

devoted to differences and similarities between the problem-solving methodologies of law and public health. The goal of these discussions was to identify the distinct contributions that each discipline can make to the formulation of public health policy. These discussions culminated in the creation of a holistic model for generating and evaluating alternative solutions to public health problems that incorporated the dominant concerns and perspectives of both disciplines.

Distance education technology was employed to enhance the scope and depth of the course's substantive coverage, increase opportunities for and reduce barriers to interdisciplinary interaction, and remedy specific administrative and logistical problems. Specifically, a course website was created to enlarge the sphere of informational resources used in the course and expedite communication with the class. Asynchronous online discussion forums were used to increase opportunities for student-to-student and student-to-teacher communication by reducing the constraints imposed by time and space.

The success of cross-listed courses largely depends on the willingness of students from both disciplines to engage in an open and multidimensional exploration of the subject. Given the vast differences in the professional cultures and languages of individual disciplines, it is a considerable challenge to create a learning environment in which students from both disciplines feel sufficiently comfortable to share their perspectives and experiences, openly question the opinions and assumptions of the other discipline, and express their own opinions about an unfamiliar subject in the presence of a group of experts.

Post-class discussion forums were effective at breaking down barriers to interdisciplinary communication and increasing the ability of each group to benefit from the other's expertise and perspectives. In contrast, the pre-class discussion forums did not achieve their objective.

Distance education technology provides a number of tools for teaching at different levels. For example, online discussion forums permit more or less sophisticated discussions of the same material simultaneously. After each live class, the author initiated several discussion threads on the post-class forum that were deliberately targeted to students at different levels. This multilevel approach, which is not available in the traditional classroom, usually succeeded in eliciting the participation of students at different levels. In addition, the course website significantly enlarged the realm of informational resources that could be employed to meet students' different educational needs and appetites.

Distance learning technology also provides a number of tools for reducing the risk of student disengagement. In any course, students' levels of engagement rise and fall according to whether the material and class discussions are below, equal to, or beyond their level of knowledge and analytical competence. This is especially the case in a cross-listed course, where the risk of student withdrawal is heightened because of the need to teach at different levels.

Courses that bring law students together with students from other professional schools provide an exciting environment for teaching interdisciplinary collaboration and exploring the contributions that other disciplines can make to the solution of legal problems. While cross-listed courses present considerable pedagogical, logistical, and administrative challenges, many of these challenges can be significantly reduced by the use of distance education technology.

Diversity in legal education: a broader view, a deeper commitment

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'Diversity' is prominent among the values law schools embrace today. From the hospitable language of admissions brochures to the array of programs for outreach and retention, law schools have put in place a variety of measures for accomplishing this aim. Historical data on enrolments show that through such efforts over the past twenty-five years law schools have made enormous strides toward realising their goal.

However, there is much room for progress. In fact, the latest enrolment figures show that law schools have fallen short of complete success, particularly with regard to minorities. And many law students find that their school's hospitality seems to end with the last page of the recruitment brochure. Even with women enrolled in numbers nearly equal to men, for example, women continue to report encountering a hostile environment once they enter law school.

To date, the quest for diversity has been largely consumed with producing a student body roughly reflective of the demographic makeup of the community at large. The strategy reflects the expectation that from the larger and more representative presence of historically under-represented students, institutions would naturally evolve over time and structurally adjust to the greater diversity. This approach has not been entirely successful in legal education. There has been less attention, moreover,

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to the failure of law schools to create a learning environment in which diversity thrives — an environment conducive to the intellectual development of all law students.

A more comprehensive approach is necessary to fulfil the commitment to diversity and meeting these goals. Inviting a diverse group into an unyielding institution will not advance the goal of diversity, even if all those invited make an appearance. The quality of the interactions that these women and minority students, faculty and administrators experience once inside is as much a part of achieving diversity as ushering them through the door.

The diversity that law schools strive for today must instead envision much more than a student body that adequately reflects the larger community. The next step in law schools' quest for diversity must involve a shift in perspective and orientation. Along the pipeline leading to the profession are other identifiable obstacles to achieving diversity in law schools.

Probably the greatest challenge for law schools seeking diversity, aside from legal threats to affirmative action, is the disparate access of minorities, the poor and the geographically isolated, to an education that provides adequate preparation for the rigours of law school. Minority youth who overcome social disadvantage to succeed in high school and college, and who aspire to becoming lawyers, may even then be diverted from their goal by institutions that rely inordinately on LSAT scores in their admissions decisions.

Once in law school, many women and minority students encounter the same types of barriers that exist in society at large. The ABA Commission on Women in the Profession has reported on the hostile law school environments often created by peers, teachers, and administrators who cling to stereotypes or even engage in racial or sexual harassment. In the light of such findings, it is not surprising that women, and particularly women of colour, are less likely to participate in the classroom and are more likely to report feeling isolated or alienated, even by the language and culture of the law itself.

The current state of affairs should already prompt law schools to engage in a more ambitious commitment to attaining a diverse student body, faculty and administration. Diversity has a strong positive impact on educational experience. A student's exposure in law school to classmates with a variety of experiences and perspectives develops her cultural competence and intellectual dexterity, qualities vital to graduates entering our fast-changing and increasingly diverse profession and society.

Accumulating evidence substantiates both the practical experience of educators and the Supreme Court opinions holding that diversity and academic excellence are complementary rather than competing virtues. Yet most law schools have failed to organise their institutions and design policies to take advantage of that knowledge. Placing diversity at the forefront of the law school's mission will directly challenge the assumptions that underlie traditional legal education. It may mean that schools will have to re-examine accepted definitions of merit.

There are proven tools for achieving and retaining diversity. Conditional admission programs are variously organised, but they most commonly target applicants with less competitive credentials who have other qualities indicating their strong potential for performing well in law school. Law schools should explore admissions models that give balanced weight and attention to numerical indicators and qualitative factors. Diversity cannot be accomplished solely by changing law school admissions practices. Encouraging and preparing more students to set their sights on law school will be a crucial component of any program to achieve diversity.

A law school that truly institutionalised diversity's values would more naturally foster pedagogical and curricular innovation. Its faculty, recognising the educational benefits of diversity and motivated by its potential for their students, would be more inclined to construct situations to optimise those benefits. Methods such as problem-based learning and working in teams, common to both medical schools and MBA programs, might then make headway in legal education.

Conservative pedagogical theory prevails in the law school classroom. This is most evident in the reluctance to depart from the Socratic method, which, as traditionally practised in law schools, is meant to groom students for an adversarial role. Arguably, however, the lawyer-as-adversary model better reflects the notions of popular culture than the reality of law practice today.

Making diversity an institutional priority may also mean exploring more fully the possibility of partnerships with non-profits and corporations with common goals. Almost certainly it will involve greater incorporation of teaching methods and curricular offerings that enhance students' abilities to succeed in a diverse, dynamic legal profession. Whatever avenues individual law schools choose, it is past time to elevate diversity to a top priority. Fully integrating the values it represents and organising the law school to pursue that aim will ensure continuing excellence in legal education and the graduation of capable forward-looking leaders.