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2019 Survey of Canadian Law School Career Services Offices

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Introduction

The 2019 NALP Survey of Canadian Law School Career Services Offices was conducted during May 2019. A total of 16 schools completed the survey, representing seven provinces. Because of the small number of responses possible for this survey, most analyses are at the national level only; in few instances analyses are also based on law school enrollment. Additionally, with few schools reporting more than three staff members in their career services office (a total of just five staff members reported in the 4th – 7th positions), staff members in the 3rd – 7th positions were combined to provide sufficient data points for analysis.

Finally, some findings are reported out in footnotes or text only, as the item was applicable to only a few respondents.



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Table 1. Staffing Levels

	Overall (N = 16)	By Total Enrollment (JD/LLB and graduate students):	
		Less than 500 (N=7)	500 or more (N=9)
Professional Staff – Full-time			
Average number	1.8	1.4	2.0
% Reporting 1	44%	57%	33%
% Reporting 2	44%	43%	44%
% Reporting 3 or more	12%	0%	22%
Support Staff – Full-time			
Average number	0.6	0.3	0.9
% Reporting none	44%	71%	22%
% Reporting 1 or more	56%	29%	78%
Paid Student Assistants – Part-time, Fall 2018			
Average number	1.4	0.7	2.0
% Reporting none	44%	57%	33%
% Reporting 1 or more	56%	43%	67%
Paid Student Assistants – Part-time, Spring 2019			
Average number	1.4	0.7	1.9
% Reporting none	50%	57%	44%
% Reporting 1 or more	50%	43%	56%
Student Volunteers			
Average number	3.9	1.9	5.6
% Reporting none	50%	57%	44%
% Reporting 1-4	19%	43%	56%
% Reporting 5 or more	31%		

Note: Few schools reported staff in other categories. Reporting was as follows:

Four schools reported one part-time professional staff, in the role of counselor. One school reported a part-time support staff. Over half of schools reported having no full-time student assistants during Summer 2018; most of the rest reported having one student assistant. No schools reported having full-time student assistants during Fall 2018, and most did not report any full-time student assistants during Spring 2019. Four schools reported having one or more part-time student assistants during Summer 2018. Staff in the 'other' category was reported by one school and described as contract staff to help with counseling.

Table 2. Staffing for Specific Functions

	Overall (N= 16)	By Total Enrollment (JD/LLB and Graduate Students):	
		Less than 500 (N = 7)	500 or more (N = 9)
Staff Person for Employer Outreach	19%	NC	NC
Judicial Clerkship Counseling Provided By:			
Designated CSO staff	44%	43%	44%
Any available CSO Counselor/Staff	56%	57%	56%
Clerkship advising is independent of CSO	19%	NC	NC
Other*	19%	NC	NC
Career Counseling for Graduate Students Provided By:			
Any available CSO Counselor/Staff	54%	50%	56%
Graduate student office staff	38%	25%	44%
Other**	31%	25%	33%
School does not have graduate students	19%	NC	NC
Public Interest/Government Counseling Provided By:			
Designated CSO staff	38%	43%	33%
Any available CSO Counselor/Staff	75%	33%	67%
Staff in separate public interest office	0%	0%	0%

Note: More than one response could be chosen for each question, so percentages add to more than 100. NC indicates that percentages were not calculated because the overall percentage is small.

One school reported having a staff person primarily dedicated to alumni counseling. Two schools reported having a staff person primarily dedicated to wellness/personal counseling. One school reported having designated CSO staff to counsel graduate students.

Four schools reported offering a masters in law program. Three schools reported that the CSO provides career counseling to these students.

*Others described include faculty and academic dean.

**Faculty and graduate services outside of the law school were mentioned.

Table 3. Characteristics of Primary Staff Person

Titles Reported*	
Director	50%
Assistant Dean	12%
Other, e.g., coordinator, officer, manager	38%
Years in Current Job	
3 years or less	50%
More than 3 years	50%
Average number of years	3.5
Years in Field (N = 16)	
8 years or less	50%
More than 8 years	50%
Average number of years	8.5
LLB/JD?	
Yes	75%
Prior Practice? (N=12)	
Yes	100%
Current License Status (N = 12)	
Practicing member of a provincial law society	0%
Non-practicing member of a provincial law society	75%
Not a member of a provincial law society	25%
Salaries for Full-time Staff	
Median	\$92,000
Average	\$90,450
Half of salaries fell in range from:	\$78,925-101,850
Time Spent on Career Counseling	
None	0%
Less than 25%	19%
26-50%	56%
51-75%	25%
More than 75%	0%

Note: Number reporting is 16 unless otherwise noted. All these individuals were reported as professional full-time staff. Salary figures have been rounded to the nearest \$25.

*Titles have been grouped into categories based on the presence of the word(s) in the title.

Other advanced degrees described include LLM, MBA, and MEd.

Table 4. Characteristics of Second Staff Person

Titles Reported*	
Counsellor/advisor	58%
Coordinator or assistant	25%
Other, e.g., officer, director	17%
Job Characteristics	
Professional full-time	75%
Professional part-time	8%
Support full-time	17%
Years in Current Job	
2 years or less	50%
More than 2 years	50%
Average number of years	5.1
Years in Field	
6 years or less	50%
More than 6 years	50%
Average number of years	9.5
LLB/JD?	
Yes	42%
Prior Practice? (N=5)	
Yes	80%
Current License Status (N = 5)	
Practicing member of a provincial law society	20%
Non-practicing member of a provincial law society	40%
Not a member of a provincial law society	40%
Salaries for Full-time Staff (# reporting = 11)	
Median	\$68,800
Average	\$67,950
Half of salaries fell in range from:	\$54,800-85,100
Time Spent on Career Counseling	
None	25%
Less than 25%	8%
26-50%	8%
51-75%	58%
More than 75%	0%

Note: Number reporting is 12 unless otherwise noted. Salary figures have been rounded to the nearest \$25.

*Titles have been grouped into categories based on the presence of the word(s) in the title.

Other advanced degrees described were MA, MSW, or MEd, some specified as in counseling.

Table 5. Characteristics of Additional Staff Reported

Titles Reported*	
Advisor/counsellor	38%
Coordinator	31%
Administrative support	15%
Officer	15%
Job Characteristics	
Professional full-time	62%
Professional part-time	8%
Support full-time	31%
Years in Current Job (N = 10)	
Less than 5 years	60%
5 years or more	40%
Average number of years	6.0
Years in Field (N = 10)	
Less than 5 years	50%
5 years or more	50%
Average number of years	7.0
LLB/JD?	
Yes	15%
Salaries for Full-time Staff (# reporting = 12)	
Median	\$64,575
Average	\$65,500
Half of salaries fell in range from:	\$55,950-72,825
Time Spent on Career Counseling	
None	54%
Less than 25%	15%
26-50%	31%
51-75%	0%
More than 75%	0%

Note: Number reporting is 13 unless otherwise noted. Salary figures have been rounded to the nearest \$25. Those with a JD had practiced previously and are non-practicing members of a provincial law society.

*Titles have been grouped into categories based on the presence of the word(s) in the title.

Other advanced degrees described were MA in counseling.

Table 6. Other Duties Performed by Staff

	Primary staff person (N = 16)	Second staff person (N = 12)	Additional staff (N = 13)
Program development and career education	100%	83%	54%
Recruitment initiatives	100%	75%	92%
Employer outreach	100%	50%	77%
Development and Fundraising	19%	0%	0%
Management/administrative duties	88%	0%	23%
Experiential learning or law co-op programs	50%	25%	0%
Wellness or personal counseling	25%	17%	7%
Other	13%	42%	23%

Other duties noted for the primary professional include duties related to experiential learning and event planning. For the second staff person, event planning, managing Pro Bono Students Canada (PBSC), and managing postings and career resources were mentioned. For the additional staff, supervision of mentoring program, event planning, and managing PBSC and public interest work placements were noted.

Table 7. Reporting Lines — Person to Whom the Primary CSO Professional Reports

	Overall (N = 16)	By Total Enrollment (JD/LLB and graduate students):	
		Less than 500 (N = 7)	500 or more (N = 9)
Law School Dean	38%	57%	22%
Law School Associate Dean	19%	29%	22%
Law School Assistant Dean	31%		44%
Other *	12%	NC	NC

*Other administrators mentioned were operations manager.

NC indicates that percentages were not calculated because the overall percentage is small.

Table 8. Other Offices/Functions Reporting to the Immediate Supervisor of the Primary CSO Professional

	Percent of schools
All other offices	31%
Admissions	38%
Registrar	38%
Student services	38%
Financial aid	19%
Development	6%
Business/finance	6%
None	6%

Note: All percentages based on all 16 responses. Respondents could check more than one response; hence percentages add to more than 100. One-quarter of schools checked 'other', but did not describe.

Source of Funding for Staff Salaries:

Nearly all schools (13 of 16) reported that salaries are funded from a centralized law school staff salary fund. Eleven schools reported a central fund only. The remaining 5 schools reported some combination of sources, with student fees one of the 'other' sources specified. No school reported that CSO salaries are entirely funded by revenue generated by the CSO.

Table 9. Benefits Paid For by the School

	Percent of schools providing the benefit for:	
	Professional Staff	Support Staff
Association memberships	88%	13%
Industry conferences	88%	32%
Laptop	38%	19%
Mobile hand-held device	6%	0%
Corporate credit card	38%	6%
Broadband remote access	13%	6%
Cell phone	38%	0%
Tablet	13%	6%

Note: All percentages are based on all 16 respondents. No schools reported providing parking.

For professional staff, memberships typically include NALP, Canadian Bar Association, Law Society, provincial bar associations, and organizations focused on human resources or professional development. Industry conferences typically include NALP's Annual Education Conference and CLCDN meetings. For support staff, paid memberships and industry conferences, if any, are generally for NALP or CLCDN.

Table 10. Changes Experienced in the Most Recent Fiscal Year

	Percent of schools reporting:
Position(s) in the office eliminated	0%
Position(s) in the office added	19%
Position changed from part-time to full-time	13%
Position changed from full-time to part-time	6%
Staff have left the office	50%
Staff have joined the office	56%
Office budget reduced	25%
Office budget increased	0%
Travel authority/budget reduced or eliminated	25%
Travel authority/budget increased	0%
Decrease in funds for staff professional development/conferences	19%
Increase in funds for staff professional development/conferences	0%
Other*	13%

Note: All percentages are based on all 16 respondents. Since more than one item could be checked, percentages add to more than 100.

*Described as decrease in funds for speakers and programs; work-study student now shared with the office of Experiential Education; CSO reporting changed from Associate Dean of Academic Affairs to newly created Associate Dean of the Legal Profession.

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Open-ended comments on changes, challenges, and enhancements that have affected the office since May 2018.

- Staffing changes have been the focus of our year.
- A full-time student now shared with another office; reduced budget for speakers and presentations.
- The full-time counselor is currently reduced to part-time at her own request for the time being. The office has a contract counselor assisting to bridge the gap in service.
- Hired a Career Advisor (full-time). Only one professional staff member was approved to travel and attend NALP conference unlike previous years. Some construction was done to change one office into two offices to accommodate the hiring of new staff member.
- Starting September 2019 I will only have one part-time student at the office, instead of two.
- Change in CSO Reporting Structure to the Dean's Office (due to a shuffle in Associate Dean portfolios and positions). For our professional staff, the University revisited how these positions were graded on the whole, resulting in a significant salary bump for the Assistant Dean this year, and for the Director/ Public Interest Coordinator in the next two years.
- My position had been vacant since November 2017. I started August 2018, just ahead of students starting, so I had to learn the job on the go, in the thick of recruitment activities.
- On April 1st, 2019, we hired another staff person to take on some of the roles in my position that were not related to careers services, so that I can now primarily focus on career services as being my primary role (instead of it being about half of the duties that were under my full-time position).
- Our staff complement was reduced, and after the 2018-2019 academic year, it has become apparent that we cannot provide the level of service we were providing and leadership at the faculty is looking for solutions to provide the office with additional support.

Note: Some comments were edited slightly for clarity and length.



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