



FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

THE SCHOOL OF LAW

Strategic Plan

2017



PREAMBLE

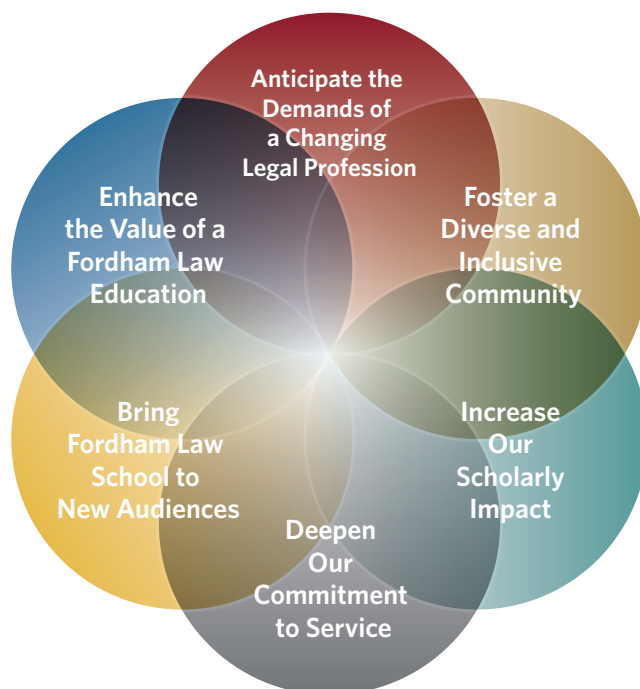
Fordham lawyers are smart, know the law, have strong judgment, and possess the skills to solve real-world problems. Whether they are employed by firms, businesses, government agencies, or community organizations, Fordham lawyers are committed to service with an integrity that is a hallmark of Fordham's Jesuit tradition. Fordham lawyers serve clients and the public at the highest levels as counselors, problem solvers, advocates, and leaders.

These qualities stem from and reflect Fordham Law School's unique approach to legal education, which is grounded in deep commitments to excellence, an ethos of care, valuing the individual while building community, and the belief that law and lawyers can nurture human flourishing. Located in new and stunning surroundings in the greatest city in the world, Fordham Law School offers students the extraordinary advantages of a large institution of learning while providing individualized training, focus, and mentorship from our world-class faculty. And Fordham's extended network of dedicated alumni helps create opportunities within the profession while ensuring that the Law School itself remains strong.

This Strategic Plan advances our core mission of law "in the service of others" by setting a course that will carry the values and strengths of a Fordham Law School education into the future and ensuring that the lawyers we graduate will be more effective than ever. In this plan, Fordham Law School commits itself to the following six strategic objectives:

- **Anticipating the demands of a changing legal profession**
- **Fostering a diverse and inclusive community**
- **Increasing our scholarly impact**
- **Deepening our commitment to service**
- **Bringing Fordham Law School to new audiences**
- **Enhancing the value of a Fordham Law School education**

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Anticipating the Demands of a Changing Legal Profession

They must have an understanding of the contexts in which legal issues arise and have developed the practical wisdom to appreciate what is important in the real world.

The rapidly changing practice of law demands new tools and abilities, and Fordham Law School is anticipating those changes. Employers seek law school graduates who can be effective professionals from the day they start. New lawyers must not only possess strong analytic skills and foundational legal knowledge but also craft solutions, communicate effectively, work collaboratively, and maintain high ethical standards. They must have an understanding of the contexts in which legal issues arise and have developed the practical wisdom to appreciate what is important in the real world.

Tomorrow's lawyers will think and act with greater sophistication about technology, business, and quantitative analytics. They will need stronger grounding in a wide array of professional capabilities, particularly as effective communicators and collaborators.

To anticipate these changing demands, the Law School will pursue the following objectives:

- Maintain and enhance areas of traditional curricular strength—notably in business and financial law, international law, human rights, intellectual property and information law, litigation, public interest and service, and ethics—and continue to adapt our curriculum to emerging dimensions of legal practice, such as corporate compliance, entrepreneurial law, and new frontiers in civil rights and social justice.
- Elevate our focus on such core competencies as problem solving, collaboration, ethics, leadership, management, cultural competence, and technological sophistication through a Professional Excellence Program that draws on our experiential program and doctrinal courses as well as journals, competitions, student organizations, and the work of our Career Planning Center.
- Ensure that all students who graduate from Fordham participate in experiential learning in a carefully structured supervised setting by building on the excellence of our clinical programs—including extraordinary live-client clinics, field placement opportunities, and simulation courses—with particular focus on innovation, enhancement of students' educational experiences, and forming strategic partnerships with institutions throughout New York City.
- Renew attention to improving students' research and writing experiences by emphasizing supervision and mentorship and by creating opportunities for new professional writing experiences that complement traditional seminar research papers and independent supervised writing—from transactional and discovery documents to policy memos, blogs, and op-eds.
- Continue to improve the academic support services for students as the demands of the profession increase in order to ensure that every student succeeds academically.



Fostering a Diverse and Inclusive Community

Today more than ever, our profession requires lawyers who can engage a multiplicity of viewpoints and perspectives. Diversity and inclusion are core to our educational model, not only to provide access to those historically underrepresented in the legal profession but also to train effective lawyers in an increasingly global age.

Our Law School must reflect the diversity of the great city in which we live—a place of learning for everyone, regardless of race and ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, religious faith, and personal and political commitment. Fordham Law School is committed to creating a community that emphasizes inclusiveness, interconnectivity, and an openness to differing viewpoints.

DIVERSITY

From our origin as a gateway school for newly arrived immigrants to our role as a leader in modern legal education, Fordham Law School has always produced outstanding lawyers who meet the needs of a diverse array of clients locally, nationally, and globally. In that spirit, we share the University’s mission to “be attentive to authentic, pluralistic dialogue and engagement” and “affirm that difference is a gift.”

Toward that end, the Law School will develop and implement a Diversity Plan that will address the following objectives:

- Continue to develop admissions and financial aid processes that are holistic in their evaluation of applicants and geared to ensure a broadly diverse student body that reflects the diversity of New York City, the nation, and beyond.
- Offer more generous financial aid packages, expand pipeline programs that help to identify and attract motivated and talented students from a range of socio-economic, ethnic, and racial backgrounds, and emphasize recruiting student talent from historically underrepresented communities.
- Recruit, retain, and engage more faculty and staff from groups historically underrepresented in the legal profession within all of the School’s departments, programs, and offices.
- Ensure that alumni from historically underrepresented communities continue to be actively engaged with the Law School after graduation and that Law School alumni and mentorship activities reflect diverse perspectives and experiences.

Continues

Our Law School must be a home for people of all races and ethnicities, religious faiths, and personal and political commitments, from every walk of life ...

II. Fostering a Diverse and Inclusive Community (continued)

COMMUNITY AND INCLUSION

Fordham's size and breadth offer great educational opportunities, but they also present challenges to community building and care for each individual. Our commitment to inclusion spans all of our educational programs, including serving the needs of those seeking a part-time legal education and international students who make up an increasing portion of our global student body.

To realize our commitment to community and inclusion, Fordham Law School will pursue the following objectives:

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- Build more intimate communities within the institution to ensure that all of our students feel a sense of belonging, that all have mentors and ample guidance as they develop their professional identity and prepare to begin careers as lawyers, and that all are engaged with their colleagues and professors and reap the benefits of intensive collaboration during their time at Fordham Law School.
- Move toward a “house” system in which every student has a lifelong community of peers, supported by career counseling and faculty and alumni mentorships that begin the first day of classes and last throughout a career. Through the house system, every entering student would take part in a small community within Fordham Law School, with enhanced faculty and alumni mentorship and stronger connections to career planning, student services, and the work of our centers and institutes.
- Ensure that our part-time J.D. program, which continues to be a source of great pride to Fordham Law School, meet the needs of working students in a broad range of industries.
- Promote an environment that fully incorporates our LL.M., M.S.L., and S.J.D. students into the Fordham Law School community and meets the needs of international students in these programs.
- Provide even greater opportunities for alumni to engage with the School and for students to work with, and learn from, our vast alumni networks—including expanding alumni mentoring to enhance career development for students and alumni.



Increasing Our Scholarly Impact

Our faculty produces work that sheds light on some of the most difficult issues we face as a society.

In an age of superficiality, Fordham Law School nurtures a depth of understanding that is urgently needed. Our faculty produces work that sheds light on some of the most difficult issues we face as a society. Our traditional scholarly excellence in core disciplines such as business law, constitutional history, evidence, intellectual property, and legal ethics is strong, and newer vistas such as immigration, information law, urban law, race and the law, and statutory interpretation are ever-growing.

To harness and expand the relevance, rigor, and reach of faculty scholarship, the Law School will do the following:

- Strengthen our world-class faculty through the hiring and retention of first-rate scholars.
- Nurture groundbreaking scholarship by creating new faculty chairs, which not only recognize outstanding scholarship and teaching but also enable faculty members to continue to advance cutting-edge theoretical and doctrinal work.
- Foster innovative scholarship by providing interdisciplinary research opportunities, recognizing superlative scholarly contributions, and maintaining an excellent, service-oriented, and technologically sophisticated law library.
- Support and encourage faculty members to advance law-reform efforts by working with courts, legislatures, and policymakers and by participating in model rules and restatement projects, judicial conferences, and policy debates.
- Promote and recognize outstanding student scholarship while embracing new models of scholarly communication for our student-edited law journals.



Deepening Our Commitment to Service

The Law School's commitment to service lies at the core of our Jesuit identity and is critical in forming Fordham lawyers committed to promoting the rule of law worldwide. Our capacity to meet this challenge is strong—but can be even stronger. As the need for access to justice increases, we will deepen our commitment to service through clinics, pro bono initiatives, and centers and institutes.

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Our clinics' accomplishments are numerous and include securing access to quality education for children, ensuring family unification by securing legal status for immigrant parents and children, fighting unscrupulous business practices, promoting sustainable development, and defending the human rights of marginalized populations at home and abroad. Our centers and institutes also have a profound impact, addressing social problems, connecting faculty scholarship and ideas to legal actors and constituencies who can draw on the insights and knowledge in their work, and serving as a bridge to engage our students in real-world challenges.

To deepen our culture of service and public interest, the Law School will do the following:

- Enhance and solidify a culture of service across the School by integrating and promoting the vital public service work of clinics, centers and institutes, and related programs.
- Expand students' ability to explore public interest careers by drawing on the unique expertise and guidance of alumni in public service careers, including our Public Service Advisory Council, by offering more career-centered resources to students interested in public interest and service.
- Provide greater financial aid and loan repayment assistance for students pursuing public interest and public service careers so that all students who seek to explore public interest careers can successfully achieve that goal.



Bringing Fordham Law School to New Audiences

As legal and regulatory systems have become more complex and interconnected, the Law School must be prepared to offer high-quality degree and non-degree programs to a range of new professional audiences. Fordham Law School's LL.M. programs are already well established and have strong global reputations, and the School has recently launched two new Master of Studies in Law programs for non-lawyers. New programs like these, which allow professionals to gain legal knowledge in cost-efficient ways, are only some of the ways that Fordham Law School is bringing its expertise to new audiences.

Fordham Law's LLM programs are already well established and have strong global reputations, and the School has recently launched two MSL programs.

To further expand our reach to new audiences, the Law School will pursue the following objectives:

- Foster collaborative scholarship, classroom offerings, dual-degree programs, and participation in conferences and lectures with the Gabelli School of Business, the Graduate School of Social Service, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and the School of Education, among others.
- Explore executive education offerings and certificate programs—both in-person and online—across areas of distinctive and emerging strength, including business and corporate law, compliance, national security, and cyberlaw, which allow us to reach new communities, both domestic and international.
- Expand collaborations with domestic and international educational partners to develop customized programs for law students and graduates who seek specialized training in one or more areas of U.S. law.
- Build new non-degree programs for international law school students and graduates to serve as a gateway to law study in the United States and for those wishing to pursue non-degree law studies in the United States.



Enhancing the Value of a Fordham Law Education

Even as Fordham Law School's commitment to financial aid has increased significantly over the past several years, our students face increasing career and economic pressures. In today's highly competitive law school and legal job market, Fordham Law School provides great value to students, in terms of quality, career success, and student satisfaction.

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At the core of the value we offer is ensuring that our students are prepared to excel in a range of environments—from the nation's largest law firms to their small and mid-size counterparts, from government agencies to judges' chambers, and in a range of for-profit and not-for-profit settings, including academia and other areas of practice and employment. And a Fordham Law School education offers students a broad array of professional opportunities, preparing them for traditional roles in public and private law practice as well as careers in business, media, education, and government.

To realize our commitment to value, Fordham Law School will do the following:

- Expand financial aid with new fundraising—with particular emphasis on enhancing the enrollment and participation of students traditionally underrepresented in the profession—and enhance our loan forgiveness programs to support the affordability of a Fordham Law School education.
- Strengthen the financial foundation of Fordham Law School to ensure long-term sustainability and growth by seeking new sources of revenue and ensuring that we continue to use our resources efficiently and wisely.
- Advise and guide our students for successful careers in an increasingly broad range of settings, ensuring that our students understand the wealth of career paths across the country—and beyond.

Conclusion

The goals outlined in this Strategic Plan will help Fordham Law School realize our core mission to advance the law “in the service of others.” Fordham Law School’s commitment to innovation, diversity and inclusiveness, scholarly impact, service, new audiences, and value all work together to foster a new generation of Fordham lawyers who understand difference and other points of view, focusing our graduates on the contributions they can make rather than on themselves. As our profession responds to accelerating changes across regulatory, political, cultural, and socioeconomic domains, the Law School will continue to produce graduates with the knowledge and tools to keep them at the forefront of the profession.



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