



UNIVERSITY *of*
DENVER

STURM COLLEGE OF LAW

2009 Strategic Plan Successes

Since we adopted our 2009 Strategic Plan, we have achieved tremendous success, both internally in terms of the initiatives and innovations we have successfully implemented, and externally, in terms of the recognition we have received. Our 2009 Plan also helped us to achieve success in other core areas, including fundraising, diversity and inclusive excellence, graduate employment, and bar passage.

Here are some highlights:

I. External Recognition

- Sustained improvement in *US News & World Report* law school rankings: up more than 20 spots, from #88 in 2008 to #67 in 2015. Six specialty programs nationally ranked in Top 25 by *US News*.
- Recognition for Innovative Programs:
 - Denver Law was listed as one of the 20 most innovative law schools by the *National Jurist*.
- Recognition for Modern Learning Initiative:
 - Denver Law was ranked #10 in the *National Jurist*'s listing of the Best Schools for Practical Training in 2015.
 - Our Clinic was ranked #14 in the nation by *US News*.
 - Our Lawyering Process Program was ranked #7 in the nation by *US News*.
 - Our Advocacy Program was ranked #19 in the nation by *US News*.
 - Our Legal Externship Program was ranked #6 in the nation by the *National Jurist*.
 - Three of our programs (our Experiential Advantage Curriculum™, our Legal Residency Program, and Law Jobs: By the Numbers™) were listed among *preLaw* magazine's 25 most innovative programs in legal education.
 - Denver Law was featured by *US News* in its lead article on experiential education.

- Recognition for our Specialization Initiative:
 - *US News* Peer Assessment rank up from #72 in 2009 to #53 in 2015.
 - Our SSRN download rank improved from #66 to #38 since 2012.
 - Our Roger Williams Scholarly Reputation score increased from 2.86 to 4.19 since 2009.

II. Initiatives and Innovations Implemented

Our 2009 Plan contained two core initiatives:

- The Modern Learning Initiative, which committed to build capacity and quality in integrated experiential learning. As part of this initiative, we implemented the following innovations:
 - Developed a broad range of experiential offerings, including clinics, externships, simulation courses, and other project-based, hands-on courses and course components.
 - The Experiential Advantage Curriculum™ (any student may choose to take 30 credits of experiential learning courses)
 - The Live Client Guarantee™ (any student may take either an in-house clinic or externship)
 - Developed the concept of Carnegie Integrated Courses (simulation courses which combine all of the “apprenticeships” recommended by the Carnegie Report). Denver Law now has more than 25 Carnegie Integrated Courses.
 - New Community Economic Development Clinic (transactional law clinic).
 - Higher-quality externships, as a result of adding two full-time faculty members to our Legal Externship Program.
 - New, intensive Semester in Practice Externship.
 - New Immersion Semester in the Criminal Defense Clinic.
 - New hybrid externship programs, including:
 - Hybrid Immigration Program
 - Wills Lab
 - Tribal Wills Project
 - Appellate Skills Lab (students working on case in 2nd Cir. under supervision of professors)
 - Students working on pro bono cases with professors
 - Center for Separating and Divorcing Families (a multi-disciplinary project with externs from the law school, school of graduate psychology, and school of social work)
 - Built a series of high-quality Bridge-to-Practice programs for our graduates, including our ground-breaking Legal Residency Program.
 - Inaugurated the nation’s first endowed chair in experiential learning, the Mulligan Burleson Chair in Modern Learning.

- The Specialization Initiative, which committed to build subject matter expertise in five areas (international, corporate/commercial, constitutional, environmental/natural resources, and employment). Such expertise allows students to build and demonstrate subject matter mastery, creates synergies and support for faculty members in these areas, and enhances Denver Law’s reputation in these areas. As part of this initiative, we implemented the following:
 - We created six certificate programs for students, allowing them to demonstrate expertise in corporate and commercial law, constitutional rights and remedies, environmental and natural resources law, international law, workplace law, and intellectual property law.
 - Dual degree programs (JD/LLM’s) in three areas of specialization (environmental and natural resources law, international business transactions, and tax).
 - Sponsored annual lectures and symposia in areas of specialization.
 - The *Journal of Energy and Natural Resources Law* moved to Denver Law.
 - Started the nationally recognized *Race to the Bottom* blog in Corporate & Commercial Law Program.
 - We have doubled our scholarly productivity.
 - Our faculty's scholarship has been routinely cited by courts, practitioners, and policy makers, and featured in local and national media outlets. It has also been featured prominently in many important scholarly debates.
 - Thousands of people from the local and national legal communities have attended programs at Denver Law.

III. Achievements in other Core Areas from 2009 Plan

- Fundraising.
 - Raised \$45.5 Million for Denver Law in the ASCEND Campaign.
 - Set annual fundraising record for Denver Law, with over \$10 Million.
 - Gifts included:
 - Over 70 new endowed scholarships.
 - \$3 Million gift to start new LLM program in International Business Transactions.
 - \$2 Million gift for new endowed Mulligan Burleson Chair in Modern Learning.
 - Gifts for new endowed chairs in International Law and Clinical Education.
 - Gifts for professorships in Animal Defense, Marijuana Law & Policy, and Online Learning.
- Diversity and Inclusive Excellence
 - Created first position in the country for Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusiveness.
 - Started sustained, long-term pipeline programs, including partnership with Denver Urban Debate League.
 - Started \$1.5 Million Yegge Scholarship Program for diverse law students.

- Increased student diversity while increasing admissions standards.
- Successful recruiting for diverse faculty and staff, and appointments of several diverse associate and assistant deans, leading to increased employee diversity and inclusiveness.
- Graduate Employment.
 - Reorganized Career Services Office to focus on outreach and job-placement, in addition to traditional career services.
 - Adopted a voluntary, independent audit program to ensure accuracy in reporting. This, along with our transparency in reporting employment outcomes, has resulted high level of confidence in our reported outcomes, including an “A” grade by *National Jurist*, when law schools were under fire for reporting practices.
 - Created the Denver Law Jobs: By the Numbers™ website, which provides complete transparency by permitting users to create their own employment formula based on the jobs that matter most to them. (Also created a similar website for Educating Tomorrow’s Lawyers, which permits comparisons between schools.)
 - Employment rates have remained high, even during the recession.
- Bar Passage.
 - Created and implemented data-driven initiatives to improve bar passage rates, including a new admissions and financial aid policy, more stringent requirements for students, and a post-graduate bar study program.
 - Bar passage rate up 13%, from 10% below state average in 2005 to 8% above state average in 2014-15. The annual pass rate for DU graduates was 67% in 2005; it is now regularly between 85% and 90%.
 - Denver Law was recognized as one of the most-improved law schools in bar passage by *National Law Journal*.
 - Alumni who were extremely unhappy with our bar passage rates have gained confidence in the law school and are re-engaged.

Our 2015 Plan builds upon this record of success to propel us to new heights.