



STRATEGIC PLAN

2014-2020



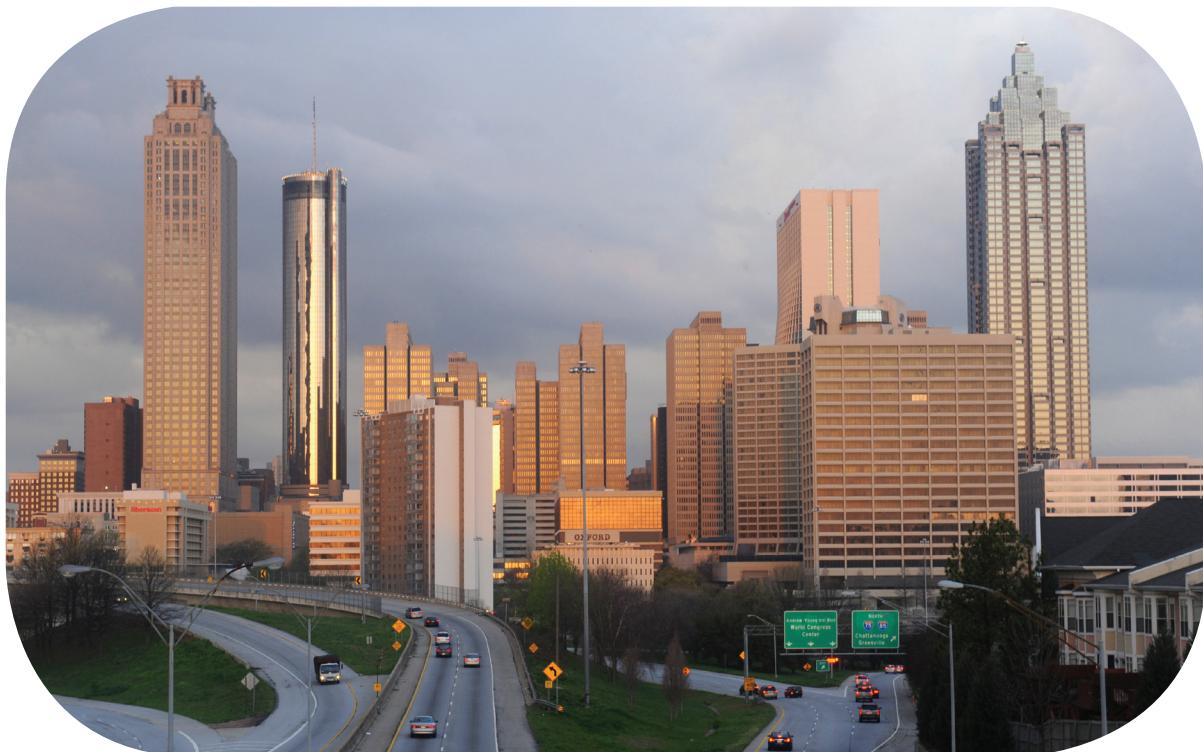


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Our Location



“Our dynamic location in the capital city of Atlanta situates the College of Law at the center of robust legal, government and public interest integrated communities that benefit from resources, legal expertise and service missions.”



PREAMBLE

"We have earned a reputation of excellence ... by developing our students into well-rounded professionals with the skills and knowledge necessary to compete at the highest level in any work environment."

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW was created in 1982 based on its founders' belief that a first-rate law school not only can, but must be tailored to meet the needs of the students who enter its doors. Recognizing that a unitary approach to education benefits only a select few, the college was one of the first to offer a part-time program of legal study to the citizens of Georgia, enabling a diverse group of students to matriculate and ultimately serve their communities. Although the College of Law has grown substantially in scope and reputation during the last 30 years, this flexible, entrepreneurial and student-centric spirit continues to resonate throughout our institution.

Our dynamic location in the capital city of Atlanta situates the College of Law at the center of robust legal, government and public interest integrated communities that benefit from resources, legal expertise and service missions. Our students have unparalleled access to the courts, the legislature and agencies of state and federal government, as well as an incredible array of private business and service providers utilizing the skills of legal professionals. We have earned a reputation of excellence within these communities by developing our students into well-rounded professionals with the skills and knowledge necessary to compete at the highest level in any work environment. That we have done so while maintaining our tuition at affordable levels is a particular point of pride and a reflection of our strong commitment to broad access to legal education.

Although we are justifiably proud of our history, there is no question that the legal profession has entered a time of incredible change. To move forward in this fluid and uncertain environment, it is critical that we assess our current practices and evaluate whether modifications are needed to ensure our effectiveness and viability in the future. To remain competitive and to best serve our students, we cannot simply react to market forces as they evolve over time. Instead, we must anticipate the effects of these shifts and respond with innovative pedagogy and a coherent institutional approach that remains ahead of these changes.

As a public institution, we recognize that we face external constraints and institutional realities over which we have little or no control. As stewards of the College of Law, we are challenged to create programs and opportunities that not only enhance our educational mission, but ensure the stability of this institution amid the next decade of market changes. We must thoughtfully create a sustainable approach that will serve not only today's students, but tomorrow's as well.

The completion of our new building in 2015 offers unprecedented opportunities for our students, faculty, staff and programs to build upon the successful foundation we began in 1982. What follows is our attempt to balance our strengths and challenges in a comprehensive and systematic way, with the ultimate goal of moving the College of Law into the next decade in the strongest possible position to benefit our students, our faculty and staff, our community and the legal profession as a whole.



OUR MISSION

The College of Law is committed to providing an excellent, affordable and distinctive legal education to a diverse student body; to promoting legal scholarship and service that enrich the legal profession and the communities we serve; and to capitalize on the unique environment in which we are located.



OUR VISION

We will

- **BE A PREEMINENT** urban law school that is accessible to students from a wide variety of backgrounds.
- **EMBRACE THE CHANGES** taking place in legal education and the profession in a thoughtful and proactive way that is consistently mindful of our mission and commitment to our diverse student body.
- **MAINTAIN A CURRICULUM** that is student-centered, fuses theory and practice and richly prepares our graduates to be thoughtful, ethical and analytical problem-solvers capable of success in any environment.
- **EMPLOY THE CONSIDERABLE TALENTS** of our faculty to produce rigorous, innovative and meaningful scholarship that engages in and addresses key legal and policy issues facing our city, state, nation and world.
- **PROVIDE LEADERSHIP** to our community by creating an inviting environment where students, faculty, staff, alumni, members of the profession and the public can interact with, learn about and debate issues of critical importance.
- **BUILD UPON OUR STRONG RELATIONSHIP** with units throughout the university and collectively work to advance high quality teaching, scholarship and community engagement.

“We will maintain a curriculum that is student-centered, fuses theory and practice and richly prepares our graduates to be thoughtful, ethical and analytical problem-solvers capable of success in any environment.”

Georgia State Law is known for delivering a high quality, practice-based legal education that prepares students for the demands of the profession. As contemporary law practice evolves, so too must our approach to teaching while remaining true to the fundamental principles that serve as the hallmarks of a well-rounded legal education. The college will meet this challenge by immersing every student in substantive explorations of the law that are broad-based and cutting-edge and in experiential learning opportunities that comprehensively engage in or model the work of legal professionals in the modern world. In addition, the College of Law will develop identified pathways through the curriculum that progressively build student proficiency in specialized fields and develop skills that are relevant to modern practice environments. We will provide students with coordinated curricular advisement and mentoring that enables each student to follow a coherent and personalized path. This combination of preparation in substantive knowledge, application of professional skills and professional judgment should enhance career opportunities for students and enable them to practice at the highest level in a variety of dynamic and rapidly changing environments.

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INITIATIVE I:

Nurture and support a culture where faculty members are continuously engaged in curricular and pedagogical assessment and innovation that equips our students to meet the evolving demands of the legal profession.

We will build on the strong teaching culture that has been the hallmark of the College of Law faculty since its founding. We will provide faculty with the methods, encouragement and support structure necessary to foster innovative teaching that meets the educational needs of the students of today and tomorrow. We will continuously educate ourselves on changes in legal education and law practice, engage in the national discussion on best practices in teaching, provide resources and incentives for excellent teaching, and encourage outside evaluation and development of teaching skills.



INITIATIVE 2:

Provide students a considerably more integrated course of study that develops substantive knowledge, practical skills and professional judgment.

We will strengthen and build upon our curriculum to prepare students to effectively engage in the complex realities of modern practice. We will develop experiential opportunities and employ innovative pedagogy to blend the teaching of doctrine with the development of practice-related competencies and professional judgment. We will explore and seize upon new opportunities to grow our programs, particularly those presented by our location in Atlanta. We also will coordinate and leverage the strengths of our existing experiential learning opportunities, including clinics, externships (using broader formats and locales), capstone courses and simulated law practice experiences to provide all students with the opportunity to develop fundamental lawyering skills in meaningful contexts.

By increasing the availability of experiential learning opportunities for our students, we not only will enhance learning outcomes, but we also will position the college to explore and adopt expanded transition to practice options in the upper level curriculum characterized by immersion in practice settings, capstone courses and simulations, as well as a stronger partnership with the practicing bar. Our broader, innovative curriculum also will enable us to consider requiring a clinical or other experiential learning opportunity for every student and prepare students for success as highly knowledgeable, competent and ethical legal professionals.



INITIATIVE 3:

Develop course sequencing, additional certificate programs and a robust advisement program that responds to student needs and interests.

The College of Law will strengthen and enhance the transparency of its curriculum by developing recommended pathways that comprehensively build students' skill development, substantive knowledge and professional judgment over the course of their legal studies. In addition, we will group related course offerings into elective certificate programs that allow students to gain depth in particular areas of interest, potentially enhance their marketability post-graduation and benefit from the guidance of faculty experts in their chosen field of study.

For students to take full advantage of the opportunities in the curriculum, they must first be aware of the range of available options. We will develop a more robust faculty advisement program to ensure that students receive adequate mentoring and guidance in course selection and professional development. This coordinated approach will facilitate students' thoughtful progression from the first year of law school to success as new graduates.

“We will develop a more robust faculty advisement program to ensure that students receive adequate mentoring and guidance in course selection and professional development.”

As a professional school in a public research institution, the College of Law is devoted to disciplinary and interdisciplinary research that is influential in its reach and promotes the examination and development of law and policies that serve the needs of the legal profession and society. In continuing to grow our scholarly reputation, the college is committed to being an innovator in the production and promotion of legal scholarship that reaches academic and professional audiences, policymakers and the community at large via traditional and emerging media.

INITIATIVE 1: Nurture and support a faculty research culture that is responsive to evolving changes in legal practice, education and scholarship.

Just as legal education and law practice are evolving, so too is legal scholarship. There are more collaborative efforts taking place, both interdisciplinary and international, new legal research methodologies in play, and a proliferation of new outlets for disseminating information. Our ability to capitalize on these changes, enhance our influence and achieve distinction in scholarship in the future will be enriched by education and skill development in these emerging areas. We will build on existing incentives and support structures to extend the reach and impact of faculty scholarship, in all its forms. Areas of review will include but not be limited to:

- Continued development of faculty research colloquia, exchange programs with other law schools and the college's internal workshop program;
- Enhanced research mentoring and continued growth of internal development programs devoted to junior faculty members;
- Course scheduling that will allow time for intense research and teaching related projects; and
- Increased summer research support.

INITIATIVE 2: Improve the coordination of measures designed to promote the awareness and influence of faculty's scholarly or policy-oriented work.

The College of Law faculty comprises talented and diverse teachers and scholars, many of whom are part of a recent five-year hiring surge in which junior and mid-level professors replaced senior faculty founders. We will strengthen our efforts to promote broad awareness and recognition of faculty scholarship and related activities as well as help professors bring their work to a wide and diverse audience. Areas of review include but are not be limited to:

- Broadening faculty's engagement with online research databases, such as the Social Science Research Network (SSRN), which are gaining cachet as research venues for showcasing and auditioning works in progress;
- Enhancing systematic coordination with the college's communications department for promotion of faculty publications, policy work and areas of expertise;
- Using the capacity of the new building and our Atlanta location to foster greater awareness of faculty scholarship through the strategic use of hosted regional and national conferences at the College of Law;
- Increasing, where possible, the level support of faculty presentations at influential conferences that will facilitate networking with leaders in the field and provide a forum for one's scholarly work; and
- Enhancing the visibility and influence of faculty scholarship in a wide variety of recognized outlets, from traditional journals to emerging electronic media.



INITIATIVE 3: Employ our scholarship and academic expertise in service to our constituencies.

The College of Law has a long tradition of employing its scholarly expertise to inform the practice of law, policy development, law reform and public service. We will expand our efforts to leverage our scholarly output in service of legal professionals, policymakers and the public. We will strengthen our ties with governmental and nongovernmental organizations and support the use of faculty, students and law school programs to aid these organizations in their effort to use the law to advance the public good. We will continue to value scholarship that is cited and reflected in the work of these organizations.

“We will expand our efforts to leverage our scholarly output in service of legal professionals, policymakers and the public.”

INITIATIVE 4: Increase endowed professorships.

An important component to building and retaining a strong scholarly faculty, while also developing senior faculty leadership and enhancing our school's reputation, is the establishment of endowed professorships. As a relatively young law school, the College of Law has done well in raising funds to support the establishment of seven endowed professorships, five of which are endowed at the chair level. But this number is still inadequate in comparison to that of many law schools with whom we compete for faculty. As part of the university's upcoming comprehensive campaign, the college will seek to raise funds for at least three new endowed faculty professorships.

INITIATIVE 5: Increase faculty participation in interdisciplinary and externally funded scholarship.

Historically, law faculty research has predominantly focused on law rather than interdisciplinary collaboration. The College of Law is fortunate to have several members of the faculty who have pursued interdisciplinary scholarship and have developed productive collaborations with non-law scholars, aided in part by the university's support of such activity through its Second Century Initiative and Strategic Plan. We will further support and encourage the efforts of the broader faculty to participate in this type of scholarship.

One benefit of interdisciplinary research is that it brings the potential for external funding of research activities. Progress in this area has been slower to gain traction but is equally critical because such funding could provide essential support for an expanded range of research activities. For example, faculty may conduct research through a contract or grant, provide legal expertise on a grant developed outside the College of Law or write a book with the support of a fellowship or grant. We will work with the university to provide the education and staff support necessary to encourage and enable faculty members to seek out external sources to support research and scholarship.





GOAL 3

Serve as a dynamic hub that engages diverse communities for the advancement of law and public policy.

Consistent with our mission as a public law school in Georgia, the College of Law is committed to enhancing public awareness of and access to information about the law and legal services. The new building, centrally located in downtown Atlanta, provides an unparalleled opportunity to further this mission. Aided by the design of a flexible-use conference center and the support of dedicated staff, we will create a welcoming environment that encourages education, interaction and synergy among all of our constituencies.

INITIATIVE 1: **Expand programming to engage, serve and foster collaboration on the legal and policy issues affecting our communities.**

The potential of the College of Law's new facility should be exploited to the fullest. The College of Law will draw on the strength of its faculty, students, staff and alumni, as well as relationships with the bar to develop educational programs for the profession, the university and the public. Our building will serve as a legal "public square" where our academic, legal and civic communities expect to gather for conferences, meetings, lectures and conversations about the law-related issues of our times. These efforts will bring together legal practitioners, scholars and policymakers to serve the legal needs of the public and to expand our students' options for public service.

"Our building will serve as a legal 'public square' where our academic, legal and civic communities expect to gather for conferences, meetings, lectures and conversations about the law-related issues of our times."

INITIATIVE 2: **Develop a robust, informative online capacity to facilitate engagement with our communities beyond the formal programming and outreach envisioned by Initiative 1.**

To become a dynamic hub, the College of Law must develop an engagement capacity with our communities that extends virtually beyond the scope of our new physical space. Toward that end, aided by a strong technology and communications team, Georgia State Law will leverage its investments in digital technology and augment its online communications strategies as a complement to the formal programming and hub concept described above. Through such engagement, for example, the college could provide the public with timely background on

contemporary legal controversies and insights from faculty scholarship. It could also help the public find information about common legal questions and links to legal services provided through our clinics or community partners.



GOAL 3

Serve as a dynamic hub that engages diverse communities for the advancement of law and public policy.

INITIATIVE 3: *Through outreach to the community, we will improve our capacity to assist underserved populations.*

As a public law school in an urban area, we are mindful of our responsibilities to assist those who do not have ready access to justice and the services of legal professionals. We will explore and develop new ways of assisting this population by continuing to develop our legal clinics and other courses, supporting and expanding our student, faculty and staff pro bono activities, facilitating our student organizations' engagement with the community, and evaluating the potential for non-J.D. professional law programs.

“As a public law school in an urban area, we are mindful of our responsibilities to assist those who do not have ready access to justice and the services of legal professionals.”

INITIATIVE 4: *Building on existing community partnerships and initiatives, develop a portion of the new facility as an attractive venue for international and domestic dispute resolution.*

The College of Law will augment the efforts of the legal and business communities to promote Atlanta as a favored destination for international commercial dispute resolution. We will develop partnerships with the Atlanta Arbitration Society, the metro and state Chambers of Commerce, the city of Atlanta, other law schools and dispute resolution service providers to promote the use of this space for arbitrations and mediations. We will leverage this effort so as to obtain prominence as a center for teaching and scholarship in dispute resolution.

INITIATIVE 5: *Leverage the new building as a dynamic hub to strengthen the alumni community's engagement with the College of Law and the formation of alumni identity.*

Georgia State Law alumni generally graduate with strong positive feelings toward their law school and their peers. Their annual fund participation of 20 percent to 25 percent reflects this reality while also suggesting there are significant opportunities for greater alumni engagement with the College of Law. All of our alumni have experienced the college as a space-limited commuter venue that offers little ability to connect with their alma mater because of its physical identity. The new building, attractively designed for students and the community, gives us an opportunity to change the way we reach out to our alumni and use the facility to inform alumni identity.

The College of Law will develop a comprehensive plan for alumni engagement in light of the new facility. We envision an expansion of opportunities for alumni to participate in law school life on campus, working with students as adjuncts, on law school programs and the like. We will also develop a plan for increasing alumni networks in the population centers where we have a significant alumni presence, and in substantive areas of practice, such as our existing Intellectual Property Advisory Board and our Graduate Health Law Network, where there is considerable alumni interest.





GOAL 4

Enhance the college's engagement with and our graduates' competence in a global legal environment.

Legal practice and the development of the law take place in an increasingly global context. Therefore, our students should have enhanced opportunities to learn and experience the international dimensions of law and legal practice. We will pursue international relationships that further the global competency of our graduates and our faculty's scholarship and service worldwide. We also will increase the exposure of our J.D. students to international law, and we will establish an LL.M. program for individuals with law degrees from educational institutions outside the United States.

INITIATIVE 1: **Broaden international perspectives and course offerings throughout the college's curriculum.**

The college must better identify and implement strategies for increasing our students' exposure to important international legal concepts, processes and practices. We will pursue a thoughtful course of action to identify the optimal mix of course components, required classes and supplemental programs that will provide these opportunities. Our discovery process will draw upon existing expertise of faculty and staff within the college and university and seek to supplement that knowledge through dialogue with the legal community and colleagues at other institutions.

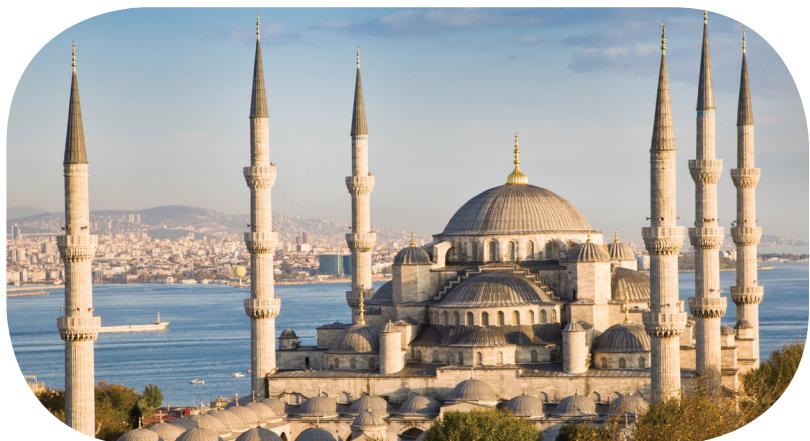
INITIATIVE 2: **Attract and expand formal collaborations with leading non-U.S. educational institutions offering law degrees.**

Increasingly, educational institutions offering law degrees outside the United States are open to exchanging resources and ideas with American law schools. To further our international objectives, Georgia State Law must leverage its Atlanta presence and status as an ascendant American law school to attract and build strong ties with leading non-U.S. institutions providing legal education. Formal collaborations between the college and institutions offering legal education in other countries will benefit our students and increase Georgia State Law's international recognition, influence and impact.

“Georgia State Law must leverage its Atlanta presence and status as an ascendant American law school to attract and build strong ties with leading non-U.S. institutions providing legal education.”

INITIATIVE 3: **Establish a selective, successful LL.M. program for individuals with law degrees from non-U.S. educational institutions.**

The college will attract highly-qualified LL.M. students who will thrive in and contribute to our program of legal education. Our LL.M. graduates will be well prepared to lead successful careers within the United States or internationally. Further, our LL.M. program will foster lasting international professional relationships for the college's J.D. students, faculty and members of the local legal community.



GOAL 5

Take active steps to understand and anticipate the significant changes affecting legal education, the markets in which we operate and their impact on the College of Law.



As acknowledged previously, legal education operates in a very different world today from even a few short years ago. There have been significant changes in the practice of law, the job market for new legal professionals, law school admissions and the financing of law school programs. While Georgia State Law is well positioned to weather this changing environment, our faculty and staff nevertheless must explore and embrace creative new approaches to ensure our continued ability to fulfill our mission and move forward as a highly successful and engaged public law school.

INITIATIVE 1: **Develop a legal practice roundtable consisting of College of Law representatives, students and bar leaders to advise the law school on a regular basis on trends in law practice, the delivery of legal services, new forms of lawyer jobs, emerging industries and lawyer competencies.**



INITIATIVE 2: **Employ new strategies to enhance job placement and empower students to navigate career opportunities.**

Hiring trends have shifted, and job placement strategies that worked in the past will no longer be sufficient to ensure that our graduates have meaningful employment opportunities. We will enhance our career placement practices, empower students to seek out job opportunities, strengthen our alumni networks and aggressively seek out new markets for legal graduates to expand our students' options for employment.

INITIATIVE 3: **Employ new recruitment strategies in response to the changing admissions market.**

The College of Law is committed to recruiting and enrolling a student body that is both academically strong and diverse. With the continued national decline in law applications, the law recruitment process has become extremely competitive. These circumstances require the development of a comprehensive recruitment plan for this new and challenging market. Key features of this plan will include:

- a program to increase scholarship funds for high-achieving and diverse students;
- a statistical analysis of our admissions yields at all levels to guide admissions policy;
- an improved coordinated set of post-admissions recruitment practices and communications;
- a broader consideration of joint admissions agreements and accelerated 3/3 bachelor/J.D. programs with undergraduate partner schools; and
- an exploration of the feasibility of early action and early decision programs.



INITIATIVE 4: **Leverage existing strengths and resources to develop revenue-generating programs beyond the J.D. degree.**

To remain competitive in these challenging financial times, we will be creative in finding new sources of revenue that are consistent with our educational mission and leverage our existing strengths and programs. Toward this end, we will aggressively identify new opportunities to generate revenue in ways that support and enhance the law school's mission. We will diversify our programmatic offerings beyond the J.D. program and explore the potential of a variety of arrangements, including professional development opportunities, degree programs for non J.D. professionals, conference hosting and distance learning.

“The College of Law is committed to recruiting and enrolling a student body that is both academically strong and diverse.”



APPENDIX A SWOT ANALYSIS, available on request

APPENDIX B OUR METRICS

GOAL 1

By 2020, at least 95 percent of third-year students responding to the Law School Survey of Student Engagement will give the answer “very much” or “quite a bit” when asked whether they acquired (a) a broad legal education and (b) job or work-related knowledge and skills.

GOAL 2

By 2020, the College of Law will apply for and receive recognition as a chartered member of the **Order of the Coif**, a prominent U.S. law school honorary society in which the quality of scholarship produced by a school’s faculty is a key consideration for recognition.

GOAL 3

Attendance at extracurricular programs and community events at the College of Law will increase by 10 percent each year beginning one year after initial occupancy of the new law building.

GOAL 4

By 2020, (i) double the number of J.D. students will complete at least one course with a substantive international or comparative law component and (ii) establish formal collaborations with at least three leading non-U.S. institutions providing legal education in at least three different countries.





APPENDICES

OUR COMMITTEE

CHAIR: Wendy Hensel, *associate dean for research and faculty development and professor of law*, teaches and writes about disability discrimination in American society and its intersection with education, employment and tort law.



Ron Blasi, *Mark and Evelyn Trammell Professor of Law and Director of Philip C. Cook Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic*, specializes in federal taxation. He teaches courses on business and individual taxation.



Lisa Radtke Bliss, *associate clinical professor, director of experiential education and co-director of the HeLP Legal Services Clinic*, teaches Interviewing and Counseling, Public Interest Law and Social Welfare and Advanced Techniques in Pretrial Litigation.



Cass Brewer, *assistant professor of law*, teaches Basic Federal Income Taxation, Nonprofit Organizations, Taxation of Business Organizations, Partnership Taxation, and the Law of Social Enterprise. His research focuses on the legal and tax aspects of the intersection of tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations with for-profit enterprises and commercial activity.



Clark Cunningham, *W. Lee Burge Professor of Law and Ethics*, is a member of the Chief Justice of Georgia's Commission on Professionalism and Co-Reporter to Georgia's Commission on Indigent Defense. He is a widely cited expert on the lawyer-client relationship.



Samuel A. Donaldson, *professor of law*, has written and co-written many books, including the *Price on Contemporary Estate Planning* treatise published by CCH and the West casebook, *Federal Income Tax: A Contemporary Approach*.



Chip Hill, *assistant dean for administration and finance*, has supervises the finance, human resources, information technology, faculty support and building operations. He is co-chair of the building committee, tasked with the design and construction of the 200,000-square foot building that opens summer 2015.



Kendall Kerew, *instructor of law and co-director of the Externship Program*, directs Georgia State Law externs gaining legal experience at government agencies and area nonprofit organizations.



Paul Lombardo, *Bobby Lee Cook Professor of Law*, is a lawyer/historian, and serves as a senior advisor to the Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues. He has published on topics in health law, medico-legal history and bioethics. He is best known for his work on the legal history of the American eugenics movement.



Natsu Taylor Saito, *professor of law*, teaches international law and human rights, race and the law, immigration, criminal procedure, and professional responsibility. She is an advisor to the Asian American Law Student Association and the Hispanic Student Bar Association.



Anne Tucker, *assistant professor of law*, researches corporate law, recently focusing on issues related to individual investors. Her scholarship asks broad policy questions that examine the roles, rights and responsibilities of private corporations in society's public spheres.



Leslie Wolf, *professor of law*, conducts research in a variety of areas in health and public health law and ethics, with a particular focus on research ethics. She has conducted empirical research on conflicts of interest, research with stored biological materials, Certificates of Confidentiality, IRB web guidance, and HIV-related laws and policies.





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