MISSION STATEMENT & STRATEGIC PLAN

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BACKGROUND

This strategic plan is the culmination of two years of assessment and discussion at the Law College. Its purpose is to set out goals, implementation steps, and assessment mechanisms to guide planning at the College of Law over the next 5-10 years. However, we consider this strategic plan a document that will need to be updated and revised during that time as circumstances change. This is particularly the case for a law school strategic plan written in 2012, when the field of legal education is in a state of flux: applications to law schools have decreased nationally by 25% over the past two years; the job market for new law graduates is challenging; student debt load is growing; and all of these phenomena are attracting significant national attention. This strategic plan will therefore have to change and adapt to circumstances.

Despite the ongoing uncertainty, or perhaps because of it, the University of Nebraska College of Law is well positioned to grow its programs, to hire excellent faculty, to enroll more highly credentialed students, and to increase its alumni engagement and fundraising over the next decade. As a state law school with low tuition and a history of providing an excellent legal education, the College is not as directly implicated by national concerns about student debt load and over-enrollment at law schools. The College is well known in several areas of strength, including Law & Psychology and the Space, Cyber, and Telecommunications Program. We have a beautiful facility, recent faculty hiring has been very successful, and alumni support remains strong.

We have a baseline of strengths on which to build, including our small size, our close-knit community among faculty and students, our low student-faculty ratio, the loyalty and generosity of our alumni, the support of the wider university, our state-of-the-art facility, our close and productive relationship with the Nebraska bench and bar, our national reputation in several areas, and the recent entry of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln into the Big Ten and the CIC.

The faculty is agreed that one overarching goal is not only to improve and strengthen the College, but also to increase the national recognition of the quality of the College of Law, the education it provides, and the contributions of its faculty. Rather than making this a specific goal, it is infused throughout this strategic plan. If the College can succeed in making significant progress in its stated goals, and we continue recent efforts to make our successes known, our national recognition will increase. As the state law school of Nebraska, however, we must do so while remaining dedicated to the critical mission of the Law College to serve the people, the courts, and the bar of Nebraska.
MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the University of Nebraska College of Law is to fulfill its responsibility as the state law school of Nebraska and to reach across the nation and the world through research, scholarship, and programs. We aim to harness our unique strengths to improve the law and the administration of justice and to educate lawyers and leaders who will pursue satisfying careers and contribute positively to the world.

STRATEGIC GOALS

We fulfill this mission by

1 | Educating students in the law, legal skills, legal concepts, and professional ethics so that they are prepared for a wide variety of careers;

2 | Undertaking significant research and scholarship that impact Nebraska, the nation, and the world;

3 | Sharing our expertise, assisting the legal profession and improving the administration of justice; and

4 | Sustaining a diverse, ethical, tolerant, and engaged community of scholars, teachers, students, staff, and alumni.
STRATEGIC GOAL #1

Educating students in the law, legal skills, legal concepts, and professional ethics so that they are prepared for a wide variety of careers

Goal 1.A. Provide a basic generalist legal education with opportunities to acquire expertise, including in areas of the law that would support careers in which a law degree is an added value but not required.

Implementation/Assessment

- Continue the tradition of providing a solid first-year curriculum taught primarily by tenure-track faculty.
- Support and enhance current dual degree programs, particularly the Law & Gerontology, JD/MBA, and JD/MPA (Accountancy) programs.
- Introduce more dual and joint degree programs into the curriculum.
  - JD/MPH and JD/MPA (Administration) in 2012
  - JD/Political Science (Human Rights & Humanitarian Affairs) in 2013
- Expand the curriculum to include a greater variety of courses.
- Implement Foundational Legal Skills Course and unit on ethics and professionalism and other reorganization in Fall 2012.
Goal 1.B. Develop international opportunities for students.

Implementation/Assessment

- Create international opportunities for externships and study in the areas of agriculture, water, and trade law and policy.

Goal 1.C. Increase the number and variety of clinical and skills offerings.

Implementation/Assessment

- Launch transactional/entrepreneurship clinic in 2013.
- Add 2 additional new clinics to the curriculum by 2020.
- Catalogue and build skills offerings at the College.
- Increase student participation in law school competitions.
- Increase the clinic space at the Law College. Initiate renovation and/or construction by close of NU Capital Campaign in 2014.
- Review & revamp externship program to increase opportunities.

Goal 1.D. Nurture and grow signature programs at the Law College and increase national recognition. Achieve this in part by building strength through connections to other programs and disciplines at the University of Nebraska. Current programs well positioned for this growth include:

- Law and Psychology
- Space, Cyber, and Telecommunications Law (SCT)
- Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs (HRHA)
- Agricultural and Water Law & Policy

Implementation/Assessment

- Implement an online program in SCT in 2012.
- Create study abroad program in SCT.
- Create Doctorate of Space Law.
- Develop joint degree with Political Science w/ concentration in HRHA.
- Build upon current association with the program in Human Rights and Humanitarian Law and Policy to create focus on (1) human trafficking; (2) the right to food and economic security; and (3) transitional justice.
- Strengthen ties to UNL’s Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources through Water for Food Institute and Rural Future Institute.
STRATEGIC GOAL #2 |
Undertaking significant research and scholarship that impact Nebraska, the nation, and the world

Goal 2.A. Increase amount and influence of faculty scholarship of high quality and impact.

Implementation/Assessment
- Increase in publication of books and articles that have indicators of excellence and impact on the advancement of scholarship and teaching.
- Increase citation to and amount of faculty scholarship in academically and professionally influential outlets, from traditional journals to developing electronic media.
- Increase faculty visibility through scholarly presentations by Nebraska faculty at national and international conferences and meetings.

Goal 2.B. Identify areas of faculty expertise where we can build connections with universities and scholars internationally.

Goal 2.C. Promote faculty publications and activities through website, law school publications, and press placement.

Goal 2.D. Create more professorships for faculty.
STRATEGIC GOAL #3

Sharing our expertise, assisting the legal profession and improving the administration of justice

Goal 3.A. Offer CLE opportunities that serve our alumni, the bench and bar.

Goal 3.B. Engage with the university, bar, and bench in efforts at law reform and policy implementation.

Goal 3.C. Establish the Law College as a central location for activity that engages members of the legal profession in Nebraska and brings them together with citizens of the State.
STRATEGIC GOAL #4 | Sustaining a diverse, ethical, tolerant, and engaged community of scholars, teachers, students, staff, and alumni

Goal 4.A. **Maintain and improve the credentials and diversity of entering class through strategic recruitment strategy that includes increasing the number of highly credentialed resident and non-resident applicants to the College.**

**A separate document containing a detailed plan for implementation of this subgoal is being prepared by the office of admissions.**

Goal 4.B. 
**Increase the diversity of the Faculty and Staff at the Law College.**

Implementation/Assessment
- Continue and expand outreach to diverse populations.

Goal 4.C. 
**Create regular colloquia series for invited scholars.**

Implementation/Assessment
- Implement Big Ten Workshop for faculty from Big Ten law schools.
- Create regular schedule of Lane & Pound Lecturers.
- Increase number and prominence of outside lecturers who present at the Law College.

Goal 4.D. **Increase alumni engagement with the Law College and alumni giving.**

Implementation/Assessment
- Increase out-of-state alumni recruiting at the Law College.
- Increase alumni participation in the annual fund to 15% by 2015.
STRATEGIC GOAL #4 | Cont.

Goal 4.E. Create strategies to engage alumni and to bring more alumni to the law college to interact with students and faculty.

Implementation/Assessment
- Further engage Alumni Council and Young Alumni Council in recruitment and placement of students.
- Increase participation in reunions and reunion giving through involvement of individual class members.

Goal 4.F. Support students and student groups in their participation in Law College activities and their exploration of the law and legal profession.

Goal 4.G. Provide the support, responsiveness, and leadership necessary to enable faculty to maximize their potential as scholars and teachers, and students to build a body of knowledge and skills necessary for a successful career. Support an environment where everybody works together as a community toward increasing the success and impact of the Law College.