

GOING THE DISTANCE

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Really? Strategies for Counseling Our New Student Populations

Elizabeth Armour, Associate Dean, University of Southern California Gould School of Law
Gail Peshel, Executive Director, Valparaiso University School of Law
Dana Morris, Assistant Dean, University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law
Bill Chamberlain, Assistant Dean, DePaul University College of Law



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Background and Context

- Shrinking traditional JD applicant pool
- Pressure to maintain median LSAT/GPA for US News rankings—smaller first-year classes
- Budget concerns and pressure to come up with new revenue sources
- Too often, law schools focus on (short-term) inputs rather than (longer-term) outcomes
- Essential for Career Services to be at the table for these discussions

Result: New Types of Students and New Placement Challenges

- International 3-year JDs (includes permanent residents and those on student visas; includes those with U.S. undergrad degrees and those without; may have law degrees from home country)
- International 2-year JDs (includes those with work experience in their home countries; with or without a U.S. LL.M.; permanent residents and those here on student visas)
- Increased numbers of domestic transfer students (mostly students who are trying to upgrade or move to another region)
- MJ/MLS Programs—target working professionals (these students may or may not want a different job)
- Limited-License Lawyers (Washington State) (small number so far—can do work traditionally done by lawyers but limited to ministerial work—to increase access to justice)

International Students—3-year JD Students

- Challenges
 - English fluency (GPA/bar passage and employment concerns)
 - Student visas—impact on employability
 - Lack of connections in U.S.
 - Lack of knowledge of U.S. job searching and business culture
 - Competition from domestic JD students

International Students: 3-Year JD Students

- Counseling
 - Use Academic Support
 - Meet with professors—get to know them
 - Speak up in class
 - Join affinity bar associations/student orgs
 - Speak English at all times
 - Get to know the local consulate
 - What local companies/firms have offices in home country?
 - Is international trade an option?
 - Connect them with alumni from their countries
 - For non-citizens—strategic use of CPT and OPT to get experience while in school

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International Students: 2-Year JD Students

- Challenges
 - English fluency (GPA/passing the bar/employment)
 - Many have student visas—need to find a sponsor willing to go through the lottery
 - Student visas—impact on employability
 - Competition from domestic JDs
 - Lack of connections in the market
 - OCI integration
 - One summer and one year to get experience
 - Lack of familiarity with U.S. job searching and business etiquette

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International Students: 2-Year JDs

- Counseling
 - May have an LLM
 - More likely to have work experience in home country
 - Use Academic Support
 - Meet with professors—get to know them
 - Speak up in class
 - Join affinity bar associations/ student orgs
 - Speak English at all times
 - Get to know the local consulate
 - What local companies/firms have offices in home country?
 - Is international trade an option?
 - Connect them with alumni from their countries
 - For non-citizens—strategic use of CPT and OPT to get experience while in school
 - Assign to one counselor?

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Domestic Transfer Students: Outgoing

- VERY hot market (interest and pressure to “trade up”)
- How do we convince them to stay?
 - High Achiever—more marketable if stays
 - Retain scholarship/less debt
 - Preserve honors/stature: law review, moot court
 - Bonding with classmates during first-year

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Domestic Transfer Students: Incoming

- Increased number
- How do we integrate them into OCI?
- Are they considered “less than” by large firms?
- Transfer Student Panels, Peer Mentors
- Social events to meet other 2L and 3L transfers
- Require counseling appointment upon arrival, assign counselor
- Timing critical: work closely with Admissions

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Master of Jurisprudence/ Master of Legal Studies

- Purpose (aside from revenue): To provide working professionals with additional skills in law that may help them advance in their careers
- Myth 1: They will all be already employed when they start
- Myth 2: And they will want to stay with their current employers after they graduate
- Do they compete with JD students for JD-Advantage jobs?
- What role does Career Services play?

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Limited License Legal Technicians

- Only in Washington State so far
- Purpose: Greater access to justice for people who cannot afford (and do not need) barred lawyers
- Cheaper for students who want to focus on the more ministerial aspects of the law
- Licensure, but not bar examination
- Chiefly in family law area currently

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Scenarios and Group Discussion

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Contact Information

Elizabeth Armour
Associate Dean
University of Southern California
Gould School of Law
213.740.7397
earmour@law.usc.edu

Gail Peshel
Executive Director
Valparaiso University School of Law
219.465.7898
Gail.Peshel@valpo.edu

Dana Morris
Assistant Dean
University of Maryland Francis King
Carey School of Law
410.706.2080
dmorris@law.umaryland.edu

Bill Chamberlain
Assistant Dean
DePaul University College of Law
312.362.8331
wchamber@depaul.edu