



WILLIAM & MARY LAW SCHOOL

DIVERSITY PLAN

2016-2017

INTRODUCTION

The American Bar Association's 2010 report on diversity in the legal profession noted that law schools

play a particularly important role in advancing the value of diversity in the legal profession. Law schools identify the faculty talent that educates and produces new scholarship and the student talent that continually renews the profession. Law schools also choose the knowledge, skills, and values that form the legal canon and create an identity for lawyers and other legal professionals by transmitting a set of normative behaviors, ethics, and narratives. In short, law schools occupy a central role in forming and transforming the intellectual capital, the group identity, and culture of the profession. For this reason, law schools are crucial to the project of making the profession more diverse.

The Law School seeks to reflect diversity in its many forms: race, ethnic background, gender, age, sexual orientation and identity, religion, disability, first-generation college students, military status, socioeconomic status, and intellectual diversity, among others. Our dedication to educating citizen lawyers necessarily includes a consideration of diverse perspectives and beliefs, in an environment in which all individuals – faculty, students, administration, and staff – are valued and respected.

Our progress along this path is mindful of the College's Strategic Plan – specifically Challenge #2, which sets the intention of supporting “a more fully diverse W&M community.” Within this Challenge are four goals:

- Communicate W&M's commitment to diversity.
- Provide a safe environment for campus community members to work, learn, live, and socialize together without fear of assault, harassment, or discrimination.
- Ensure a welcoming and supportive campus.
- Increase the diversity of the student body, faculty, and staff.

The Law School's diversity plan aims to address each of the goals. While we have made considerable progress, we are continually striving to improve.

THE LAW SCHOOL COMMUNICATES ITS COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY.

The Law School's commitment to diversity is made evident through the efforts of the Admission Office, the Dean's Office, the Office of Career Services, the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, our Alumni and Foundation Boards, and our curriculum and programs.

The Law School's admission policy acknowledges that both the educational process at the Law School and the legal profession are best served by an admission process that uses a holistic review process to select a diverse and talented student body.

In pursuit of this goal, our Admission Office engages in targeted mailings to prospective students, on-campus recruiting at HBCUs and other institutions, participation in state and national recruiting events designed for students of color, engagement with prospective students applying under the military's Funded Legal Education Program, sponsorship of the Black Law Students Association's Law Day for potential applicants, and, perhaps most important, consistent, personalized, and welcoming one-on-one communications from our Admissions team.

In addition to traditional demographic information, the Law School's application for admission to the J.D. program also welcomes (but does not require) information on applicants' tribal affiliation, status as a first-generation college student, gender identity, and military service. Our application was recently revised to reflect gender inclusivity, in consultation with our student Equality Alliance organization.

Alumni Admission Ambassadors and Student Admission Ambassadors are very important parts of our recruitment and matriculation program and outreach efforts. Our Alumni Ambassador Program includes alumni from a diversity of backgrounds representing nearly every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and several other countries. In addition to e-mailing and/or calling prospects and admits, many alumni meet with prospective students to share the William & Mary experience.

All student organizations are asked to submit information for our website, for printed materials, and to participate in the Admitted Student Program organization fair. Specific student organizations are asked to prepare letters for the Admission Office to forward to prospective students with specific information they wish to share and their

availability to meet with prospective students to discuss their specific interest and questions.

Each year, the Admission Office helps to sponsor various outreach and recruitment events designed for underrepresented minorities. In addition to BLSA Law Day, which includes simulated classes, Law School tours, and social activities, the Admission Office also hosts DiscoverLaw Outreach Programs for local four-year college students, community college students, and middle- and high-school students.

The Law School also works with the Virginia State Bar on diversity and outreach efforts and was the host institution for the Virginia Bar Association Minority Pre-Law Conference held in 2014. In addition, Admission deans attend conferences that focus on issues of diversity in higher education, including the LSAC Diversity Retention Conference.

Finally, our LL.M program in the American Legal System seeks to recruit and admit graduate students from a wide array of backgrounds and countries. Recent LL.M. students have come from Algeria, China, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, Poland, and Saudi Arabia, among other countries.

The Dean's Office meets with the officers of several student organizations that support underrepresented populations at the Law School – formally once per year and informally throughout the year – to assist with the organizations' goals and programs and to hear about any concerns or suggestions, including suggestions relating to our admissions efforts and the curriculum.

With a J.D. population of about 600 students and an LL.M. population of about 30 to 50, the Law School features an impressive number of organizations whose missions reflect the diversity of the Law School population, including the Asian Law Students Association, the Black Law Students Association, the Christian Legal Society, Equality Alliance, the Jewish Law Students Association, the J. Reuben Clark Law Society, the Latino Law Students Association, the Military and Veterans Law Society, and the Women's Law Society.

The current Vice Dean also serves as a mentor in the College's WMSURE (William & Mary Scholars Undergraduate Research Experience) program, through which she speaks to undergraduate students at the College about preparing for law school and about the first-generation college student experience.

In 2016, the Dean appointed an Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, comprising alumni, faculty, students, and staff. The Dean will meet with the Committee at least once per semester to hear feedback and engage with issues of importance to the Law School community.

The Office of Career Services (OCS) is committed to the professional success and development of all our students. Among its many other efforts, OCS promotes to our students the opportunity to participate in a variety of off-campus interview programs with a diversity focus, including, but not limited to, the Bay Area Diversity Career Fair, the Boston Lawyers Group – Boston Job Fair for Law Students of Color, the Cook County (IL) Bar Association Minority Job Fair, the Delaware Minority Job Fair, the DuPont Minority Job Fair, the Heartland Diversity Legal Job Fair, the Hispanic National Bar Association Career Fair, the IMPACT Career Fair for Law Students and Lawyers with Disabilities, the IndyBar Diversity Job Fair, the LGBT Bar Association Lavender Law Conference and Career Fair, the Mid-Atlantic Region of the National Black Law Students Association Job Fair, the Minnesota Minority Recruitment Conference, the National Bar Association Annual Convention, the National Black Prosecutors Association Job Fair, the Northwest Minority Job Fair, the Rocky Mountain Diversity Legal Career Fair, the Southeastern Minority Job Fair, and the St. Louis Diversity Job Fair.

OCS also promotes to our students an extensive number of diversity-related fellowship and scholarship programs. To increase awareness of these fellowship and scholarship opportunities, OCS created a Diversity Job-Related Opportunities communication, which contains information about several dozen such programs throughout the United States. OCS updates this document throughout the year and regularly promotes these opportunities to our students.

Beginning in 2014, OCS designated one of its advisors to serve as a liaison to the Law School's diversity student organizations. The OCS liaison meets periodically with the leadership of these student organizations, with a goal of increasing student awareness of and applications to the diversity job fairs and diversity fellowship and scholarship opportunities that are available to them. This liaison program resulted in nearly four times the number of Law School students who were invited to interview with employers at the 2015 Southeastern Minority Job Fair, with several of those students obtaining summer job offers.

The OCS staff also takes steps to ensure that presenters in OCS's career planning programs reflect the diversity of our students and graduates.

The Office of Development and Alumni Affairs continually seeks to engage diverse graduates of the Law School in the Law School's activities, including through its Co-Counsel program, which pairs alumni with current students for advice and mentoring.

In 2014, the Law School hosted its first African-American Law Alumni Celebration, marking the 60th anniversary of the graduation of Edward Augustus Travis, B.C.L. '54, the first African-American graduate of William & Mary. We anticipate that the reunion will be a recurring event.

The William & Mary Law School Alumni Association Board of Directors and the Marshall-Wythe School of Law Foundation Board feature a diverse membership. The William & Mary Law School Association represents the entire Law School alumni body and is responsible for assisting in programs and activities for alumni. The Board of Directors oversees the Law School's Annual Fund efforts. The 2016-2017 Board comprises 23 Board members, including ten women, one self-identified LGBT member, and seven individuals of color, including the current President. The nominating committee seeks nominations from the alumni and actively recruits diverse candidates. All alumni of the Law School are eligible to vote for the Board.

The Marshall-Wythe School of Law Foundation is the body entrusted with oversight of the private funds given to the William & Mary Law School. The 2016-2017 Board comprises 23 trustees, eight of whom are women and three of whom are individuals of color, including the immediate past President. The nominating committee actively seeks to nominate alumni who are representative of the alumni body as a whole.

The Law School's curriculum and programs address issues of importance to diverse communities. Courses such as Gender and Human Rights; Law of Domestic Violence; Law and Social Justice; Race, Law and Lawyering in a Diverse Environment; Selected Topics in Race and American Legal History; The Wire: Crime, Law, and Policy; our student-edited *Journal of Women and the Law* (which publishes scholarship by academics in the field); and programs such as our Puller Veterans Benefits Clinic, Revive My Vote, Street Law, and our Center for Comparative Legal Studies and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding (which enables students to work for NGOs

and similar organizations around the world) provide students with exposure to diverse perspectives and communities.

Our clinics, including our Special Education Advocacy Clinic, our Puller Veterans Benefits Clinic, our Elder and Disability Law Clinic, our Domestic Violence Clinic, and our Legal Aid Clinic, serve diverse populations in the community and expose students to a variety of client backgrounds and needs. Our Puller Veterans Benefits Clinic, in particular, has been recognized as a model for law schools throughout the country and has expanded its outreach efforts to include Military Mondays, a partnership with Starbucks Corporation to provide advice and counsel to veterans in local Starbucks locations.

Our additional goals include:

- Enhanced discussion among faculty and students about the scope of the curriculum, including whether existing course offerings address issues of diversity and social justice. (Responsibility: Dean's Office and faculty; timeline: ongoing.)
- Continued support and guidance for faculty- and student-led symposia and other programs that address issues of diversity and social justice, including an annual MLK Day lecture. (Responsibility: Dean's Office and faculty; timeline: ongoing.)

THE LAW SCHOOL AIMS TO PROVIDE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR CAMPUS COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO WORK, LEARN, LIVE, AND SOCIALIZE TOGETHER WITHOUT FEAR OF ASSAULT, HARASSMENT, OR DISCRIMINATION.

The Law School has engaged in several efforts to ensure that the Law School continues to be a safe environment for all.

The Dean's Office, as noted, meets with officers of specific student organizations as well as with the Student Bar Association to hear concerns regarding climate issues at

the Law School. During Law Week, the orientation program for first-year students, sessions are provided on professionalism, student conduct, bystander training, and available resources and support systems at the Law School and at the College.

Instructional faculty, professional faculty, and staff are expected to comply with all training and compliance requirements communicated by the College.

Many member of the Law School community have participated in the Safe Zone training offered at the College and indicate their participation to students with signage on their office doors.

The Law School has designated two restrooms in the Administrative Suite (open to the Law School community) as gender-neutral and will take inclusion into account in all new construction.

Our additional goals include:

- Development of workshops for faculty, professional faculty, and staff on diversity- and inclusion-related topics, including workshops on effective classroom discussions. (Responsibility: Dean's Office and faculty; timeline: 2016–2017 academic year)
- Scheduling of forums to allow the community to express views on climate and related issues. (Responsibility: Dean's Office; timeline: 2016–2017 academic year)

THE LAW SCHOOL AIMS TO ENSURE A WELCOMING AND SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS.

The Law School engages in several efforts to promote a welcoming and supportive campus for all faculty, students, and staff.

In addition to the efforts mentioned above (outreach to student groups, orientation for 1L students, curriculum, and programs), the Law School also engages in additional programs to promote a supportive campus.

The Law School offers multiple opportunities for students to meet and learn from leaders in the legal community from diverse backgrounds, including programs sponsored by the Office of Career Services, the William & Mary Law School Leadership Institute (a pilot program for a cohort of first-year students), and our Co-Counsel program, which connects alumni to current law students for one-on-one advice and mentoring.

In the fall of 2015, we piloted a first-year reading group initiative, in which several full-time faculty members met with groups of first-year students to discuss fiction or nonfiction works with important legal themes. Many of these books, including Tanehisi Coates's *Between the World and Me*, Rebecca Skloot's *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, Kenji Yoshino's *Speak Now: Marriage Equality on Trial*, Danielle Citron's *Hate Crimes in Cyberspace*, and Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow*, involved issues of gender, race, equality, and social justice. Faculty facilitating these discussions ensured that all views were welcome. The program will enter its second year in 2016.

Our Academic Success Program recognizes that students come to Law School with a variety of backgrounds and preparation and so provides support to encourage academic achievement, including workshops on study skills and exam preparation for first-year students, individual tutoring, and bar examination preparation for selected third-year students. Two full-time faculty members co-direct this program.

Our additional goals include:

- A continued focus on our physical environment and the messages that it communicates, including diversity in portraiture and space for students engaged in religious practice. (Responsibility: Dean's Office; timeline: ongoing.)
- Completion of renovations to one of our large lecture rooms to increase access for individuals with physical disabilities. (Responsibility: Dean's Office; timeline: 2016-2017 academic year.)
- Enhanced programs for first-year students on diversity issues during orientation week and continued programs for second- and third-year

students. (Responsibility: Dean's Office, Legal Practice Program, Office of Career Services, and faculty; timeline: 2016-2017 academic year.)

- Expansion of the Law School's Academic Success Program to provide additional workshops, individual counseling, and bar examination preparation. (Responsibility: Dean's Office; timeline: 2016-2017 academic year.)

THE LAW SCHOOL STRIVES TO INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF THE STUDENT BODY, FACULTY, AND STAFF.

Although the Law School has been a leader among law schools in the Commonwealth in the diversity of its student body, it still has room to improve.

As noted above, our Admission Office engages in considerable efforts to attract, admit, and enroll a diverse student body; those efforts will continue and develop.

For the 2015-2016 faculty recruitment season, the Dean's charge to the Faculty Appointments Committee again made ensuring a diverse pool of candidates a high priority. With that in mind, the Appointments Committee reviewed the faculty rosters of law schools across the United States for potential lateral candidates, reviewed every entry-level submission to the American Association of Law School's Faculty Recruitment Conference database, and contacted lawyers, judges, and professors throughout the United States to obtain recommendations of diverse candidates who might not have come to the Committee's attention otherwise. These efforts will continue during the 2016-2017 recruitment season.

Our additional goals include:

- A continued focus on ensuring that pools in searches for faculty, administrators, and staff are diverse and continued exploration of opportunities to make individuals from underrepresented communities aware of employment opportunities. (Responsibility: Dean's Office, Vice

Dean, Associate Dean for Administration, and Appointments Committee; timeline: ongoing.)

- Expansion of outreach efforts with respect to our adjunct faculty, which consists of practicing attorneys and judges who teach one or two classes per academic year. (Responsibility: Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development and faculty; timeline: ongoing.)
- Continued enhancement of LL.M. recruitment and programs to attract an internationally diverse graduate student body. (Responsibility: Director and Associate Director of the LL.M. program; timeline: ongoing.)
- Exploration and pursuit of additional programs designed to address pipeline issues in law school admissions. (Responsibility: Dean's Office and Admission Office; timeline: ongoing.)