

MEMORANDUM

To: Neil Dennis, Board Liaison

Cc: Fred Thrasher, Acting Executive Director
Meaghan Hagner, Member Services Coordinator

From: Eric Bono, Chair and Law Student Professional Development Leadership Team

Date: January 31, 2019

Re: Second Quarter Report, NALP Law Student Professional Development Section

The NALP Law Student Professional Development Section (“LSPD”) is off to a good start in 2019. This report identifies our leadership team, summarizes the environmental scanning we conducted in our second quarterly section call and describes the status of our projects.

I. Leadership Team

Chair – Eric Bono, University of Denver Sturm College of Law, ebono@law.du.edu

Annual Education Conference/*Bulletin* Article Planning Vice Chairs, Erin Pedrami, LSU, epedrami@lsu.edu; Alex Piller, Illinois, apiller2@illinois.edu

Law Student and Lawyer Professional Development Sections Collaboration Vice Chairs, Elisabeth Beal, William & Mary, eabeal@wm.edu; Shannon DeGennaro, DePaul, SDEGENN1@depaul.edu

Best Practices Guide Vice Chairs, Francie Scott, Wake Forest, scottfs@wfu.edu; Kate Christoff, Cincinnati, christkb@ucmail.uc.edu

Membership Development Vice Chairs, Patty Lopez, Case Western pmr43@case.edu and Elizabeth Carr, Mercer, carr_e@law.mercer.edu

Professional Identity Formation Vice Chairs, Susan Fine, George Washington, sfine@law.gwu.edu; Melissa Berry, Washington, mmberry@uw.edu, Angela Cruseturner, Baylor, Angela_Cruseturner@baylor.edu

II. Section Call & Environmental Scanning

On January 24, 2019, twenty-one members of the LSPD section participated in our third quarterly call. We kicked off the call with a plug from one of our Vice Chairs, Alex Piller

(Illinois), to encourage members to consider submitting RFPs for NALP's 2019 Professional Development Institute. Alex described the timeframe for submitting an RFP and offered to serve as a resource for members seeking proposal topics, co-presenters or feedback on draft proposals. Alex also discussed the general timeframe for submitting RFPs for the 2020 NALP Annual Education Conference.

We devoted the remainder of the meeting to two topics of significant interest to our members, which sparked a lively discussion. First, we talked about strategies for seeking faculty approval of required professional development programs.¹ Second, we considered NALP's new Principles for a Fair and Ethical Recruitment process from the standpoint of law student professional development.

A. Strategies for seeking approval of required professional development programs (led by Angela Cruseturner, Shannon DeGennaro and Eric Bono)

Most law school career services professionals face a dilemma. They know their students will benefit from the professional development training they provide, but for a variety of reasons, not all students take advantage of this resource. Moreover, the students who may benefit the most from the professional development programming offered by their CSO are often the least engaged. Accordingly, many career services professionals would love to persuade their faculties to adopt mandatory professional development programs, whether through coursework or co-curricular offerings. For a host of reasons, however, it can be difficult to persuade faculty members to support mandatory professional development programming in any form. Faculty objections take many forms including a perception that students do not need such training (or would be overwhelmed by it), that such training lacks sufficient rigor, general objections to adding new requirements and more. Accordingly, we wanted to talk about what has worked at law schools where faculty have adopted some form of professional development requirement. Three LSPD members shared their experiences in obtaining faculty approval.

Baylor: Angela Cruseturner presented on Baylor's mandatory professional development program, launched in 2013, which is co-curricular and follows a CLE model. Specifically, students must earn 18 CLE hours in order to be eligible to graduate.

Going into the proposal process, Baylor's CSO understood that some faculty would be concerned about the prospect of requiring too much of students given the school's already heavy academic requirements. The CSO also understood that the faculty would likely be reluctant to approve what it perceived to be an enhanced form of the programming the CSO already did. Therefore, they used employer feedback to identify gaps in the training students were receiving and proposed that the CLE program could fill in those gaps. In addition, the CSO team was able to

¹ In connection with this topic, Melissa Berry (Washington), Shannon DeGennaro (DePaul) and Sarah Rohne (Minnesota) highlighted some related sessions that are on the program for the upcoming NALP Annual Education Conference. Examples of highlighted programs included "From Dean to Students," "Evening Student Programming," "Core Competencies for New Lawyers," "Student Well Being Task Force Update," "Programming for Legal Master's Students" and more.

identify and collaborate with a “faculty champion” who was influential with other faculty members and bought into the need for required professional development for students. Angela believes this program would not have been approved without the assistance of this faculty member and she noted that they are able to maintain faculty buy-in by working with a faculty committee to help run the program.

DePaul: Shannon DeGennaro presented on DePaul’s 5-year-old professional development requirement, which the school offers through a mandatory 1L course on professionalism. The professionalism course, which spans both semesters, is not for academic credit, but does appear on students’ transcripts on a pass-fail basis.

Shannon identified several factors that helped persuade DePaul’s faculty to adopt this model. First, at the time the faculty were considering the proposal, DePaul’s employment statistics had dropped, so faculty were already focused on finding ways to improve the school’s employment rate. Second, advocates for DePaul’s program leveraged employer feedback to persuade the faculty that adding a professionalism course would be important. Third, advocates for the professionalism course identified and collaborated with multiple “faculty champions” to help them make the case. Finally, DePaul succeeded in persuading the faculty to adopt a coursework model specifically (as opposed to a co-curricular model) because they had previously tried a point-based co-curricular program, which proved to be challenging to administer. Shannon noted that since the adoption of the program, they have found it valuable to keep faculty engaged by seeking their input into the content of the course.

University of Denver: Eric Bono described the University of Denver’s required co-curricular professional development program and the factors that persuaded the faculty to adopt it. Denver Law’s CSO approached the law school Dean in circa 2011 about the concept of a professional development requirement and learned that Denver Law’s faculty tends to be hesitant to add new graduation requirements. Therefore, the office decided to focus on other priorities. Over the years, however, the CSO noticed a clear pattern—graduates who they reported as unemployed and seeking work were far less likely to have engaged with the CSO than employed graduates. In addition, like CSO colleagues at other law schools, Denver Law’s CSO had received plenty of employer feedback that suggested the value of a required professional development program.

In 2015, Denver Law embarked on a strategic planning process and the CSO saw this as an opportunity to advocate for the adoption of a professional development requirement. As a part of making the case, the CSO emphasized that while the school’s rate was higher than it was coming out of the Great Recession, there was still room to improve. Throughout the strategic planning process, the CSO highlighted these facts and argued that a professional development requirement could help them reach students who were otherwise slipping through the cracks.

The faculty eventually adopted the law school’s 2015 strategic plan that included broad language stating that career and professional development would be embedded in the experience of every law student. The Dean of the Law School then asked the Assistant Dean for Career

Development to chair a committee of faculty, staff and one student charged with recommending a structure for accomplishing this. The guidance from faculty and a student was instrumental in helping to create a proposal that the faculty at large would find palatable. By including faculty and student voices (some of which were initially skeptical), the CSO was able to anticipate and address faculty objections and propose a program that the faculty would accept.

Common Threads: While different in some respects, the professional development programs at Baylor, DePaul and Denver share several commonalities in terms of how they came to exist. All three schools cited the use of employer feedback and the assistance of supportive faculty members as being significant factors in gaining approval for their mandatory professional development programs. In addition, at least two of the schools, DePaul and Denver, took advantage of natural inflection points to make their case for mandatory professional development training. Specifically, DePaul's CSO made their pitch at a time when their faculty were focusing on improving employment outcomes while Denver's CSO used the law school's strategic planning process as an opportunity to make their case.

B. New NALP Principles for a Fair and Ethical Recruitment Process – Challenges and opportunities from a law student professional development standpoint – (led by Elisabeth Beal)

In our section call, we discussed challenges and opportunities that may arise from the adoption of NALP's new Principles for a Fair and Ethical Recruitment Process. Without the timing guidelines from NALP's former Principles and Standards, we anticipate that going forward, the amount of time students have to consider offers may be less standardized. In addition, we believe that in many cases, students are likely to have significantly less than twenty-eight days to consider offers. With the potential for these changes to occur as soon as the next recruiting season, we believed it would be helpful for our members to discuss ways to address them the standpoint of Law Student Professional Development. For example, can we provide training to empower students to navigate the recruiting process when they may not necessarily have a standard amount of time to consider and respond to offers? The highlights of that conversation are summarized below.

Call participants agreed that in a new environment where students may have less time to consider offers during the recruitment process, it will be more important than ever for students to enter the recruiting season well informed about individual employers and with a better sense of which employers may best suit them. Participants suggested that they might emphasize even more the importance of researching and networking with firms ahead of the formal recruitment process so that students have more information about individual employers going into their interviews. For example, while such programming at some schools has focused most heavily on application materials and interview preparation, schools may devote more time to helping students develop strong communication and negotiation skills in order to keep employers apprised of where they stand in considering offers and to request more time to respond to offers when necessary. One member suggested that it might be helpful to have a panel of employers talk with students about

best practices in communicating about offers and negotiating timeframes in which to respond. It could be empowering for students to hear from employers that it is reasonable to seek more information or additional time in considering offers and for employers to suggest best practices in how to frame those communications.

In addition, some members are considering doing more programming on networking, self-assessment and employer research in the spring of the 1L year specifically related to on-campus recruiting so that students can enter into the process better informed. In the course of this discussion, some members cited other on-campus recruitment systems in which the time frames for interviews and responding to offers are far more compressed than the time frames we have become accustomed to in on-campus recruiting in U.S. law schools. For example, law school recruiting systems in Canada and certain recruitment programs for MBA students have time frames as short as one week or less, sometimes giving students as little as one day to respond to an offer. LSPD members who have worked in these systems conveyed that in these systems, there tends to be significantly more pre-application engagement between students and employers so that all parties go into the process with more information. In addition, at least in the MBA programs, there can be even more competition among employers to try to come onto campus on day one of the recruitment process.

Additional thoughts: Participants generally agreed that the new Principles present both the opportunity and challenge of spending even more time preparing students ahead of the application process. We also noted, however, that in the absence of NALP's October 15 kickoff for individually advising first-year law students, there is an opportunity to start engaging with students earlier in law school. This may free up time in the spring semester to provide enhanced programming related to the formal recruitment process. In addition, because there may be less standardization in the recruitment process, some members anticipate there will be more questions from students on how to navigate having multiple offers. To maximize efficiency in responding to such questions, some members are considering developing copy/paste language, slides or short handouts to answer frequently asked questions.

III. Work Group Reports

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

2019 Professional Development Institute RFPs

We have asked our members for RFPs for the Professional Development Institute (PDI). We will be working with our members to generate additional ideas, bring together collaborators, and provide feedback on draft RFPs in advance of the March 31st submission deadline.

2020 Annual Education Conference RFPs

We are also preparing to assist our members with submitting RFPs for next year's Annual Education Conference. We are working to identify and improve any promising RFPs submitted last year that were not selected for this year's conference, and will be collecting ideas from our members for new RFPs, especially once the application period opens. The section meeting at the Annual Education Conference is also likely to generate RFP topics, and we will work with our members to help them choose the best topics and finalizing and submitting their proposals.

B. Law Student and Lawyer Professional Development Sections Collaboration (by Elisabeth Beal and Shannon DeGennaro)

Our initiative to interview and draft write-ups about law firm PD programs continues to progress. Approximately 36 firms have been invited to participate, and 9 write-ups are complete. We conducted follow up outreach to our volunteers at the beginning of January. Our goal remains to complete 20 write-ups by the NALP Annual Education Conference.

C. Best Practices Guide (Francie Scott and Kate Christoff)

We would like this guide to be a go-to resource for law school professionals implementing professional development programs (whether mandatory or voluntary). After considering what we believe to be key topics for PD programs, we have turned to the full LSPD section to help us compile teaching tools. Unfortunately, we have not received much input from the section on this request so we are trying to think of additional steps we could take.

D. Membership Development (by Patty Lopez and Elizabeth Carr)

We will continue to implement our strategy of posting professional development topics to NALP Connect and asking for commentary of what questions and issues in the PD realm are important to other NALP members. Then we will reach out to those who comment and ask them to participate in our calls and sections. We will also continue to grow our list of previously active and newly interested members of the group by actively reaching out to potential new members as well as existing members to assess what they'd like to see from the group, what topics they'd like cover, and what they hope to gain from their membership. We will continue to join other section calls periodically to garner interest in the group. We will also continue to send the group of newer members the agenda before each section call to get their thoughts and encourage engagement. We will encourage them to invite 1-2 colleagues or send the agenda on for their thoughts. During conversations with interested new members, we will suggest helpful resources developed by the group such as the PD Booklet. We will continue to make outreach efforts to these new/potentially interested members and welcome any volunteers who may be interested in conducting some of this outreach as well.

E. Professional Identity Formation (by Susan Fine, Melissa Berry and Angela Cruseturner)

The Professional Identity Formation Work Group continues to work on its three primary deliverables. First, we seek to raise awareness through relevant conferences. To that end, Co-Chair Susan Fine presented “A Long Engagement: How to Build a Culture of Self-Directed Learning” at NALP’s 2018 Professional Development Institute (PDI). The program was well received. Co-Chairs Melissa Berry and Angela Cruseturner attended the 2019 Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Annual Meeting in January 2019 and participated in a discussion on “Bridging the Divisions with Professional Identity Learning Outcomes that Encourage Cultural Competency in the Profession” featuring Neil Hamilton and Jerry Organ of the Halloron Center at University of St. Thomas School of Law, along with faculty from several other law schools. The Work Group is currently exploring submitting a proposal for the 2019 PDI and/or the 2020 Annual Education Conference. Second, the Work Group and other volunteers are collaborating with Elizabeth Beal, LSPD liaison to NALP’s Lawyer Professional Development Section, in the compilation of descriptions of law firm professional development programs. Third, the Co-Chairs continue to monitor the Halloron Center’s formation stage development models project. They will facilitate getting feedback from NALP members as it progresses.

F. Professionalism Videos (Collaboration with JD Career Advisers and Recruiting Sections) – Eric Bono (Denver)

With the advent of NALP’s new Principles for a Fair and Ethical Recruitment Process, we have decided to shift the direction of this project. We need to determine whether any of the existing videos are still viable or whether we should replace them with new videos that reference the new Principles. At the same time, we also need to determine what messages we should seek to convey through a new set of videos. We have scheduled a call on February 1, 2019 to discuss these new efforts.