

MEMORANDUM

To: Pascale Bishop, Board Liaison

Cc: Fred Thrasher, Deputy Director
Claire Nash, Member Services Coordinator

From: Jennifer Salyers, Chair, Law Student Professional Development Section
Law Student Professional Development Section Leadership Team

Date: October 22, 2020

Re: Board Report, NALP Law Student Professional Development Section

During the second quarter of the 2020-2021 NALP business cycle, the Law Student Professional Development (“LSPD”) Section continued its work on its charges and engaged in robust environmental scanning discussions during its second quarterly call hosted via Zoom. This report identifies our leadership team, summarizes the environmental scanning we conducted on our second quarterly call, and describes the status of our projects.

I. Leadership Team

Chair:

Jennifer Salyers, William & Mary Law School, jsalyers@wm.edu

Annual Education Conference/Bulletin Article and Webinar Planning Vice Chair:

Alex Piller, University of Illinois, apiller2@illinois.edu

Knowledge Management Vice Chair:

Freda Coleman-Jackson, Washington & Lee University School of Law,
fcoleman-jackson@wlu.edu

Law Student and Lawyer Professional Development Sections Collaboration Vice Chair:

Shar Poormosleh, Southwestern Law School, spoormosleh@swlaw.edu

Membership Development Vice Chair:

Elizabeth Carr, Mercer, carr_e@law.mercer.edu

Professional Identity Formation Vice Chairs:

Molly Wilensky, University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law,
wilenskym@umkc.edu

Laura Friedman, Case Western Reserve University School of Law,
laura.friedman@case.edu

Programming Best Practices Vice Chair:

Sara Marshall, William & Mary Law School, srmarshall@wm.edu

II. Section Call & Environmental Scanning

On October 14, 2020, nineteen members of the LSPD Section participated in the second quarterly call of the current NALP business cycle.

A. Introductions

The call began with a brief introduction by the Section Chair. LSPD Vice Chairs then provided updates on their Work Groups and a robust environmental scanning discussion followed.

B. Environmental Scanning: Virtual Interviewing Skills.

As the current public health crisis continues, the LSPD Section Leadership Team wanted to address the issues that students are facing and potential solutions as it relates to virtual interviewing. Elizabeth Carr led a discussion about this topic. Here are the themes and highlights from this discussion:

- Members chimed in with several helpful tips to share with students as they prepare for virtual interviews, including:
 - The importance of eye contact; be sure to look at the camera and not at the screen.
 - It was also noted that on Zoom, students could move their own image (a small thumbnail of the user's image) right under the camera, which can help you maintain eye contact.
 - Adjust your camera and/or laptop position so that the camera is at eye level.
 - Turn off your own video to avoid self-monitoring.
 - Create an IT emergency "cheat sheet" listing the name, email, and phone number of the contact to reach out to should you bump into any technical issues during the interview (this way you do not have to search your email inbox, etc.).
 - Expect and prepare for technical issues and other issues (e.g., simply acknowledge unexpected noises in the background, remain calm, and move on). In fact, these issues allow students to show their problem-solving skills and poise in the moment.
 - Use the stopwatch on your phone to track time during the interview.
 - Check your lighting.
- One Section Member noted their CSO adapted a student-facing pre-interviewing checklist to include specific tips for virtual interviewing.
- Zoom backgrounds may be distracting but may be the only option (e.g., student has to interview in their bedroom).
- Self-advocacy: This recruiting and hiring season presents an opportunity to help students learn to self-advocate in requesting virtual options and when handling the added complications concerning in-person interviews in the COVID era.

- Employer Relations: CSOs may need to remind employers about the challenges students may be facing (e.g., living with parents/roommates, quarantining, etc.). A related discussion arose regarding how the LSPD section might be able to work with the Lawyer PD section to broach this subject.
- One member noted that NYU created and made available a handout regarding virtual interviewing.

C. Environmental Scanning: Adjustments to Professional Development Programming During the COVID-19 Era.

As CSOs move forward with their professional development programming, the LSPD leadership team thought it would be helpful to collect best practices from section members to identify ways to adapt existing professional development programming and/or create new program content. Sara Marshall led a discussion about this topic. Here are the themes and highlights from this discussion:

- One Section Member shared details about their CSO’s professional development programming series: Pathway to the Professions Series – Practice Area Focused Sessions. Students participate in these weekly programs live via videoconference. The sessions cover many practice areas and are hosted by practicing attorneys. Each session is recorded for future reference.
- This CSO also added a networking component to this Pathway to the Professions Series on Fridays called “remote roundtables.”
- Silver Lining: One pro of the COVID era is that we can engage alumni in distant geographic markets.
- Case Western, with a consortia of law schools in PA, OH, and WV, collaborated to create 12 videos that they are all sharing.
- RSVPs and “no shows” are especially problematic during the COVID era given spacing and distancing requirements.
- The LSPD Section is working on a Google Doc to share best practices and ideas with section members.

D. Environmental Scanning: How can we support first-year law students in building a sense of community in a virtual learning environment?

Members of the Class of 2023 are facing new and unique challenges as they navigate the fall 2020 semester in the COVID era. One area of particular concern is how to assist 1Ls in making connections with fellow law students, faculty, staff and alumni to build a sense of community “on campus” in a hybrid or virtual learning environment. Jenn Salyers led a discussion about this topic. Here are the themes and highlights from this discussion:

- Mindset Shift: In a traditional in-person learning environment, networking and a sense of community is often built organically (e.g., students hanging out after class, meeting 2Ls

and 3Ls in the lobby at table events, etc.). Now, students need to intentionally seek out their law school community and find ways to engage.

- Encourage students to be intentional about developing a sense community and articulating the importance of carving out time to do so.
- “Zoom fatigue” is an issue that is popping up as well.
- Encourage 1Ls to participate in student organizations and to attend monthly meetings, etc.
- Some CSOs reported that their schools are hosting virtual social events on topics including:
 - Zoom Trivia Night
 - Mentorship Groups (e.g., 1Ls are partnered with a group of 2Ls, 3Ls, faculty, staff, etc.)

III. Work Group Reports

A. Annual Education Conference/*Bulletin* Article Planning (by Alex Piller)

Annual Education Conference RFPs

Two RFPs were submitted on behalf of our section for the 2021 Annual Education Conference. The RFPs are:

Building the Foundations for Practice by Integrating Practice-Readiness Expectations into Law Student PD

by Kristen Hulse, Zachariah DeMeola, Logan Cornett

While it is commonly accepted that law student PD should align with practice realities, there remain challenges to collaboration between law schools and employers. Yet to design relevant PD curriculum that will prepare students for practice, law school staff and faculty must understand which competencies will support and accelerate students' development in the current legal landscape. This session will identify ways to build the IAALS Foundations for Practice into student PD, as the Foundations (a set of legal skills, professional competencies, and personal characteristics) tell us what employers deem necessary for junior lawyer success. We will highlight key Foundations that prepare students for entry-level practice during times of change and share multiple approaches and exercises for bringing this data to life.

Silver Linings Playbook: COVID-19 Summer Triage & Lessons to Enrich a New Normal

by Pascale Bishop, Elisabeth Beal, Corinne Crews, Jeff Becherer

While the COVID-19 pandemic brought extraordinary global challenge and disruption to the employment market, the silver lining for career services professionals was an opportunity to innovate to help students build skills and form their professional identities. The panelists will describe the unique summer programs they developed – from resource

banks and facilitated networking opportunities, to a voluntary professional development bootcamp, to a for-credit course in partnership with a national law firm – to fill this gap. We will discuss how lessons from these experiences are informing our services into summer 2021 and beyond and participants will brainstorm about implementing these lessons themselves.

Bulletin Articles

There have also been three *Bulletin* articles proposed on behalf of our section. Those articles are:

Virtual Meeting Sessions Reveal Expectation Gap Between Students and Employers

by Rachael Bosch, Hannah Kelly, and Jessie Spressart

Analyzing feedback from over 100 virtual setup sessions with law students around the country conducted by Fringe Professional Development, Optia Consulting, and Flo Recruit to illustrate students' challenges and concerns about topics such as presenting professionally and virtual networking.

Learning Curve: Applying Concepts from Law School Academic Support to Career Services and PD Programs

by Sara Marshall

Helpful key concepts to apply to career services learned from an interim position in law school academic support.

Experiential Education in the Midst of a Pandemic: Where are we now?

by Dena R. Bauman and Kathryn C. Liss

A summary of how to find an externship in light of COVID-19, adapting to remote working/telecommuting, and the impact the pandemic has had on students and field supervisors.

B. Knowledge Management - KM (Freda Coleman-Jackson)

The Work Group represented the LSPD Section on a follow-up training call conducted by the KM Advisory Group on August 4th that provided further clarification of the taxonomy to be used to conduct content audits. At that time, the Work Group was assigned to conduct an audit of the Conference Handouts from the 2017 Annual Education Conference. The audit of the 2017 Conference Handout was completed on October 1st and submitted to the KM Advisory Group for review.

Following this submission, the Work Group was assigned to conduct an audit of the Conference Handouts from the 2016 Annual Education Conference. This audit is currently in progress. We welcome any members to join the Work Group and to lend their expertise on LSPD resources.

C. Law Student and Lawyer Professional Development Sections Collaboration (Shahrzad Poormosleh)

The work group continues to make progress on the Law Firm PD Program Write-Up Project, an initiative to interview and draft write-ups about law firm PD programs. Work Group volunteers continue to work on write-up updates, pending submissions, and have strategized on how best to timely and efficiently complete the Law Firm PD Program Project. After receiving feedback from NALP's Editor in Chief, Shar Poormosleh and Jenn Salyers prepared a finalized a draft of the interview write-ups, along with a headline, byline, and repeating text, as well as a schedule for release, and sent the same for review to NALP on July 17, 2020. A follow-up was sent August 10, 2020. We are now awaiting instructions to launch an on-line publication of this resource.

D. Membership Development (Elizabeth Carr)

In September, we co-sponsored and co-hosted a webinar with the Lawyer PD Section on Enhancing Your Virtual Presence. The program was presented by Carrie English, Chief Professional Development Officer at Husch Blackwell LLP, and she provided excellent tips and lessons on how to set-up a home office, vocal and physical presence, and voice command. It was an incredibly well attended and timely program and we look forward to continuing our partnership with the Lawyer PD section in the future. To continue our efforts to increase LSPD Section membership, members are encouraged to invite their colleagues and contacts to join quarterly calls and to engage in discussions on NALPConnect and most recently, during our section call, I asked each member to invite one person to our next virtual meeting.

E. Professional Identity Formation (Molly Wilensky & Laura Friedman)

The Chair of this work group has, since the first quarter, collaborated closely with the Lawyer Professional Development Professional Identity Formation Work Group, as well as the Holloran Center. This collective met multiple times via Zoom and corresponded via email to develop a draft of a proposal for research collaboration between the LPD/LSPD Professional Identity Formation Work Groups, the Holloran Center, and NALP. The proposal is for the distribution of a survey of law firm competency models for associate development. This will help illuminate what common competencies exist across different sizes of law firms, help law firms understand the varied ways in which competency models are being used by law firms, and help law schools understand the extent to which common competencies among law firms are considered in the hiring process and whether they align with common law school learning outcomes. The goal is for distribution of the survey in early November.

F. Programming Best Practices (Sara Marshall)

This work group is continuing to gather information on programming best practices to develop a resource for NALP members. In particular, we are gathering information on how to provide effective virtual programming in a world of physical distancing. We are partnering in this

endeavor with the Small and Solo Career Advisor Section's Programming Best Practices work group. At this stage, we have created a Google doc that is shared between our Sections so that members from both groups can share their ideas and best practices, including adjustments they have made to traditional PD programs.

Collection of this information will also be helpful for the Sections' contributions to NALP's strategic planning process. In addition to creating a stand-alone programming tool kit, we will consider adding updates on virtual programming best practices to the existing PD Booklet.