

# **GAZING INTO THE CRYSTAL BALL:**

## **Imagining the Successful Career Services Office of the Future**

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**Karen Britton, University of Tennessee**

**Kristine Bridges, University of Tulsa**

**Gihan Fernando, American University**

**Vicki Huebner, Santa Clara University**

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# OUR HYPOTHETICAL

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- **Your dean has asked you to describe your ideal career/professional development center for the near future, circa 2020. She wants you to dream a bit when envisioning the resources you will need, but asks you to be realistic as well.**

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# OUR METHODOLOGY

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- Interviews with
  - Deans
  - Career Professionals
  - Professional Development Professionals

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# DISCUSSION TOPICS

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- New or evolving mission or focus?
- Challenges in serving a changing student population?
- Alumni- as job seekers and as employers
- Employer relations
- Students- serving changing populations
- Partnerships and alliances
- Staffing and human resources
- Technology and physical resources

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# OUR HYPOTHETICAL

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- **What will be your biggest challenges?**
- **What will you need in order to succeed in this environment and face these challenges?**

# BETWEEN NOW AND 2020

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# OVERARCHING THEMES

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- Structural changes in provision of legal services
- Curricular innovations to JD programs/emergence of new degree programs
  - Are career implications a primary reason to consider curricular reform?
  - What input, if any, will CSO professionals have in plans to adapt or expand the curriculum?

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- Enrollment and job market conditions remain interrelated
  - Hard decisions on resource allocation within law schools
  - New contours of formal recruitment
    - OCI
    - Technology driven alternatives to OCI

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# Tensions: “Transparency”

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- Where will “transparency” take us by 2020?
  - More emphasis on selection of students in the admission process based on career goals?
  - Little tolerance for “non traditional” students because of resource demands to serve them?
  - More resources/staff dedicated to assessment, tracking, student accountability
  - Outcomes tracked at micro level

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# Tensions: “Scarce Resources”

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- Need for customized services and flexible staff
- Top students are a scarce commodity
- Promise of more specialized attention to niche career goals
- Unlimited scope of “JD Advantage”

# MISSION AND FOCUS

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# IS THE FUTURE ALREADY HERE?

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- Core:
  - Marketability
  - Creation of Opportunity
- Managing student expectations and market inequities
  - Closer connections between CSO and admissions and students recruitment
- CSOs more integrated than stand alone

# FUTURE STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

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- How much time will I be spending on student counseling?
- When does my counseling relationship with the student end?
- Do I need to develop expertise in everything?
  - Challenge of “JD advantage”
- How will my performance be measured?

# Tension: Allocation of Resources

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- Students v. recent graduates and alumni
- Students seeking “full point” jobs v. those who prefer non-traditional or JD Advantage

# SERVING CHANGING STUDENT POPULATIONS

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# CHANGING STUDENT POPULATION?

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- Entering classes
  - Smaller?
  - Varying degrees of quality?
  - Less prepared and equipped for success?
  - “Eyes Wide Open”
    - Market Conditions
    - Debt Load

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# SERVICES FOR CHANGING POPULATIONS

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- Resulting need for “customization”
  - Specialized career tracks
- Increasing reliance on “assessment”
  - Broader range of learning needs
- Pulling the diamond out of the rough
  - Formalized professionalism training

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# SERVICES FOR CHANGING POPULATIONS

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- JD Advantage counseling
- Lengthier commitment to student counseling
  - “4-year relationship”
- Counseling for the non-JD candidate
  - Pre-Law & Admissions
  - Masters of Jurisprudence

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# EMERGING TRENDS

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- Personalized services in demand
  - strain on resources
- Student engagement and accountability
  - can be enhanced through awareness and support from deans and faculty
- Institutionalize use of “benchmarks”
  - to assess student progress and trigger intervention

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# Tensions: Expectations

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1. Individual student responsibility VERSUS Quality student services
2. More transparency VERSUS JD advantage
3. Student quality VERSUS Market demands

# ALUMNI/RECENT GRADUATES

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# MOVING UP THE CAREER LATTICE

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- Longer service years to “underemployed graduates”
- Quicker, multiple job transitions
- Cost and resources to serve?
  - Menu of services, fee based?

# EMPLOYER RELATIONS

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# OVERARCHING THEMES

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- Employer “outreach” gives way to employer “service”
- Alumni as employers: relationship management in collaboration with other units
- Staffing and resources – integrated employer outreach with other roles
- The “JD advantage” challenge

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# Tensions: JD Advantage Challenge

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- Employer development in a JD Advantage world
  - Resources and effective strategies- managing the huge task
  - Collaboration with other career units on-campus to leverage employer relationships and loyalty
  - Making the case for added value of the JD

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- “student counseling, if done properly, will take twice the time as *employer relations*”

# PARTNERSHIPS & ALLIANCES

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Deans

Faculty

Others

# DEANS AND FACULTY

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- Recognition of effect of employment outcomes on law school
- CSO/PDO leaders consulted more frequently
- Leveraging faculty relationships with students for employment and reporting
- Faculty buy-in for programs and curriculum

# OUTSIDE COLLABORATIONS

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- Across Campus
  - Other colleges
  - Undergraduate CSOs
- Bar Associations
- Law Schools
  - Particularly for regional schools, joining forces to serve students of multiple schools

# Tension: Swift Market Changes

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1. Faculty tenure VERSUS need for updated curriculum
2. Need for more in-depth counseling VERSUS Collaboration with competitor schools
3. Employment outcomes VERSUS limited resources

# TECHNOLOGY & PHYSICAL RESOURCES

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# WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

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- Using technology
  - Interview and meeting technology to link people face to face over distance
  - Virtual meetings with students
  - Research tools and on demand programming
- Career Center
  - Small group training and team space

# STAFFING & PHYSICAL RESOURCES

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# Tensions: “Resource Allocation”

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- Cost and allocation of staff resources
  - Use of consultants for specialized training
  - “initiative” based staffing models
  - Pricing of services for alumni
  - Collaboration with staff in other units (i.e., admissions and alumni affairs)

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# Tension: The Alumni Investment

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- Allocate scarce resources to serve younger alumni with a longer “wingspan” of need for our services?
- Desire and need to cultivate alumni
  - Collaborators/supporters of initiatives
  - Referrals of prospective students
  - Employers
  - Donors

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# STAFF ROLES

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- “specialists” or “generalists”?
  - Diverse and flexible “skill mix”
  - Professional development
  - Collaborators
  - Counselors
  - Data integrity and transparency

# WRAP-UP AND DISCUSSION

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# CONTACT INFORMATION

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## **Kristine Bridges**

Associate Dean, Director of  
Professional Development

University of Tulsa College of Law

(918) 631-2429

Kristine-Bridges@utulsa.edu

## **Gihan Fernando**

Executive Director

American University Career Center

(202) 885-1829

gihan.fernando@american.edu

## **Karen Britton**

Director, Admissions, Financial Aid &  
Career Services

University of Tennessee College of Law

(865) 974- 6781

britton@utk.edu

## **Vicki Huebner**

Assistant Dean, Law Career Services

Santa Clara University School of Law

(408) 551-1896

vhuebner@scu.edu