement in mentoring and career counseling.
3. Improve our curriculum to graduate increasingly practice-ready lawyers.
4. Improve our students’ opportunities for judicial clerkships.
5. Improve our students’ bar passage rate.

OBJECTIVE 1. IMPROVE THE LAW SCHOOL’S PROVISION OF PLACEMENT SERVICES.

Initiatives.

- A. Explore greater staffing and funding resources for student placement needs.
- B. Foster a supportive, engaged, energetic, and service-oriented atmosphere in the career services office for both students and employers.
- C. Require students during their first year of study to meet with placement personnel.
- D. Survey employers to find out their needs and how best to serve them.
- E. Increase the number of networking events in Jackson and in key out-of-state markets such as Memphis, Birmingham, Nashville, and New Orleans.
- F. Coordinate with Law School units such as MLRI to promote employment opportunities.
- G. Identify a network of attorney mentors and connect them with students.
- H. Invite potential employers to speak at the Law School.
- I. Better assist our students in finding employment in a variety of settings, including law firms, government, business, public interest organizations, and J.D. advantage jobs.
- J. Maintain class size at a number appropriate in light of market conditions.

OBJECTIVE 2. INCREASE FACULTY INVOLVEMENT IN MENTORING AND CAREER COUNSELING.

Initiatives.

- A. Develop a faculty advising program to help students with course selection and career options.
- B. Appoint a Faculty Placement Committee charged with activities such as providing placement support, crafting placement initiatives, and developing placement events.
- C. Ensure regular placement reports at faculty meetings by career services personnel and the Faculty Placement Committee.

OBJECTIVE 3. IMPROVE OUR CURRICULUM TO GRADUATE INCREASINGLY PRACTICE-READY LAWYERS.

Initiatives.

- A. Continue the Law School's extensive clinical offerings, emphasis on skills courses, and strong externship and pro bono programs.
- B. Assess the Law School's certificate program and explore its expansion.
- C. Improve curricular offerings that will prepare our students for solo and small-firm practice.
- D. Explore adding professionalism and lawyering to the first-year curriculum.

OBJECTIVE 4. IMPROVE OUR STUDENTS' OPPORTUNITIES FOR JUDICIAL CLERKSHIPS.

Initiatives.

- A. Designate personnel (e.g., a committee, working group, or associate dean) with special responsibility to advise students on the judicial clerkship process.
- B. Hold judicial clerkship events for students each semester to improve the quantity and quality of applications.
- C. Coordinate with the Mississippi Judicial College and other Law School units to develop events and programs to maximize student success in seeking clerkships.
- D. Encourage more students to participate in judicial externships during law school and take steps to help our students obtain these externships.

OBJECTIVE 5. IMPROVE OUR STUDENTS' BAR PASSAGE RATE.

Initiatives.

- A. Hire personnel (e.g., an associate dean or a faculty committee) with special responsibilities to monitor, analyze, and report on bar passage issues.
- B. Continue to study the relationship of admission decisions to bar passage rates.
- C. Continue to study the relationship of curricular decisions—such as course offerings, bar course enrollment, testing methods, grading policies, and probation decisions—to bar passage rates.
- D. Continue to study the relationship of student performance in law school to bar passage rates.

- E. Continue to develop policies and practices to improve our bar passage rate.
- F. Continue to offer supplemental bar preparation courses or programs for students.
- G. Maintain a special bar-study support program for recent graduates who are taking the bar.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Some key indicators of performance and progress for student employment and bar passage are:

- Improved ten-month student employment rate
- Improved student satisfaction with the Office of Career Services
- Improved employer satisfaction with the Office of Career Services
- Increased number of networking events
- Increased number of attorney mentors
- Designate a Faculty Placement Committee
- Increased faculty involvement in mentoring
- Increased number of judicial clerkships
- Improved first-time test-taker bar passage rate

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Implementation and assessment of the objectives and initiatives in this section are primarily the responsibility of (1) the Dean's Office, (2) the Office of Career Services, and (3) appropriate faculty committees—such as the Faculty Placement Committee. At least one general report on placement should be made to faculty each semester.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3 – ALUMNI OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT

We view our alumni as family, and we know that they immeasurably benefit our students and add tremendously to the life of the Law School. We are therefore committed to renewing a greater sense of community with our alumni and reinvigorating a culture of giving. In particular, the Law School acknowledges the importance of private financial support for our students and our programs as student debt increases and state funding diminishes. New scholarships for our students are of special importance. We also recognize the crucial role alumni play in the recruitment and placement of students.

Accordingly, we seek to explore and implement initiatives to create opportunities for alumni outreach and development. The initiatives below include two special Law School flagship goals: (1) increasing the total dollars raised through an upcoming campus wide campaign and (2) increasing the rate of alumni participation in annual giving by 100% over the rate attained in Fiscal Year 2020 (2019-2020).

OBJECTIVES FOR ALUMNI OUTREACH & DEVELOPMENT

1. Ensure proper coordination, staffing, and funding of our alumni outreach and development efforts.
 - a. Ensure, specifically, additional support for annual giving.
2. Increase our alumni outreach by offering more and better-coordinated events in a wider variety of in-state and out-of-state locations.
3. Improve and expand alumni communications through publications and social media.
4. Increase our alumni giving participation rate by 100% from Fiscal Year 2020, and we will substantially increase the number of individual donors to the Annual Fund in order to support essential Law School operations.
5. Establish a new fundraising campaign in conjunction with the University's capital campaign to support student scholarships, creating a multi-donor fund to provide immediate scholarship assistance as well as additional endowed scholarship funds.

OBJECTIVE 1. ENSURE PROPER COORDINATION, STAFFING, AND FUNDING OF OUR ALUMNI OUTREACH EFFORTS.

Initiatives.

- A. Develop plans to coordinate all programs and personnel engaged in alumni outreach, including the Dean, the UM Foundation, the Alumni Association, the Faculty Alumni Committee, Communications, the Office of Admissions, the Office of Career Services, Law School centers and institutes, faculty, staff, and student organizations.
- B. Review the allocation of funds and staff time dedicated to alumni outreach in order to improve efficiency, maximize support for priorities, and determine adequacy of support.
- C. Recruit additional faculty and staff participation in alumni outreach.
- D. Draw on outreach resources of the Law School centers and institutes such as the Mississippi Law Research Institute and the Mississippi Judicial College.

OBJECTIVE 2. INCREASE OUR ALUMNI OUTREACH BY OFFERING MORE AND BETTER-COORDINATED EVENTS IN A WIDER VARIETY OF IN-STATE AND OUT-OF-STATE LOCATIONS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE MORE OUR ALUMNI ARE ENGAGED WITH THE LAW SCHOOL, THE MORE LIKELY THEY ARE TO MAKE A FINANCIAL INVESTMENT IN UM LAW.

Initiatives.

- A. Conduct regular social events in Jackson, the Gulf Coast area, Memphis, and other locations both in-state and out-of-state where we have a significant number of alumni.
- B. Offer events that appeal to diverse groups of alumni—such as the Magnolia Bar, young alumni, and graduates associated with particular activities (e.g., law journals, advocacy programs, or clinics).
- C. Coordinate alumni events with other significant Law School and University events such as panels, lectures, symposia, and SEC sports.
- D. Offer more CLE programs at the Law School, including programs of interest to solo practitioners and small law firms, and recruit more faculty to participate.
- E. Improve the Mississippi Bar Convention alumni events by holding donor receptions, providing special speakers or awards at the Law Alumni Luncheon, and livestreaming the events at the Bar Convention for alumni who do not attend.
- F. Restructure Law Alumni Weekend to attract more participants and explore ways to build on the Alumni Hall of Fame by recognizing a diverse group of accomplished alumni, such as those distinguished by careers in public service, government, and private industry.
 - a. Work to involve younger alumni in Law Alumni Weekend through relevant activities for all ages and introduce a “Young Alumni Hall of Fame” award.
- G. Develop a partnership with the Mississippi bar to place students on bar committees in various substantive areas.
- H. Build on existing virtual (video and Zoom) networks to host bar speakers on a regular basis.
- I. Ensure that all events involving alumni are well organized, scheduled, and publicized.
- J. Designate a staff member to note and recognize significant life events of alumni.
- K. Keep up to date information about career changes, anniversaries, marriages, deaths, births, etc.

OBJECTIVE 3. IMPROVE AND EXPAND ALUMNI COMMUNICATIONS THROUGH PUBLICATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA.

Initiatives.

- A. Build an alumni database accessible to the various constituent offices supporting student recruitment, admissions, career services, development, and alumni engagement.
- B. Reinstitute the *UM Lawyer* magazine (with a possibility of a virtual magazine) and include coverage of:
 - a. A diverse group of alumni in a variety of professional careers;
 - b. New developments in our program of study;
 - c. Accomplishments of our faculty and students; and
 - d. Law School service activities, especially service to the State of Mississippi.
- C. Expand our outreach to alumni through social media.
- D. Continue to publish our alumni e-newsletter and ensure that it regularly includes information on a variety of faculty and student accomplishments.

- E. Promote upcoming events such as conferences, CLE programs, and alumni events on the Law School monitors when alumni are likely to be present.

OBJECTIVE 4. INCREASE OUR ALUMNI GIVING PARTICIPATION RATE BY 100% FROM FISCAL YEAR 2020, AND WE WILL SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL DONORS TO THE ANNUAL FUND IN ORDER TO SUPPORT ESSENTIAL LAW SCHOOL OPERATIONS.

Initiatives.

- A. Explore reorganizing the structure of our giving society program to create new, named giving societies at various giving levels to reinvigorate current supporters and attract new ones.
- B. Consider establishing a class gifts competition for the Annual Fund, using class officers to solicit donations and providing recognition to competition winners on our social media platforms and in publications.
- C. Create a culture of giving among students and recent graduates to encourage support early in one's career, using methods such as establishing a class gift for the graduating class each year that entitles each donor to membership to the Carolyn Ellis Staton Society.
- D. Explore new ways to attract contributions—such as crowd funding—for programs appealing to donors associated with particular constituencies, such as law journals, advocacy programs, and clinics.
- E. Reach out to a more diverse donor base.
- F. Raise funds to endow new oral advocacy competitions.

OBJECTIVE 5. ESTABLISH A NEW FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS, CREATING A MULTI-DONOR FUND TO PROVIDE IMMEDIATE SCHOLARSHIP ASSISTANCE AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS.

Initiatives.

- A. Conduct a short-term campaign to support student scholarships with contributions that can be used immediately to recruit students for the next three to five years.
- B. Initiate a longer-term campaign to raise funds for endowed scholarships.
- C. Provide special recognition for donors with a scholarship event to emphasize our appreciation for donors and our commitment to student support.
 - a. Establish programming where students are in contact with donors that contribute to scholarships.
- D. Develop new ideas for scholarship funds such as multiple-contributor scholarships for top applicants from particular undergraduate schools in the state.
- E. Review endowment memoranda of agreement to establish standardized documents that promote more flexible use of resources.
 - a. Continue to engage donors that have fully funded endowments to endowments to encourage more giving.
- F. Focus on deferred planned gifts and increase the number of DPG gifts to five per year.
- G. Develop fundraising campaign to relieve the Law School budget by creating an endowment that funds oral advocacy teams.

- H. Explore opportunities to create a Public Interest Law Fellows program that would include scholarships with living stipend, mentorship, and bar prep for incoming students.
- I. Develop funding initiatives with the Business Law Fellows program to realize unique opportunities given to students.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Some key indicators of performance and progress for alumni outreach and development are:

- Improved coordination among programs and personnel engaged in alumni outreach
- Improved faculty participation in alumni events
- Improved alumni events—quantity, quality, location, and alumni participation
- Improved communications to alumni and about alumni
- Increased annual giving rate
- Increased scholarship fundraising
- Increased deferred planned gift funding
- Endowed funds for oral advocacy teams
- Pipeline of donors to support Public Interest Law Fellows or funding for the program
- Pipeline of donors to support Business Law Fellows

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Implementation and assessment of the objectives and initiatives in this section are primarily the responsibility of (1) the Dean's Office, (2) the Law School Development Officer, (3) the Director of Alumni Relations, (4) Communications, and (5) the Faculty Alumni Committee. At least one general report on alumni outreach and fundraising should be made to faculty each semester.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4 – MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

The Law School's faculty, staff, students, and alumni make the world a better place every day. Their activities and accomplishments further the Law School's mission of teaching, research, and service. We understand the importance of celebrating the achievements of the Law School community to external audiences to recognize excellence, promote further success, and to enhance the reputation of the school. We also recognize the importance of communicating these developments internally to foster a spirit of community and collaboration. Accordingly, the Law School will continue to explore and implement a series of initiatives to improve our marketing and communications operation.

OBJECTIVES FOR MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

1. Continue to explore improvements in resource-allocation for marketing and communications.
2. Maintain a comprehensive and cohesive marketing strategy.
3. Continue to improve the Law School's external communications.
4. Continue to improve the Law School's internal communications.
5. Continue to improve individual faculty-staff marketing of accomplishments.

OBJECTIVE 1. CONTINUE TO EXPLORE IMPROVEMENTS IN RESOURCE-ALLOCATION FOR MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS.

Initiatives.

- A. Review the allocation of funds dedicated to marketing and communication in order to improve efficiency and maximize funding of priorities.
- B. Explore additional funding for marketing and communications.
- C. Review allocation of staffing resources for marketing and communications in order to improve efficiency and maximize staffing of priorities.
- D. Explore additional staffing for marketing and communications.
- E. Ensure efficient coordination and collaboration with individual Law School units engaged in communications, University communications, and other key constituents—such as the Law Alumni Association and the UM Foundation.
- F. Offer opportunities to faculty and staff for training in communications—such as best practices for use of social media, new developments in technology, and working with traditional media.

OBJECTIVE 2. MAINTAIN WORK TO DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE AND COHESIVE MARKETING STRATEGY.

Initiatives.

- A. Identify external target audiences and continue to undertake market research where possible to establish directions for effective messaging, strategies, and tactics.
- B. Continue to set specific and measurable integrated marketing objectives.
- C. Develop a marketing strategy and draft an integrated marketing plan.
- D. Update marketing tactics as needed to guide day-to-day communications work.

- E. Evaluate marketing strategy and make improvements.
- F. Promote consistent branding, cross-promotion, and messaging in communications across units and constituents.

OBJECTIVE 3. CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THE LAW SCHOOL'S EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS.

Initiatives.

- A. Continue to improve our electronic communications by:
 - a. Creating a mobile version of our website;
 - b. Continuing publication of a regular alumni e-newsletter;
 - c. Developing social media campaigns; and
 - d. Educating faculty and staff on social media technology and best practices.
- B. Resume publishing the alumni magazine, *UM Lawyer* (with a possibility of a virtual magazine).
- C. Better promote the work of Law School faculty, staff, alumni, and students.
- D. Devote additional resources to promoting the many accomplishments of our alumni.
- E. Better promote Law School programs, personnel, and activities that serve the State of Mississippi, including the work of MLRI and the Mississippi Judicial College.
- F. Ensure that all Law School events are well-organized, scheduled, and publicized within and outside the law school.
- G. Increase the frequency of social media posts and include virtual tours.
- H. Designate a staff member to note and recognize significant life events of alumni.
- I. Regularly invite alumni to share photos of their practice to feature in newsletters and other communications.

OBJECTIVE 4. CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THE LAW SCHOOL'S INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS.

Initiatives.

- A. Continue to use the Ole Miss Law Bulletin, message boards, calendar, website, and social media to highlight significant information to our community.
- B. Continue to evaluate the current internal communications operation and develop a revised internal plan for improvements.
- C. Ensure consistency between internal communications and external communications in branding, cross-promotion, and messaging.
- D. Explore hiring additional communications staff to focus on internal communications.
- E. Explore greater use of student workers to help with internal communications.

OBJECTIVE 5. CONTINUE TO IMPROVE INDIVIDUAL FACULTY-STAFF MARKETING OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

Initiatives.

- A. Encourage faculty and staff to forward updates for their individual web pages with relevant information, such as biographical sketches, resumes, publication lists, and Social Science Research Network and Legal Scholarship Network links.
- B. Solicit regular reporting of noteworthy faculty and staff accomplishments to appropriate personnel for publicity.
- C. Promote timely provision of notice to communications staff of upcoming events for calendaring and publicity.
- D. Ensure regular responses to media requests for commentary and proper notation of institutional affiliation with the Law School.
- E. Encourage faculty and staff training in communications such as use of social media.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Some key indicators of performance and progress for marketing and communications are:

- Revisions and updates to development of the marketing plan
- Improvements of our website and use of social media
- Increased communications about alumni
- Increased communications about service to the State of Mississippi
- Increased student applications and campus visits
- Increased placement rate
- Increased alumni giving rate

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Implementation and assessment of the objectives and initiatives in this section are primarily the responsibility of the Dean's Office and appropriate marketing and communications personnel. At least one general report on marketing and communications as a strategic priority should be made to faculty each year.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #5 – DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

The University of Mississippi School of Law is committed to creating an educational experience that affirms diversity, inclusion, and equity. We welcome the contributions of a diverse student body, faculty, and staff. Diversity, inclusion, and equity are vital to the education of our students and to the role we play in shaping the legal profession.

Achieving greater diversity, inclusion, and equity is a challenging commitment that requires leadership, sustained action, and continual inspiration at all levels of the organization. The Law School must present a clear message about the importance and priority of this commitment. As the flagship law school in a state where the painful truth of the past continues to impact the daily realities of the present, we commit ourselves anew to creating and nurturing an academic environment where all people are welcomed, and all voices are heard. The Law School's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity and its recognition of the effects of past discriminatory practices are consistent with the University of Mississippi's recognition of such effects, as stated in the University's Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Institutional Strategic Plan:

The complicated history of the University of Mississippi includes, but is not limited to, the exclusionary founding of the institution, the violent resistance to James Meredith's integration of the university in 1962, the arrests and expulsions of the Ole Miss 8, and the longstanding conflicts regarding Confederate symbols and iconography. Every decade since integration has seen a struggle for progress toward equity and inclusion. Though there are markers of success in these efforts, there is still significant work that needs to be done. Our collective future, as an institution, state and world, depends on the development of forward-thinking and inclusive leaders. We must foster an expansive vision of leadership — broad-based, equity-minded and compassionate.

The Law School is a part of that complicated history, and it similarly recognizes that “there is still significant work that needs to be done.” Therefore, the Law School is especially sensitive to the recruitment of African Americans and other underrepresented groups given their historical underrepresentation and/or exclusion from the Law School. In particular, the Law School strongly believes that the educational benefits of diversity constitute a compelling state interest, and we are committed to achieving a critical mass of diverse students, faculty, staff, and law administrators. The Law School's understanding of diversity is broad and extends to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical or mental ability or attributes, religion, religious or ethical values systems, geographical area, national origin, political beliefs, life experiences, and many other factors.

OBJECTIVES FOR DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

1. Create diversity in students.
2. Create diversity in faculty and administrators.
3. Create diversity in staff.
4. Foster inclusivity.
5. Support professional success.
6. Foster equity.

OBJECTIVE 1. CREATE DIVERSITY IN STUDENTS.

Initiatives.

- A. Admit classes that substantially increase the proportion of members of underrepresented and historically excluded groups so that a critical mass of such students will be present at the Law School.
- B. Continue to enhance and deploy scholarship resources in support of diversity.
- C. Follow the best practices for achieving diversity in the admissions process.
- D. Increase our pool of diverse applicants by building strong relationships with our traditional feeder schools, with HBCUs, with high schools that have diverse student populations, and with additional undergraduate institutions.
- E. Improve relationships with groups and organizations that will assist our recruitment of a diverse student population, such as the Magnolia Bar.
- F. Work to increase scholarship funds available for diversity recruitment and will not cap recruitment scholarships to enable us to compete with other schools' offers.
- G. Increase faculty, staff, and administration involvement in recruitment of diverse students.
- H. Provide additional support and guidance for student organizations involved in diversity student recruitment.
- I. Explore the development of new programs for pre-law students to promote diversity and inclusion.

OBJECTIVE 2. CREATE DIVERSITY IN FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS.

Initiatives.

- A. Establish the Diversity Committee as a standing Law School committee.
- B. Seek to increase the diversity of all types of faculty and administrators.
- C. Adopt hiring policies and practices that seek to obtain a diverse group of faculty members.
- D. Ensure that all search committee shall include members with diverse backgrounds and experiences, including minorities and other underrepresented groups.
- E. Continue to focus on ensuring that individuals from minority and underrepresented communities are aware of employment opportunities.
- F. Regularly assess the extent to which students are exposed to faculty of diverse backgrounds and perspectives across all academic endeavors and undertake best efforts to provide such diversity wherever it is found to be lacking, including when racial or gender diversity is found to be lacking.
- G. Follow the AALS's statement of good practice regarding the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Law Faculty.
- H. Review any existing hiring policies and practices or adopt new hiring policies and practices to ensure that they are in compliance with the mission and goals of the Law School's Strategic Plan for Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity 2020-2023.
- I. Reduce all hiring policies and practices to writing and submit a copy of them to the Dean and the Diversity Committee.
- J. Improve efforts to recruit and retain a diverse adjunct faculty.
- K. Improve efforts to recruit and retain a diverse staff and administration.

OBJECTIVE 3. CREATE DIVERSITY IN STAFF.

Initiatives.

- A. Adopt hiring policies and practices that seek to obtain a diverse group of librarians and staff in all units including using best efforts to achieve diverse pools of applicants.
- B. Review existing hiring policies and practices and adopt new hiring policies to meet the mission and goals of the Diversity Plan.
- C. Reduce all hiring policies and practices to writing.
- D. Ensure that all search committees include members with diverse backgrounds including members of minority and other underrepresented groups.
- E. Develop opportunities for the professional development of librarians and staff so that their background and experiences will enhance the diversity, inclusion, and equity of the Law School.
- F. Create and award the Law Staff Diversity Award.
- G. Authorize the Dean to review the results of each search committee to ensure that the results are in compliance with the mission and goals of the Diversity Plan, in which the Dean may declare a failed search and direct that a new search be commenced.

OBJECTIVE 4. FOSTER INCLUSIVITY.

Initiatives.

For Students and Student Organizations:

- A. Employ a full-time Chief Diversity Officer who has authority over the coordination of all Law School diversity efforts.
- B. Include diversity, inclusion, equity, and cultural competence programs and activities in the orientation program for first-year students.
- C. Include mandatory implicit bias training during the orientation program.
- D. Review current programs and activities and make any changes that are necessary.
- E. Develop a program in which a substantial portion of the student body has the opportunity to participate in a non-diversity-related program that provide problem-solving opportunities.
- F. Develop programs, initiatives, or events to create team spirit and camaraderie among the student body.
- G. Work closely with student organizations to assist them in incorporating diversity, inclusion, equity, and cultural competence into their various activities and events.
- H. Assist student organizations in planning and executing joint programming, activities, and events to foster cooperation among the organizations.
- I. Track diversity-specific efforts and results on recruitment, enrollment, retention, placement, and other areas specified in the Diversity Plan.
- J. Explore increasing resources devoted to diversity initiatives to ensure sufficient staffing and funding to implement diversity strategic planning goals.
- K. Encourage all student organizations to advance diversity, inclusion, equity, and cultural competence in their programs, initiatives, and activities and provide funding for student organizations' programs that promote the goals of the diversity plan.
- L. Provide opportunities, at least once a year, for student training on diversity, inclusion, equity, and cultural competence-related issues.
- M. Create and award the Law Student Diversity Award.

- N. Encourage journals and boards to establish and consistently follow objective and holistic membership standards that seek a critical mass of diverse members and that establish at least one level of appeal.

For Faculty and Staff:

- O. Provide opportunities to include classroom discussions regarding diversity-type issues in lectures and classroom discussions.
- P. Provide opportunities to add new courses to the Law School's curriculum that offer instruction on diversity, inclusion, equity, and cultural competence-related topics.
- Q. Provide opportunities, at least once a year, for faculty and staff training on diversity, inclusion, equity, and cultural competence-related issues.
- R. Create and award the Law Faculty Diversity Award.
- S. Invite strong speakers and provide for other extra-curricular programs that advance diversity, inclusion, equity, and cultural competence and that provide opportunities for respectful dialogue on these and related issues.
- T. Increase the representation of diverse speakers in law school programming.
- U. Provide opportunities for students and faculty to engage in discussions of diversity issues.
- V. Publicize commitment to diversity, including creation of diversity-specific recruitment publications.
- W. Provide opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to engage in programs to increase cultural awareness and appreciation of diversity.
- X. Develop improved programs and practices for mentoring diverse students.

OBJECTIVE 5. SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

Initiatives.

- A. Expand the Academic Success Program to provide additional workshops, programs, initiatives, and individual counseling, when such is needed.
- B. Develop additional programming, initiatives, and courses to support bar passage rates.
- C. Create mentorships with recent graduates to support bar passage for at-risk students.
- D. Collect relevant data and statistics to determine the effectiveness of all bar passage programs, initiatives, and courses, and make necessary changes to improve them or terminate them.
- E. Provide need-based support for bar courses if such is financially feasible.
- F. Identify any problems, issues, or concerns regarding the successful placement of diverse students and minority students in summer- and permanent employment and develop a plan of action to resolve any such problems, issues, and concerns.
- G. Follow nationally recognized best practices for CSOs regarding diversity and inclusion for diverse students and minority students, including best practices of the National Association of Law Placement ("NALP").
- H. Develop a database of the Law School's alumni as a resource for recruitment and placement of diverse students.
- I. Increase outreach to our diverse alumni to provide mentoring and placement advice.
- J. Support student groups that provide assistance and support to diverse students.

OBJECTIVE 6. FOSTER EQUITY.

Initiative.

- A. Commit to actively challenging and responding to bias, harassment, and discrimination, and to a policy of equal opportunity and treatment of all students, staff, faculty, and law administrators.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Some key indicators of performance and progress for diversity and inclusion:

- Improved diversity in the study body
- Increased scholarship offerings to promote diversity
- Improved academic support program
- Improved outreach to alumni and provision of mentoring programs
- Improved recruitment and retention of diversity faculty, staff, and administration
- Increased diversity speakers, events, and awareness programs
- Increased engagement among students and faculty with differing backgrounds
- Increased resources devoted to diversity
- Increased accomplishment of the mission and goals of the Law School's Diversity Plan

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Implementation and assessment of the objectives and initiatives in this section are primarily the responsibility of (1) the Dean's Office, (2) the Admissions Office and the Assistant Dean for Admissions, (3) the Career Services Office and Director of Career Services, (4) the Faculty Admissions and Scholarships Committee, (5) the Diversity Committee, and (6) any other law administrators or law committees that have responsibilities under the Diversity Plan. At least one general report on diversity as a strategic priority shall be made to faculty each year.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #6 – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTIONAL INNOVATION

We recognize that teaching is the most important thing we do, and the Law School is committed to a “students-first” philosophy of education and empowerment. Our goal is to prepare students for the practice of law and enable them to compete in a changing global marketplace. We intend our graduates to enhance the legal profession, promote justice, and serve the public.

To support student learning, the Law School is dedicated to a rigorous curriculum built around doctrinal courses, legal research and writing, skills training, clinical instruction, externships, and professional ethics. We plan to make a strong curriculum even better with reforms and innovations. Accordingly, the Law School seeks to explore and implement the initiatives below.

OBJECTIVES FOR CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTIONAL INNOVATION

1. Maintain and improve our instructional faculty.
2. Maintain and improve our curricular offerings.
3. Maintain and improve other units, programs, activities, and organizations that promote student learning.
4. Regularly assess our curriculum and promote instructional innovation.

OBJECTIVE 1. MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE OUR INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY.

Initiatives.

- A. Continue to place a high value on excellence in teaching and instructional service to students.
- B. Recruit three new full-time faculty who will be outstanding teachers.
- C. Continue to recruit new adjunct faculty who will be outstanding teachers.
- D. Continue to regularly assess instructional faculty through student and peer evaluations.
- E. Continue to work to preserve and increase faculty positions necessary to provide our students with an outstanding and comprehensive curriculum.
- F. Explore new revenue sources to support instructional faculty.
- G. Optimize depth and breadth of faculty areas of specialization such as International Law to benefit students (for example, working to unify and promote our international offerings would help build our reputation as a center for international law).

OBJECTIVE 2. MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE OUR CURRICULAR OFFERINGS.

Initiatives.

- A. Continue to improve the Law School’s core curriculum of doctrinal offerings, the LRW program, clinical offerings, skills courses, externships, and pro bono program.
- B. Create a required professionalism course or module for first-year students.
- C. Form a group of recent grads to offer recommendations on improving the curriculum.
- D. Identify important curricular needs and recruit faculty to meet them.

- E. Improve curricular offerings that prepare students for the bar.
- F. Improve curricular offerings that prepare students for solo and small-firm practice.
- G. Improve curricular offerings that prepare students for the global market.
- H. Explore the addition of professionalism and lawyering to the first-year curriculum.
- I. Explore additional programming to help students develop a professional identity.
- J. Explore new revenue sources to support curricular programs.

OBJECTIVE 3. MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE OTHER UNITS, PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT PROMOTE STUDENT LEARNING.

Initiatives.

- A. Maintain and improve academic support programs for entering students, students on probation, and students taking the bar.
- B. Maintain and improve our advocacy programs and competition teams.
- C. Maintain and improve our journals and student publications.
- D. Maintain and improve our student organizations and faculty-staff advising of those organizations.
- E. Maintain and improve student participation in Law School centers and institutes.
- F. Maintain and improve our study abroad opportunities.
- G. Maintain and improve our externship programs.
- H. Maintain and improve our access to information technology and other library resources.
- I. Maintain and improve the Law School's Wellness Program and develop additional well-being resources, including information or services related to substance abuse and mental health.

OBJECTIVE 4. REGULARLY ASSESS OUR CURRICULUM AND PROMOTE INSTRUCTIONAL INNOVATION.

Initiatives.

- A. Maintain an engaged and active Curriculum Committee and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
- B. Study new curricular trends and changing professional conditions.
- C. Propose new curricular programs and policies to better serve our students.
- D. Assess the performance of new curricular programs and policies.
- E. Offer special meetings in which faculty discuss curricular issues and innovations.
- F. Explore organizing an annual student town hall meeting with a major curricular component.
- G. Ensure that curricular offerings remain consistent with the mission of the Law School.
- H. Engage in three-year general assessments of the curriculum led by the Curriculum Committee and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Some key indicators of performance and progress for curriculum and instructional innovation are:

- Preservation of faculty budget lines
- Improved student and peer evaluations of faculty
- Improved course offerings and concentrations

- Improvements in curricular programs, activities, and organizations
- Adoption of new curricular programs and policies
- Improved bar passage rate
- Improved student employment rate

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Implementation and assessment of the objectives and initiatives in this section are primarily the responsibility of (1) the Dean, (2) the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, (3) the Curriculum Committee, and (4) the faculty. At least one general report on curriculum as a strategic priority should be made to faculty each year.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #7 – RESEARCH & INTELLECTUAL LIFE

We recognize that legal scholarship is of crucial importance because it expands the horizons of legal knowledge and strongly supports the Law School’s teaching and service missions. We are therefore committed to the publication and presentation of scholarly research. To promote this end, the Law School seeks to foster a culture of scholarship and intellectual inquiry. Accordingly, the Law School will explore and implement the initiatives below to advance research and intellectual life.

OBJECTIVES FOR RESEARCH & INTELLECTUAL LIFE

1. Improve the Law School’s Academic Workshop Program.
2. Improve financial and staff support for faculty research.
3. Improve efforts to publicize faculty research.
4. Improve our students’ participation in research and the intellectual life of the Law School.

OBJECTIVE 1. IMPROVE THE LAW SCHOOL’S ACADEMIC WORKSHOP PROGRAM.

Initiatives.

- A. Continue the Law School’s Academic Workshop Program and build on its successes by improving or expanding core components such as:
 - a. Faculty and student writing groups;
 - b. Faculty colloquium lectures;
 - c. The speaker exchange program; and
 - d. The brown-bag luncheon program.
- B. Support the full scope of research and creative activity—including articles, books, book chapters, casebooks, reviews, educational materials, blog posts, reports, litigation documents, grant proposals, and presentations.
- C. Foster greater interdisciplinary participation in our workshop programs.
- D. Experiment with additional workshop formats and topics—such as “new ideas” workshops and topical workshops (e.g., on writing methods, law review submissions, and book publishing).
- E. Expand use of videoconference technology for “virtual” visiting speakers.
- F. Explore building special partnerships with other SEC law schools.
- G. Ensure the continued success of the workshop program by maintaining supervision by an associate dean, workshop director, or faculty committee.
- H. Find ways to celebrate the achievements of faculty who make significant contributions outside of traditional law review contexts – whether in popular press books, practical works, or specialty publications.
- I. Provide additional administrative support for workshop event planning.

OBJECTIVE 2. IMPROVE FINANCIAL AND STAFF SUPPORT FOR FACULTY RESEARCH.

Initiatives.

- A. Explore the possibility of increased funding for:
 - a. Summer grants;

- b. Conference travel;
 - c. Research assistants;
 - d. Books, databases, and other scholarly resources and services;
 - e. Equipment and information technology; and
 - f. Chairs, professorships, lectureships, and fellowships.
- B. Continue developing and expanding incentive programs for special scholarly achievements.
 - C. Ensure good stewardship of research support through appropriate administrative procedures for awards, recordkeeping, and reporting to faculty.
 - D. Ensure provision of appropriate administrative-assistant support for faculty.

OBJECTIVE 3. IMPROVE EFFORTS TO PUBLICIZE FACULTY RESEARCH.

Initiatives.

- A. Improve the presentation of the Law School's research and intellectual life on the Law School website.
- B. Improve external marketing of scholarly activities using mail, email, social media, and online repositories.
- C. Improve internal communication of scholarly activities to the UM legal community and to the broader University community.
- D. Explore use of speaker funds for events that publicize faculty research.
- E. Work with the *Mississippi Law Journal* and other Law School journals to promote and publicize faculty scholarship.
- F. Develop a timely process to more systematically collect information on faculty research activities, including publications and presentations.

OBJECTIVE 4. IMPROVE THE LAW SCHOOL'S VISITING SPEAKERS PROGRAM.

Initiatives.

- A. Ensure the presence each year of an active faculty committee charged with selecting speakers with appropriate support from the Dean's Office.
- B. Ensure appropriate publicity, promotion, turnout efforts, donor participation, and recordkeeping for all speaking events.
- C. Pursue expanded speaker partnerships with other University units and with student organizations.
- D. Explore the possibility of increased funding for our speakers program.

OBJECTIVE 5. WE WILL WORK TO IMPROVE OUR STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH AND THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE OF THE LAW SCHOOL.

Initiatives.

- A. Ensure that students are included in scholarly events and writing groups.
- B. Build on successes in faculty mentoring to further improve student publishing.
- C. Build on successes in faculty advising to further improve student journals.
- D. Explore additional scholarly partnerships with student journals and student organizations.
- E. Organize a program to foster student participation in national writing competitions.

- F. Explore the development of strategies to improve student participation in scholarly events.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Some key indicators of performance and progress for research and intellectual life are:

- Increased faculty publications in higher-tiered journals
- Increased faculty conference presentations
- Increased workshop opportunities and participation
- Increased funding and staff support for faculty research
- Improvement in the Visiting Speakers program and audience turnout
- Increased interdisciplinary and collaborative research activities
- Improvement in student publications, presentations, and participation in scholarly events

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Implementation and assessment of the objectives and initiatives in this section are primarily the responsibility of (1) the Dean, (2) the Associate Dean for Faculty Development, and (3) an appropriate faculty committee—such as the current Speakers & Faculty Scholarship Committee. At least one general report on research and intellectual life as a strategic priority should be made to faculty each year.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #8 – SERVICE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We recognize that the Law School's service to a diverse range of communities transforms lives and makes the world a better place. In particular, the Law School's clinics, centers, institutes, and student organizations are essential to the success of the Law School's service mission, which has a special emphasis on Mississippi communities. Through community engagement, our programs and personnel use their professional expertise to advance the public interest and promote reform, progress, professionalism, and access to justice. Accordingly, the Law School seeks to explore and implement initiatives to improve the Law School's service and community engagement.

OBJECTIVES FOR SERVICE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1. Better foster and facilitate a culture of service and community engagement.
2. Improve recognition and support of the many Law School programs and personnel that serve our communities.
3. Improve our engagement with the many communities we serve, with a special emphasis on the State of Mississippi.

OBJECTIVE 1. BETTER FOSTER AND FACILITATE A CULTURE OF SERVICE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

Initiatives.

- A. Ensure that the Dean's Office, through a standing committee consisting of at least one faculty, one staff, and one student representative, actively encourages and advances service to communities by:
 - a. Seeking systematically to identify new potential service activities
 - b. Surveying and interviewing faculty, staff, and students to discover new ways to facilitate service;
 - c. Fostering new service partnerships and collaborations among faculty, staff, students, alumni, and other constituents;
 - d. Organizing meetings or other events for discussion of service projects and opportunities; and
 - e. Coordinating greater faculty involvement in the service missions of the Mississippi Law Research Institute, the National Sea Grant Law Center, the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Legal Program, the Center for Continuing Legal Education, and the Mississippi Judicial College
- B. Continue to provide faculty, staff, students, and student organizations with appropriate recognition for their service activities.
- C. Continue to ensure that students embrace the value of service and receive major opportunities to engage in service while in law school.
- D. Continue to recognize the full scope of professional service and community engagement activities—including service to the Law School, the University, the academic discipline, the legal profession, the State of Mississippi, and other constituencies, communities, and individuals.

OBJECTIVE 2. IMPROVE RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT OF THE MANY LAW SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND PERSONNEL THAT SERVE OUR COMMUNITIES.

Initiatives.

- A. Better publicize and celebrate service activities in our communities through the Law School's marketing and communications.
- B. Explore ways to improve support for the service mission of the Law School's clinics.
- C. Explore ways to improve support for the service mission of the Law School's centers and institutes, including the Business Law Institute, Mississippi Law Research Institute, the National Sea Grant Law Center, the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Legal Program, the Center for Continuing Legal Education, and the Mississippi Judicial College.
- D. Explore ways to improve support for the service mission of student organizations.
- E. Explore ways to improve support for the activities of other programs and personnel— including faculty, staff, and students—committed to service and community engagement.

OBJECTIVE 3. IMPROVE OUR ENGAGEMENT WITH THE MANY COMMUNITIES WE SERVE, WITH A SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI.

Initiatives.

- A. Explore ways to improve service to the Law School, including service associated with:
 - a. Committees, working groups, and task forces;
 - b. Admissions, placement, and alumni engagement; and
 - c. Student group and journal advising.
- B. Explore ways to improve service to the University, including service associated with:
 - a. Legislative bodies, councils, and boards;
 - b. Centers, committees, and task forces; and
 - c. Provision of expert legal advice.
- C. Explore ways to improve service to the academic discipline, including service to:
 - a. Academic organizations and
 - b. Academic journals.
- D. Explore ways to improve service to the legal profession, including service to:
 - a. Professional organizations and
 - b. Lawyers and judges through provision of CLE and judicial training.
- E. Explore ways to include our students in meeting the legal needs of Mississippians at or below the poverty level.
- F. Explore ways to continue and expand other forms of service to communities, especially Mississippi communities, including service associated with:
 - a. Governmental institutions;
 - b. Public interest organizations; and
 - c. Community organizations.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Some key indicators of performance and progress for service and community engagement are:

- Improved facilitation of service activities by the Dean's Office
- Increased opportunities to generate new service initiatives or programs through meetings, interviews, or surveys
- Increased faculty involvement in the service activities of centers and institutes
- Increased recognition of service activities in marketing and communications
- Increased service activities such as work with professional organizations and community organizations
- Development of new service projects and programs
- Standardized processes to collect and maintain service activities data per academic year across all constituencies

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Implementation and assessment of the objectives and initiatives in this section are primarily the responsibility of the Dean's Office—with appropriate support from faculty, staff, and students. At least one general report on service and community engagement as a strategic priority should be made to all Law School constituencies each year.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #9 – BUDGET & FINANCE

In a time of economic challenges for the legal community nationwide and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on institutions of higher learning, the Law School recognizes that it is essential to practice good stewardship of resources. We must continue to maximize efficiencies, obtain new sources of revenue, track our finances carefully, and provide regular reports to stakeholders. The Law School therefore is committed to exploring and implementing initiatives designed to improve our budget and financial organization.

OBJECTIVES FOR BUDGET & FINANCE

1. Develop short- and long-term plans for increasing revenue, reducing expenses, and pursuing increased efficiency.
2. Develop a user-friendly system for tracking accounts, revenue, and expenditures.
3. Ensure transparency in budgeting.
4. Develop improved processes for budget oversight and management.

OBJECTIVE 1. DEVELOP SHORT- AND LONG-TERM PLANS FOR INCREASING REVENUE, REDUCING EXPENSES, AND PURSUING INCREASED EFFICIENCY.

Initiatives.

- A. Continue to explore new sources of revenue, including alumni development, government grants, University support, and legislative appropriations.
- B. Continue to explore new efficiencies in the use of existing resources such as reallocation of staff and funding to increase effectiveness.
- C. Seek advice for the Dean's Office from faculty, staff, students, and alumni as appropriate on revenue, expenses, and efficiencies.
- D. Pursue creation of a working group or task force to explore new sources of revenue.
- E. Develop a five-year plan to address budget shortfalls.
- F. Hold annual faculty and staff meeting to review progress on the five-year plan and to discuss long-range planning, considering measures for increasing revenue and reducing expenditures.
- G. Explore new sources of revenue and various expense reductions with the University Administration, including:
 - a. Participating in SEC law school course exchanges;
 - b. Lowering out-of-state tuition so as to reduce scholarships;
 - c. Revamping the division of money between Outreach and units for distance learning courses; and
 - d. Allowing lapsed instructional funds to be reallocated to other categories annually.

OBJECTIVE 2. DEVELOP A USER-FRIENDLY SYSTEM FOR TRACKING ACCOUNTS, REVENUE, AND EXPENDITURES.

Initiatives.

- A. Continue to use and improve the Law School tracking system used for all accounts, both University and Foundation, unrelated to scholarships.

- B. Work with individual units to improve annual unit budgets entered into the Law School tracking system and reconciled with the University system.
- C. Evaluate use of Law School tracking system for scholarship accounts.

OBJECTIVE 3. ENSURE TRANSPARENCY IN BUDGETING.

Initiatives.

- A. Seek annual faculty and staff input on budget priorities.
- B. Provide faculty and staff with annual budget report summaries.
- C. Make detailed budget expenditures available to faculty and staff upon request.
- D. Keep university personnel informed of planning process, provide revised budgets, and financial plans.

OBJECTIVE 4. DEVELOP IMPROVED PROCESSES FOR BUDGET OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT.

Initiatives.

- A. Consult with University Budget Officer for Academic Units on improving process.
- B. Conduct annual review and revision of budget each spring.
- C. Conduct monthly review of expenditures.
- D. Provide individual units with monthly review of budget and expenditures.
- E. Develop a timetable and assignment roster for tasks.
- F. Develop a manual outlining budgeting and tracking system.
- G. Increase personnel training to administer the budget process.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Some key indicators of performance and progress for budget and finance are:

- Readily available reports on budgets and finances
- Regular reports to faculty, staff, and administrative units
- Advising by an advisory committee on discretionary spending
- Creation of a manual and calendar
- Development of multiple proposals to increase revenue
- Annual planning meetings
- Cross-training administrative staff on SAP functions and QuickBooks

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Implementation and assessment of the objectives and initiatives in this section are the responsibility of the Dean's Office—with appropriate support from senior staff, committee chairs, and faculty. At least one general report on budget and finance as a strategic priority should be made to faculty each Spring semester.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #10 – COORDINATION & COLLABORATION

The Law School encompasses a wide range of components, each contributing to our mission of teaching, research, and service. We recognize that the coordination and collaboration of Law School programs and personnel is essential to our progress. We all do better when we work together. Improving collegiality, faculty governance, Law School administration, ties among Law School components, and collaboration with other University units is important to keeping the Law School moving forward. Accordingly, we will explore and implement a series of initiatives to improve our coordination and collaboration.

OBJECTIVES OF COORDINATION & COLLABORATION

1. Strengthen our culture of collegiality.
2. Improve our traditions of faculty governance.
3. Improve Law School administration.
4. Improve staff morale and communication.
5. Foster closer and more visible ties among Law School components, including the Air and Space Law Program, the Mississippi Law Research Institute and the Mississippi Judicial College.
6. Improve Law School collaboration with other units of the University.

OBJECTIVE 1. STRENGTHEN OUR CULTURE OF COLLEGIALLY.

Initiatives.

- A. Promote civility, tolerance, and respect among employees of the Law School.
- B. Foster a culture in which all faculty and staff are valued for their important contributions to the Law School.
- C. Improve faculty relations, staff relations, and faculty-staff relations.
- D. Provide regular opportunities for faculty and staff to interact and socialize inside and outside of the workplace each semester, including community-building faculty-staff events.
- E. Establish a process for introducing new employees to the Law School community and ensuring they feel fully welcomed.

OBJECTIVE 2. IMPROVE OUR TRADITIONS OF FACULTY GOVERNANCE.

Initiatives.

- A. Ensure that faculty meetings have a robust slate of agenda items.
- B. Ensure that the Dean provides regular reports at faculty meetings.
- C. Establish an appropriate range and number of faculty committees to ensure proper faculty participation in Law School governance.
- D. Guide faculty committees with appropriate committee charges.
- E. Ensure regular reports by committee chairs at faculty meetings.
- F. Explore expanded use of senior staff on faculty committees.
- G. Encourage senior staff to attend and report at faculty meetings.
- H. Ensure that non-tenure track faculty and senior staff have a meaningful stake in faculty governance.

OBJECTIVE 3. IMPROVE LAW SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION.

Initiatives.

- A. Ensure that the Dean's Office provides regular reports to senior staff.
- B. Hold regular staff meetings and encourage appropriate reporting by senior staff.
- C. Develop systematic methods to facilitate information sharing, coordination, and collaboration among administrative personnel.
- D. Explore the creation of administrative calendars, manuals, and transition books.
- E. Create a policy book that collects Law School policies and other important documents.
- F. Explore creation of a Law School alumni database for collaborative use by units working on alumni-related issues such as admissions, placement, outreach, and development.

OBJECTIVE 4. IMPROVE STAFF MORALE AND COMMUNICATION.

Initiatives.

- A. Develop a comprehensive staff strategic plan.
- B. Facilitate and support leadership and professional development for staff members.
- C. Create policies to facilitate on-boarding of new staff.
- D. Develop a more transparent staff evaluation process, in terms of both process and impact.
- E. Explore the creation of initiatives to improve staff morale and ameliorate work/life balance.
- F. Explore the expansion of staffing in key administration areas.

OBJECTIVE 5. FOSTER CLOSER AND MORE VISIBLE TIES AMONG LAW SCHOOL COMPONENTS, INCLUDING THE MISSISSIPPI LAW RESEARCH INSTITUTE AND THE MISSISSIPPI JUDICIAL COLLEGE.

Initiatives.

- A. Foster a culture of inclusion and support for Law School faculty and staff from the Mississippi Law Research Institute (including the National Sea Grant Law Center, the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Legal Program, and the Center for Continuing Legal Education) and the Mississippi Judicial College.
- B. Facilitate collaborations within the Law School involving MLRI and MJC to promote:
 - a. Student education;
 - b. Student placement and recruitment;
 - c. Alumni outreach; and
 - d. Service to the bench, the bar, and broader communities.
- C. Maintain adequate workspaces in the law school building for personnel from MLRI and MJC who have primary office space elsewhere.
- D. Develop a communications strategy that reflects the importance of Air and Space Law, MLRI and the MJC as integral parts of the Law School.

OBJECTIVE 6. IMPROVE LAW SCHOOL COLLABORATION WITH OTHER UNITS OF THE UNIVERSITY.

Initiatives.

- A. Develop plans to regularly bring invitees from the central administration and other University units to important Law School functions.
- B. Encourage Law School representatives to attend important University functions.
- C. Encourage Law School faculty and staff to serve on University committees, councils, task forces, and similar bodies.
- D. Explore new collaborative endeavors with faculty and staff from other University units.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Some key indicators of performance and progress for collaboration and coordination are:

- Improved faculty and staff morale
- Provision of additional social events
- Improved faculty meetings—with substantive agendas, regular reporting, increased attendance, and broader participation
- Improved coordination between administrative offices
- Creation of a policy book
- Development of a staff strategic plan
- Improved inclusion of Air and Space Law, MLRI, and MJC
- More interaction with the central administration and other University units

IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Implementation and assessment of the objectives and initiatives in this section are primarily the responsibility of the Dean's Office—with appropriate support from senior staff, committee chairs, and faculty. At least one general report on coordination and collaboration as a strategic priority should be made to faculty each year.

THE 2025 STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Professor Lisa Shaw Roy, Chair

Rod Bridges, Class of 2022

Associate Dean Tucker Carrington

Professor Antonia Eliason

Professor Molly Fergusson

Justin Huckaby, Public Services Law Librarian

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