



UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI

# COLLEGE *of* LAW

OUR **STRATEGIC PLAN:**  
An update and progress report

*Becoming the premier small, urban, public law school*



UNIVERSITY OF  
Cincinnati

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UNIVERSITY OF  
Cincinnati

VISION

To be the *premier small, urban, public law school* in America, nationally recognized for excellence, relevance, and impact.



TO OUR READERS

In the 2005-06 academic year, the faculty of the College of Law undertook an ambitious strategic planning effort.

We began our work with three important touchstones. The first was our distinctive legacy of values and traditions—not surprising for a proud institution with considerable momentum, then approaching its 175th anniversary.

The second touchstone was our University of Cincinnati context. Clearly, we wanted to chart a path for the College that was consistent with, and supportive of, the University’s recently articulated academic plan, **UC|21: Defining the New Urban Research University**.

And finally, there was Cincinnati itself, which supports our College in so many vital ways, and provides an exceptional setting for a first-rate legal education.

With these touchstones in mind, we held multiple visioning and planning sessions, both on and off campus. We involved our faculty and staff, students, our Board of Visitors, the UC Law Alumni Association Board of Directors, local and regional law firms, out-of-town alumni, donors, and other key supporters and advisors.

The vision that we arrived at was an exciting one: *to be the premier small, urban, public law school in America, nationally recognized for its excellence, relevance, and impact*. While decidedly forward-looking, the vision reflected much of what we already knew and treasured about this institution. The many generations who preceded us as supporters and stewards of the College of Law had carved out a distinctive role for us, and our job was and is to reinterpret that role in the rapidly changing context of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The faculty approved the strategic plan in August 2006, and it was distributed to our alumni and donors, University officials, and our law school peers nationally. The thoughtful comments that we received in response convinced us that it struck a chord with many of those constituents.

We are circulating this brief update in the hope of generating further discussion. We wanted to let you know about the good progress that we have made toward our objectives. We want you to know where we are today, and where we aim to be tomorrow.

Louis D. Billionis  
Dean and Nippert Professor of Law



# OUR STARTING POINT IN 2005

As we began our work in the fall of 2005, our goals were to develop a vision statement for the College, to galvanize support for that vision, and to articulate the strategies necessary to support it.

First, we settled upon four key attributes—*premier, small, urban, and public*—which we believed added up to a distinctive profile in the field of legal education. We took some time to elaborate upon those attributes, framing them as a vision of a “best in class” law school.

## WHAT IS OUR VISION?

- A **premier** law school that is unstinting in its commitment to excellence in teaching, the scholarship of its faculty, its academic and professional life, its formation of strong and ethical leaders, and its engagement in the world.
- A **small** law school that provides a close-knit and intimate educational environment, while drawing on the resources of a major research university to offer a rich curriculum and an array of opportunities usually found only at much larger institutions. A supportive and collaborative community that is marked by an outstanding student-faculty ratio, strong and enduring relationships between faculty and students, personalized attention and mentoring, limited-enrollment classes, and diverse opportunities for each and every student.
- An **urban** law school that draws great strength from its vigorous engagement with a classic American city rich with opportunities and challenges, benefiting from partnerships and exchanges with vibrant legal, corporate, and civic communities as well as from its position within a leading urban research institution.
- A **public** law school that holds true to its commitments and traditions, dedicated to diversity, opportunity, advancement, and civic responsibility. A law school that is faithful to the role that lawyers, the legal profession, and higher education have in providing civic leadership, and which is determined to bring the very best to and draw the very best from its community.

Concurrently, we identified our **strengths**, including the scholarly influence of our faculty, the academic qualifications of our students, the reputation of our centers, institutes, and joint degree programs, the achievements of our alumni, and our relationships with Cincinnati and its institutions.

We also identified the **key challenges** that lay ahead of us, including: a decline in public funding (which hindered our ability to compete with other leading schools for the best students and faculty, and hurt our ability to support our highly productive faculty to the fullest extent); an insufficient degree of diversity in both our faculty and student body; an underutilization of the resources represented by some of our centers and institutes; the need to recast and reinforce our library’s operations; and the need to expand and upgrade our facilities.

The plan that we ultimately agreed upon included **five objectives**, aimed at leveraging our strengths and addressing our challenges:

- **Build** a stronger and more engaged faculty
- **Attract** a strong, diverse, and accomplished student body and to enhance their career opportunities
- **Create** a thriving academic enterprise
- **Establish** a full and active partnership in the University’s mission to engage the community as a vital urban research institution, and
- **Develop** the institutional strength necessary to support the premier small, urban, public law school.

We then identified a number of specific actions that we proposed to take to meet these objectives. We committed ourselves to a regular benchmarking of our relevant activities against those of other leading law schools. We embraced the goal of continual improvement—always important, and almost always difficult. Finally, we committed ourselves to reporting to our constituencies on our progress toward achieving our goals (of which this report is one aspect).

In the following pages, we present a summary of the progress we have made toward each of our five objectives. Behind each summary lies more detailed information and data, which we compile and analyze on a regular basis. But this report gives us the opportunity to take a broader look at what we’ve accomplished—and at what still lies ahead of us.



OBJECTIVE 1  
BUILD A STRONGER AND MORE ENGAGED FACULTY

THE CHALLENGE

*In the strategic plan, we celebrated the accomplishments of our faculty. We also recognized that we had to take concrete steps to stay competitive in the recruitment and retention of the next generation of great scholars and teachers, and to build a more diverse faculty. We acknowledged the need to reinforce and expand our network of adjunct professors—to ensure that our relatively small faculty could provide a rich curriculum—and to broaden and deepen our engagement with other leading law schools.*

WHAT WE’VE ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR

Nothing is more important to the continued success of the College of Law than recruiting, developing, and retaining the next generation of great law teachers and scholars.

On the recruitment front, we have made impressive progress. Four new colleagues joined us in the fall of 2006, two more in the fall of 2007, and one more in the fall of 2008. All are distinguished in their respective fields; three hold PhDs and three others hold MAs. The competition for these outstanding professors was intense, and we are proud to have prevailed.

Retention is a more mixed picture. Our faculty routinely rebuff overtures from other schools. But for a variety of reasons, we have lost a few faculty members in recent years. Sometimes the new opportunity is simply too good to turn down. Sometimes there are geographic or family considerations.

Yet recruitment of our faculty by other law schools is a good thing. It means that we have valuable assets to protect—and we have taken steps to do so. First, we concentrate on bringing people here who understand what’s special about our College: its intimacy, collegiality, and intellectual intensity. We also have made adjustments in the teaching load to make us more competitive with other leading schools. We have worked with the provost to address our salary structure, which has helped in both recruitment and retention. We have created an associate dean of faculty position to ensure that we continue to provide additional support for faculty scholarship and teaching. We have ramped up the kinds of symposia, colloquia, and workshops that make this an exciting place to pursue scholarship, and which reinforce our ties to other leading law schools. Young scholars coming here understand that we will help them build their careers—often in ways that cannot be replicated elsewhere.

Reinforcing and expanding our network of adjunct professors is one way that we get to “play large”—that is, to offer our students and faculty all the opportunities and advantages of a larger law school. We have made significant progress in this area. Our adjuncts are working more closely with our full-time colleagues to provide a curriculum that is both broader and deeper, especially in our “Practice One” courses (*explained in*

Recruiting a faculty

*Objective #3*). They bring to the classroom direct—and fresh—experience of specialized fields of law, which means that we can combine the best of practice with the best of theory.

We accomplish many of the same things through a new visiting scholars programs. The Stanley M. Chesley Distinguished Visiting Professorship, established in 2006, brings outstanding scholars and teachers to our campus as visitors on a rotating basis. They not only give our students exposure to new ideas, but also exchange ideas—and forge ties—with our junior and senior colleagues. Regular international exchanges with the School of Law at Shandong University in Jinan, China similarly enrich faculty life.

We have reinforced and extended our faculty workshop series by sending our junior faculty to present their work at our partner law schools through reciprocal scholar exchanges, while also giving all of our faculty the opportunity to invite leading scholars in their fields to lead workshops here.

Finally, we have upgraded the status of our research and writing professors, clinicians, and professors of practice through the establishment of a non-tenure track career path that includes regular promotions and long-term job security, and improved financial support.

To the extent that faculty productivity is a measure of success, then our efforts to recruit, retain, and develop scholars and teachers are succeeding. The College of Law faculty continues to produce more scholarship, and to place that scholarship with more prestigious journals and publishers, than at any time in our history.

Our faculty continue to receive awards and other distinctions. In 2008, for example, Professor Adam N. Steinman received the national American Academy of Appellate Lawyers Eisenberg Prize, honoring the best scholarship in appellate practice and procedure. (Steinman thus follows in the footsteps of Professor Michael E. Solimine, who won the Eisenberg Prize in 2006.) Professor Douglas Mossman, MD, director of the Glenn M. Weaver Institute of Law and Psychiatry, received the American Psychiatric Association’s 2008 Manfred S. Guttmacher Award for outstanding contributions to the literature of forensic psychiatry. Professor and Associate Dean Paul Caron, editor of TaxProf Blog (the most-visited law-focused blog edited by an individual law professor), was named one of the Top 100 Most Influential People in Tax and Accounting for three years running. An article co-authored by Professor Lynn Bai was chosen for the *Corporate Practice Commentator’s* list of the 10 best corporate and securities articles of 2008.

Retaining a faculty

SELECTED RECENT FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

**Jacob Cogan.** “Representation and Power in International Organization: The Operational Constitution and its Critics,” 103 American Journal of International Law 209 (2009)

**Thomas D. Eisele.** *Bitter Knowledge: Learning Socratic Lessons of Delusion and Renewal* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2009)

**Emily Houh.** “Cracking the Egg: Which Came First—Stigma or Affirmative Action?” 96 California Law Review 1299 (2008) (with Angela Onwuachi-Willig and Mary Campbell)

**Kristin Kalsem & Verna L. Williams.** “Social Justice Feminism,” 18 UCLA Women’s Law Journal \_\_\_\_ (2009)

**Darrell A. H. Miller.** “Guns as Smut: Defending the Home-Bound Second Amendment,” 109 Columbia Law Review \_\_\_\_ (2009)

**Joseph P. Tomain.** *Creon’s Ghost: Law, Justice, and the Humanities* (Oxford University Press, 2009)





Bert Lockwood continues in his distinguished leadership of the Urban Morgan Institute, which is the undisputed center of human rights legal scholarship in the world. *The Human Rights Quarterly*, edited by Lockwood, published its 100<sup>th</sup> issue in May 2007, and is recognized as the leading academic journal in its field. Lockwood also serves as series editor of the *Pennsylvania Studies in Human Rights*, published by the University of Pennsylvania Press. Thanks to Lockwood’s enormous energy and commitment, the series has expanded greatly in recent years, and now approaches 60 titles in print.

We have focused here on scholarship. But of course, teaching is no less central to our academic enterprise. It is with no small pride that we report that two of our faculty—Professor Marianna Brown Bettman and Adjunct Professor James K. L. Lawrence—received University-wide teaching awards in the same year, reflecting our continuing commitment to first-rate teaching.

WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE

The job of building a faculty is never “finished.” While we are proud of our progress in this realm, we will always have to do more, and better.

Specifically, we need to do more to increase the diversity of our faculty. As mentioned above, we have made seven faculty hires since 2006; they include four women—three of whom teach in the business and tax fields (an area that we targeted for expansion)—as well as two persons of color.

This is progress. Nevertheless, increased faculty diversity, both in terms of gender and race, remains a priority. This will be accomplished by bearing down on the very best hiring practices, which in the past have yielded success. We need to start with strong and diverse faculty committees, whose members are committed to broadening our pool of applicants. We have to communicate to prospective colleagues why the College of Law can be an excellent place to begin and advance a career.

We also have to provide more support for our scholars and teachers. Specifically, we need to raise an additional \$6 million in endowment for the support of senior and junior faculty alike. (See Objective #5.) We currently have one endowed chair and nine endowed professorships; we need to increase our totals in both areas, to ensure that we can withstand abrupt downturns in the economy without eroding our core strengths.

INVESTMENTS IN

- Recruiting a faculty
- Retaining a faculty
- Developing a faculty



OBJECTIVE 2  
ATTRACT A STRONG, DIVERSE, AND ACCOMPLISHED  
STUDENT BODY AND ENHANCE THEIR CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

THE CHALLENGE

The strategic plan recognized the exceptional talents of our student body—which has typically had the highest or second-highest LSAT and GPA medians of all Ohio law schools—but called for us to do more in the competition for great students, especially in the area of scholarships. We acknowledged that we had to work harder to increase the diversity of our student body. We also resolved to enhance the student experience during their time at the College, to increase their chances of success in the law school context, and to open up more career pathways for our graduating students. One aspect of this latter goal was to establish a loan repayment assistance program to relieve the financial burden on graduates who chose to work in the non-profit or public interest sectors.

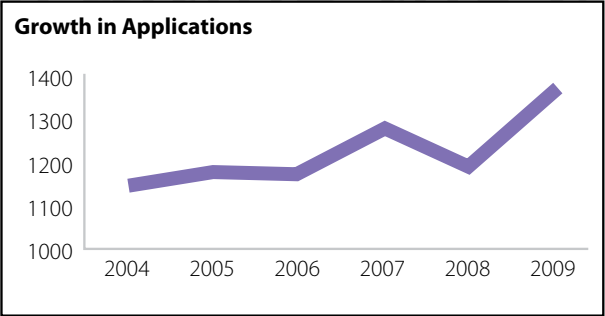
WHAT WE’VE ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR

Our applicant pool remains extremely strong. Applications for the fall 2009 entering class rose to more than 1,300: the highest in this decade.

In terms of the student experience, our small size continues to be one of our most important strengths. Our first-year sections (of approximately 25 students each) are among the smallest in the nation, and our 9.7:1 student-faculty ratio puts us first among Ohio law schools and in the top dozen among U.S. law schools.

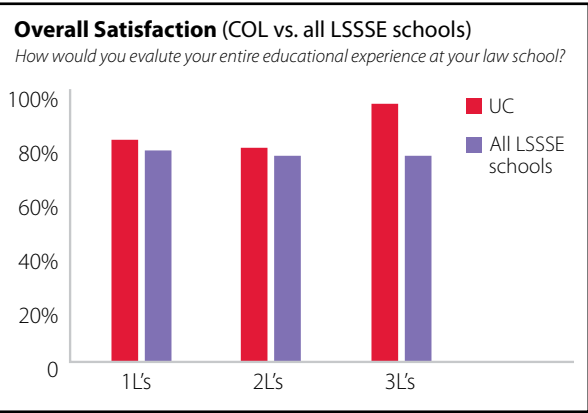
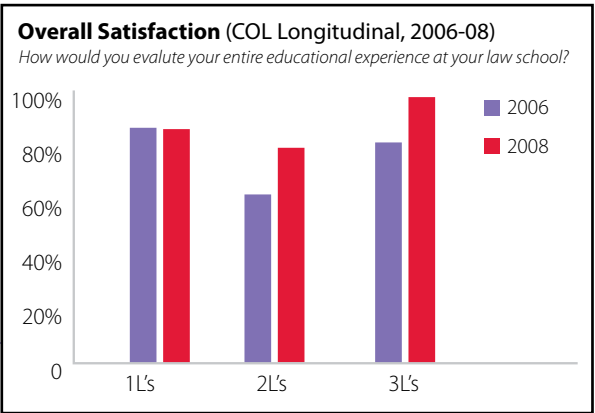
Once again, the wisdom of our predecessors in their deliberate choice to keep operating at an intimate scale has been underscored.

Recruiting the best students



In the spring of 2006, and again in the spring of 2008, we participated in the nationally administered “Law School Survey of Student Engagement.” This survey collects information about how law students spend their time, their perceptions of their experiences during law school, and their satisfaction with their law school experiences. Participating in this survey not only allows us to get direct and candid feedback from our students about their experiences, but also enables us to benchmark our results against those of other law schools.

Our results—some of which are summarized in the two charts below—are extremely encouraging:



Developing a faculty

# Better and expanded services to students

Obviously, we have made progress along many fronts, but particularly in bringing satisfaction levels with the second and third years up to (or even slightly above) satisfaction levels with the first year. We also have learned about how we can intervene to improve the student experience at the College. For example: As a result of reviewing the survey results, we will be working on emphasizing the use of computers in academic work and further encouraging the ethical practice of the law.

Beginning in 2006-07, we opened up our “Academic Success” sections—previously reserved for a small number of first-year students who were at risk academically—to the entire first-year class. This means that all of our students now have access to these very helpful services. A position has been added to this area to bolster further those expanded services.

We should note in passing that, with the University’s approval and assistance, we have made close to \$500,000 in investments in our facility, many of which have been aimed at improving our students’ quality of life. These include expanding the technology capabilities of several classrooms, increasing our building’s electrical capacity and wireless network, upgrading the student dining area, and many other improvements. Even though it became increasingly clear in recent years that we would soon need an entirely new physical plant, we took steps to ensure that our current students pursued their legal education in a safe, supportive, and comfortable environment—and to ensure that we would remain competitive with other law schools.

In 2009, 86 law students received summer public interest fellowships from the College, up from 45 in 2005. This means that many more students now have the opportunity to explore the possibility of a public interest career with financial support from the College (as well as from other public and private sources). The College of Law has been commended by several publications for its success in placing its graduates in public-interest jobs; this is in part a result of our strong relationships with the Cincinnati bench and bar, but it is also grows out of our continuing investment in public interest fellowships.

Although employment among our graduating students dipped slightly—from 98 percent in 2007 to 95 percent in 2008, reflecting the sagging global economy—our placement success ranked us 24th among ABA-accredited law schools. The average starting salary, moreover, increased from \$88,722 in 2007 to \$94,750 in 2008. In other words, even as the corporate world and the legal profession retrenched in response to a sharp recession, our graduates became more valuable in the marketplace.

## INVESTMENTS IN

- Recruiting the best students
- Better and expanded services to students
- Additional summer internships
- Our current home

# Additional summer internships



## WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE

During the strategic planning process, we assigned ourselves a “stretch goal” of raising the LSAT median for our incoming class from 160 to 161. We achieved that target in 2007, and in that same year, the GPAs of our incoming class were up significantly—not only at the median, but at the 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> quartiles as well. But this strong performance has proven difficult to maintain in the face of heightened competition from other schools, many of which focus on these same metrics. Having demonstrated that this particular stretch goal is within our reach, we will continue to set our sights on achieving and sustaining it, while still maintaining a measured approach that values the diverse strengths of the men and women who seek admission to our College.

We also want to do better in ensuring the diversity of our student body. While the number of minority students in our incoming class increased slightly (from 21 in 2004 to 24 in 2009), our “yield” rate—the percentage of those admitted who ultimately enroll here—has fluctuated considerably in recent years, in part reflecting the amount of scholarship aid that we have been able to offer as compared to leading private schools. Highly qualified minority students are in great demand, and we continue to look for new and creative ways to compete successfully for them.

One such way is to build a culture that genuinely celebrates and promotes diversity. In 2009, we endorsed a diversity plan founded on the premise that diversity is an essential ingredient of our excellence. We also began participating in the Law and Leadership Institute—a venture co-sponsored by the Supreme Court of Ohio, the Ohio State Bar Association, and the Ohio Center for Law-Related Education that is designed to increase diversity in the legal profession over the long term. The institute brings to our campus several dozen students throughout their high school years for sustained immersion in the theory and practice of law and the skills that will advance them in life. This is good for the profession, and—again, in the long term—may help the College of Law and other schools attract additional qualified minority students.

Meanwhile, we know for certain that we need to increase the financial aid that we can extend to all of our students. We need to raise an additional \$9 million in endowment for scholarship funds, which will add approximately \$360,000 to the \$2.1 million now spent annually on scholarships. (See Objective #5.)

Finally, while our loan repayment assistance program has been approved in concept by the faculty—and while recent legislation supports the concept for students who pursue prosecutorial and public defender opportunities—that program cannot be established without adequate funding. Most leading law schools now offer some kind of loan-forgiveness program for their graduates who make their careers in non-profit or public interest settings. Securing funds to launch this program remains a priority.

# Our current home





**OBJECTIVE 3**  
**CREATE A THRIVING ACADEMIC ENTERPRISE**

**THE CHALLENGE**

*The strategic plan specifically addressed the challenge of providing a broad and deep curriculum in a school that purposefully remains small. It called for an expansion of the experiential and “real-world” learning opportunities available to our students. It called for the strengthening of our centers, institutes, and joint-degree programs, which not only lend prestige to our enterprise but give our students the opportunity to dig deep in particular areas of interest to them. It called for the creation of “capstone” courses in the upper years, designed to help students gain heightened command and perspective on key issues. And finally, it called for a more significant engagement with global legal education, both in the form of international students coming to our campus, and study-abroad programs for our students.*

**WHAT WE’VE ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR**

At the heart of our academic enterprise is our curriculum, and every year that curriculum continues to undergo significant change. This rightly represents a major investment of time and energy on the part of our faculty.

For example: Our faculty approved a mandatory two-course sequence in ethics and professionalism beginning in the 2007-08 academic year, in conformance with ABA standards. In the following academic year, as noted previously under Objective #1, we began offering “Practice One” courses in four areas: Corporations, Environmental Law, International Business Transactions, and Intellectual Property. In each course, a full-time faculty member teaches the core substantive course while an experienced adjunct professor teaches a practice component. It is an exciting way for us to broaden and deepen our curriculum, to bring the voice of direct experience into the classroom, and to focus our upper-division students on important subspecialties of the law.

In discussing our progress under Objective #1, above, we cited the impact that the Chesley Distinguished Visiting Professors are having on the intellectual life of the faculty. These distinguished visitors also have a direct and positive impact on the curriculum, teaching highly popular “mini-courses” concentrating on emerging issues in the law. In recent years, such mini-courses were offered by Arthur R. Miller (New York University and Harvard University), John C. Coffee (Columbia University), and Patricia J. Williams (Columbia University).

Also at the heart of our academic enterprise are our centers and institutes. They were energetic contributors at the beginning of our strategic planning effort; today, they are far more energetic, cover far more intellectual territory, and offer far greater opportunities to our students and faculty than ever before. To cite just a few examples:

- The **Corporate Law Center** has been revitalized under the senior leadership of Professor Barbara Black, whom we recruited to Cincinnati in 2006. Black has brought in distinguished practitioners to help her work at the intersection of theory and practice, and to help revamp our curricular offerings in corporate law and related fields.
- We received a \$1 million gift in 2006-07 from the Lois and Richard Rosenthal Foundation to strengthen the **Rosenthal Institute for Justice** and its **Ohio Innocence Project** (OIP). In 2008-09, more than 700 new cases were received for review. Our OIP Fellows are actively investigating 370 cases, and some three dozen are currently being litigated. Due to the OIP’s work, eight men and women have gained their freedom on grounds of innocence. Meanwhile, research conducted by the OIP for more than a year and half served as the foundation for Ohio Senate Bill 77, aimed at significantly increasing safeguards against wrongful convictions.
- The **Center for Practice**—founded in 2001 as the Center for Practice in Negotiation and Problem Solving, and renamed in 2007 to underscore a broadened mandate—gives our students classroom-based and extracurricular experiences to improve the skills they will need as practitioners. The center draws upon the resources of leading law firms, businesses and civic organizations to provide students with “real world” opportunities. It also serves as a resource for practicing lawyers, providing a forum for dialogue and fostering opportunities for ongoing legal education and research on practice-related issues.
- The **Urban Morgan Institute**, mentioned previously, has been in the lead in our promising relationship with Shandong University Law School, which shares our interest in human rights. The institute’s director, Bert Lockwood, also took the initiative in setting up a student exchange program with Essex University, which began in 2006.

We have also invested heavily in the establishment of new clinics to enhance our students’ experiential learning opportunities. In the 2005-06 academic year, for example, Margaret Drew established our **Domestic Violence and Civil Protection Order Clinic**, operated in partnership with the Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati. Our new **Indigent Criminal Defense Clinic** (ICDC)—offered in collaboration with the Ohio Justice Policy Center and the Salmon P. Chase College of Law—enrolled its first students in the fall of 2008. In 2009, a number of 3Ls from the College were directly involved in the trying of felony cases under the auspices of the ICDC.

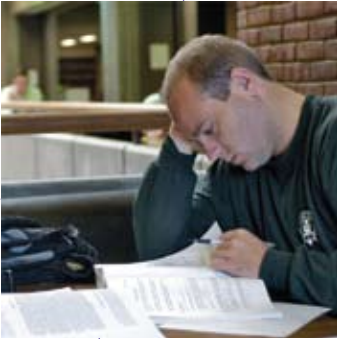
Curricular innovation

**INVESTMENTS IN**

- Curricular innovations
- Our centers and institutes
- Experiential learning



Our centers and institutes



WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE

We are determined to keep improving our curriculum so that it offers a more robust set of experiences that meld theory and practice and better form a student’s professional identity. This is in keeping with the recommendations contained in the influential study of legal education recently released by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. (One of the study’s co-authors, Judith W. Wegner, facilitated our September 2008 curriculum-oriented faculty retreat.) The “Practice One” courses are a very promising step in this direction, but we want to do still more, in part by expanding our externships and clinical opportunities in the 2L and 3L years.

Similarly, we intend to keep improving our mandatory second-year courses in Legal Ethics and Client Counseling. They properly emphasize practical skills like problem-solving and negotiation, and can create a smoother and more effective pathway to the third year.

We can and will do more with our centers and institutes. We continue to refine our plans for our Small Business Clinic and hope to see its director in place within the year. A new Center on Race, Gender, and Social Justice is ready for launch this year as well. We are working closely with the University to make these visions a reality, and provide still more learning opportunities to our students, and more research “laboratories” for our faculty.

Our vision of establishing an LL.M. program—aimed in part at bringing more international students to our campus—remains to be realized. And although we have made promising starts in China and the UK with Shandong University and Essex University, we need to expand our students’ international opportunities still further.

Finally, we need to raise \$5 million to provide additional support to our 11 clinics, centers, and institutes. They provide experiential learning opportunities to our students and specialized research opportunities to our faculty which are critical to our vision of a thriving academic enterprise. (See Objective #5)

Experiential learning



OBJECTIVE 4  
ESTABLISH A FULL AND ACTIVE PARTNERSHIP IN THE  
UNIVERSITY’S MISSION TO ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY AS A  
VITAL URBAN RESEARCH INSTITUTION

THE CHALLENGE

*This objective focused both on the College’s role as part of the University of Cincinnati, and also on its role in the broader context of Cincinnati. As noted in previous objectives, our relatively small size creates challenges and opportunities alike, especially in the range of experiences we can offer our students. One solution identified in the strategic plan was expanded cross-disciplinary ties with the University in fields like business, medicine, and the social sciences. A second solution identified in the strategic plan was a broader and deeper engagement with resources in our home city, including the bar, the bench, the business community, and other bases of leadership. Finally, the strategic plan called for us to position ourselves as a “public square” where the University community and the broader community could gather to discuss and debate the law-related events of our times.*

WHAT WE’VE ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR

It is worth underscoring at the outset that this objective is closely linked to the previous one (“to create a thriving academic enterprise”). Succeeding at that objective means, in part, building strong ties to our colleagues in the University, and also to the bench, the bar, and the community, through our centers and institutes. To a large extent, those same ties serve us well here.

The Glenn M. Weaver Institute of Law and Psychiatry, founded in 1999, provides a strong case in point. As part of its educational mission, the Weaver Institute sponsors a variety of conferences, symposia, and lectures that appeal to lawyers, judges, mental health professionals, social services providers, and scholars from far-ranging fields. The Weaver Institute’s impact has grown in recent years under the leadership of Dr. Douglas Mossman, whose appointments at both this College and the UC College of Medicine have served to bring our two schools into more effective collaboration. Our two schools now jointly offer classes that bring law and psychiatry students together, enriching their learning. Situated squarely at the interdisciplinary intersection, the Institute also encourages student scholarly inquiry that spans the disciplines. Indeed, three of our student Fellows in the Weaver Institute had manuscripts accepted for publication by law reviews in 2009.

Other formal initiatives—such as our Joint Degree Program in Law and Women’s Studies—also foster intra- and extra-university collaboration and provide distinctive opportunities for students. Although this program (the first of its kind anywhere) has been in existence since the late 1990s, it is expanding its activities. Currently, the program’s leaders are helping to shape our soon-to-be launched Center on Race, Gender, and Social Justice, which in turn should strengthen our ties within the University and with the Greater Cincinnati community.

In recent years, members of the College community have participated even more extensively in the life of the University. Like our forebearers throughout the College’s history, we represent the University at public occasions, moderate events, serve on task forces and search committees, and—when called upon—give advice and counsel on specific issues in which we have expertise.

Interdisciplinary and  
joint-degree programs



We referred earlier to our relationship with the larger Cincinnati community, which makes an absolutely critical contribution to our educational enterprise. Accordingly, we invest heavily in that complex and far-ranging relationship. First, we bring members of the community to the campus to take part in the life of the College. For example:

- Under the leadership of Professor (and former judge) Marianna Brown Bettman, the Judge-in-Residence Program has been revitalized. In the 2007-08 academic year, moreover, a panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit held court here: a distinction, since the Court rarely travels offsite. The Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas, with Judge John Andrew West presiding, also held court at the College..
- We have expanded our “Distinguished Visiting Practitioners” program, which regularly brings accomplished lawyers and leaders to the College.
- We have developed and offered a range of highest-quality continuing legal education (CLE) programs for the benefit of practitioners in the city and region.

We also take the College to the community, in a variety of ways. For example:

- In the spring of 2009, we hosted the first of what will be a continuing series of colloquia that bring provocative thought-leaders to downtown Cincinnati to benefit the legal and business community.
- In 2009, we brought the first volume of the *Freedom Center Journal* to print. An interdisciplinary scholarly review, the *Journal* is a collaborative effort with the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati.
- We regularly cohost events with local Cincinnati institutions which bring us into contact with new groups in the community. Recently, for example, the College (and specifically, the Ohio Innocence Project), the Cincinnati Museum Center, and the YWCA of Greater Cincinnati assembled a large audience to hear from a man wrongly convicted of a crime—and from the woman who erroneously identified him as the perpetrator.

WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE

Like building a faculty, the job of building strong relationships with the University and the community is never “finished.” More can always be done, and should be done.

In recent years, we have had the great benefit of a University leadership team that prizes interdisciplinary initiatives and civic engagement, and which has been highly supportive of our efforts. As we enter into an exciting and difficult phase in the life of the College (see *Objective #5*), receptive leadership at the center will be increasingly important. We will work to earn it.

This College was founded by entrepreneurs, and it has always maintained an entrepreneurial streak. As we seek to build new and stronger ties to the community, we need to encourage our faculty to be entrepreneurial. The faster the world changes, the faster we have to change.

We have made progress toward becoming the “public square,” as called for in the strategic plan—the first place where people in Cincinnati turn for stimulating, challenging, high-level dialogue about important law-related topics. There is much more progress for us to make in this realm.

INVESTMENTS IN

- Interdisciplinary and joint-degree programs
- Continuing legal education
- Our relationships within the University
- Our relationships with the Cincinnati bar, bench, and community

OBJECTIVE 5:  
DEVELOP THE INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTH NECESSARY TO  
SUPPORT THE PREMIER SMALL, URBAN, PUBLIC LAW SCHOOL

THE CHALLENGE

*Most of the first four objectives in the strategic plan implicitly called for a stronger resource base at the College of Law. The final objective in the plan made that call explicit. Specifically, it argued for expanded and upgraded facilities, a strengthened Law Library, a more robust development and alumni-relations effort, increased involvement on the part of our alumni and other supporters in our work, and the development and implementation of an integrated communications and marketing plan. Finally, the plan called for us to conduct a comprehensive campaign, both to build endowments and to provide resources for a wide range of initiatives.*

WHAT WE’VE ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR

Beginning with the intellectual soul of the enterprise—our library—we have recruited Kenneth J. Hirsh, formerly of the Duke University School of Law, to serve as director of the Robert S. Marx Law Library and Information Technology. Hirsh has been honored by both the American Association of Law Librarians and the Center for Computer Assisted Legal Instruction for distinguished service, and we are fortunate to have attracted him to Cincinnati. Under Hirsh’s leadership, our strategic plan for the library is nearly complete, and a thoughtful reorganization—which includes several new hires—is well underway.

In addition to strengthened leadership, staffing, and planning, the Law Library also can point to substantial strengthening of its collection. Earlier this year, the library received more than 14,000 volumes from the Cincinnati Law Library Association. The collection includes historical and rare books donated to the Association by local attorneys after a fire destroyed the courthouse in 1887. We also should note in this context our gratitude to alumnus Alfred K. Nippert, Jr., who in 2006 donated his family’s 60,000-volume collection of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century legal documents to our core collection. Nippert’s generosity moves our library into the upper ranks of research libraries nationwide.

Our development, alumni relations, and communications operations have seen similar fortifying. We have strengthened every aspect of our outreach effort, ranging from our print pieces (e.g., our Admissions view-book and *Counselor* magazine) to a new email newsletter and a much-improved website. For the first time, we have a full-time communications director who has taken the lead on many of these changes, which collectively aim at bringing our public “face” into congruence with the excellence of the institution.

We seized upon the happy occasion of our 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary to articulate and reinforce our vision (premier, small, urban, public), and to link our distinguished past to our current successes and future potential. Our January 2008 anniversary-related gala brought more than 1,000 people together in celebration of the College, including many alumni and non-alumni professional, business, and political leaders.



With strong support from our Board of Visitors, we have secured University approval of, and completed initial planning for, a new home for the College on its current site. The new building will be between 120,000 and 140,000 square feet, and will cost approximately \$70 million, with \$30 million of that total coming from private sources. The University has pledged its support for the project, both financial and otherwise.

As part of the larger University's **Proudly Cincinnati** campaign, we have launched a \$50 million comprehensive fundraising effort—the **Cornerstones Campaign**—both to fund the new facility and provide resources for other priorities. That campaign is co-chaired by Doloris F. Learmonth '78 and James B. Helmer, Jr. '75, both distinguished members of the Cincinnati legal community. We also have strengthened our internal development resources in anticipation of the hard work that lies ahead of us.

WHAT REMAINS TO BE DONE

First, and most important, we need to ensure that the Cornerstones Campaign reaches its ambitious \$50 million goal.

It is worth noting here that the initial emphasis of the campaign was almost exclusively on our students and our faculty. Our facilities analysis was proceeding along a separate track. But when our significant bricks-and-mortar needs became apparent, those two tracks had to converge. Our campaign grew much larger because (with the support of the University) we acknowledged that it was time to replace our entire physical plant.

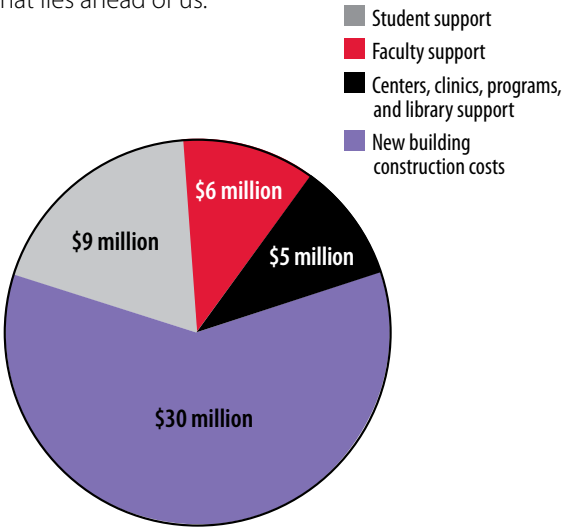
The economic crisis that deepened throughout 2008 and in the early months of 2009 raised obvious questions. Is this the time for a capital campaign? Can't we get a few more years out of our building? Shouldn't we just tighten our belts and ride out the storm?

We believe that, for all the reasons outlined in the previous pages, our case is strong—and that we need to move forward. Through our strategic planning efforts, which in their details have been revised almost continuously, we have looked at where the College of Law is today, where it needs to go, and the resources that will be needed to get it there.

Yes, the pressures imposed by the economic collapse gave us pause. Some of our planned actions have had to be deferred—not abandoned, but paced with an appropriate regard for the economic uncertainties we face. And yes, to the extent that our vision required optimism and faith in the future—and the momentum that grows out of that faith—we have had to work doubly hard to generate that optimism and build that momentum. We will have to work even harder in the years to come.

But we believe that our vision—premier, small, urban, and public; nationally recognized for our excellence, relevance, and impact—is correct and compelling.

We believe that thanks to this vision, the College of Law plays a special role at the highest levels of legal education in the United States. We are convinced that our mission will become all the more important in the years to come, and that we will be increasingly well positioned to carry out that mission.



VISION

To be the *premier small, urban, public law school* in America, nationally recognized for excellence, relevance, and impact.