

Board of Visitors
49th Annual Meeting
April 25 to 25, 2007

State of the School

Proceedings:

Session called to order by Chair, David Hayes

D. Hayes thanked everyone who was able to attend the dinner last night. The third year class is very remarkable. Over **94%** of the class has contributed to a class gift which is phenomenal. All new members to the board were acknowledged and welcomed to the Board of Visitors. The board is a great opportunity to get to know Dean Kramer and to see him in action. The importance of development was stressed, and 100% participation from the board was encouraged.

State of the School – Larry Kramer:

Thank you very much for coming, the attendance is 20% better than our best turnout in the past years. There are many things we hope to get out of the Board of Visitors, the main one being your candid reactions. On the whole, this was a pretty good year so there are fewer issues to discuss than in previous years. Law school is not a three year proposition, it's a lifetime proposition. The connections that you make here, and after you leave here, can be very important in your life.

1. Faculty and Appointments

Faculty - The heart of the school is the faculty and it is critically important to maintain them. When I came here, there were 2 clinical and 38 full time faculty members. We were permitted by the University to have 3 clinical and 45 full time faculty members. My goals for the end of the deanship are to have 8 clinical and 50 full time faculty members. As of now, we have 4 clinical and 42 full time with 2 of those being joint appointments.

New Hires - Last year 2 full time faculty were hired, Alan Sykes and Jane Schacter. The 2 part time appointments were Josh Cohen, who is joint between Law, Philosophy, Political Science and Freeman Spogli and David Victor, who is joint between Law and Freeman Spogli. The 2 clinicians added were Juliet Brodie and Jeffrey Fisher. Juliet's addition to the East Palo Alto Community Law Clinic has changed the structure of the clinic. Students can now work on campus and enrollment has gone up.

It was a quieter year on the hiring front. There are two offers out at this time, both made recently.

Promotions – The faculty has voted to award tenure to Michele Dauber and Tino Cuéllar. Both still need to be approved by the university administrative board, but no problems are for seen.

Next month Alison Morantz and Jayashri Srikantiah are up for promotions from Assistant to Associate Professor.

Recruiting - Faculty recruiting has been a problem this year, and it is the issue I worry about most as Dean. Housing is the main problem. The second is the perception that moving to California is like moving to a foreign country. Another issue is that Harvard is decreasing the size of their sections so they are on a very aggressive hiring spree.

2. Students

The student body is approximately 55% male and 45% female which is representative of the applicant pool. In terms of diversity, about 30% are minority. The student to faculty ratio is continuing to improve, down to 8.6:1 from 11:1 when I arrived.

3. Physical Plant

This has become a very critical part of the campaign because nothing else will work unless we have the space in which to do all the things we'd like to do.

Academic building – In 5 years, we will look nothing like we do today. The current law school was built for a faculty of 35 with a full staff compliment of 150. Currently, the staff compliment is close to 300 so space is very tight. Within 5 to 10 years, we will be about 75,000 square feet short of space. We are about 10,000 square feet short right now so development has been moved to Hillview. An architect has been chosen, Polshek Partnership Architects, LLP in New York. The new building will be an indoor/outdoor building with an incredible efficient use of space. We hope it to come online in the fall of 2010

Munger – Construction will start on May 8th and hopefully will be online by the fall of 2009. It will house 600 graduate students from multiple disciplines.

4. Programs

We received approval in February for all of the joint degree programs and they are now in the process of taking applications and admitting students. The JD/MPP is the easiest one as it's a new program and right now we have 10 law students that will apply. They are off to a much better start than imagined and a few more are being created.

Q: Why has the staff compliment doubled?

L. Kramer: The professional staff has not changed much at all. The staff growth is academic staff, for example the fellow and partial paralegal that help run a clinic. One other area of growth is in empirical studies which has added 5 full time post docs.

Q: Given that almost every other law school is on the semester system, has changing to the quarter system affected your recruiting?

L. Kramer: It should have no effect on faculty recruiting as it would give them more time off for research.

Q: How about faculty retention?

L. Kramer: So far, we have not lost a single person.

Q: Rumor has it that you are going to what I call "owe interviews" to the students this fall?

L. Kramer: The first year students start classes before Labor Day while the second and third year students do not start until after the holiday. What we've done is to do the early interviews when the first years are in classes so the students don't miss too many classes. Fly-back week can now happen before the quarter starts.

Q: Are you going to continue to limit people to only doing fly-backs during that week?

L. Kramer: I don't think we limit them. Students may think that, but I know many students that do fly-backs at other times. The fly-back week will move forward again when we move to full quarters, and that will be a problem as we'll lose a full week of instruction. The University will be taking off the full week of Thanksgiving and we won't be able to do that so we won't be perfectly in sync.

Q: Why is it that the University doesn't have an overall policy that deals with all of the issues of faculty recruitment?

L. Kramer: Although the problems are the same, the actual hiring, the people, and the needs that they have are hugely different. For example, in the business school it is a routine practice for the faculty to consult. The University does have a uniform policy but the schools all diverge from there to meet their needs. Even with the law school, each hiring is different.

Q: About how much square footage will be added with the new buildings?

L. Kramer: It will be 80,000 useable square feet. Our best guess is that this will take us out 30 or 40 years. All of the footage will not be used at first. We'd like to build flex space with moveable walls similar to the Clark Center. Kresge will go and will be replaced with the new auditorium in the Business school's new campus.

Q: In the process of selecting, how rigorous is the screening approval for taking courses across disciplines? How is the grading done? Students believe that they might be graded on a scale within themselves separate from the overall class which might be unfair.

L. Kramer: We got faculty to look at the different disciplines and to pre-approve courses that we would feel comfortable that if any law student took it we would give them credit toward their JD. Courses outside those require a petition, which requires an explanation of why and how you think it would serve the JD degree. The ABA permits 21 semester hours of classes outside the law school that can count toward the JD. We used to allow only 11 hours but we increased it to 15 last year. You can take up to the full 21 with petitions. The law school has a tougher grading curve than any other school in the university. If a law student takes a class outside the law school, the grade does not count toward their GPA precisely because the grades are so inflated in other schools and it would be unfair to students that did not take outside courses. Outside students in a law class either receive a pass/fail, or they are graded on their home school's curve which is what the students think is unfair.

Q: Beyond taking classes outside of the law school, what types of opportunities are there right now for law students to collaborate across disciplines?

L. Kramer: Something that is a part of the program going forward is to develop simulation courses that are usually co-taught. About 12 are currently running. Another source which is equally important is the research centers, for example, Freeman Spogli. With the business school, we have the ROCK center.

Q: How many credits do you need to graduate?

L. Kramer: According to the ABA, 83. We require 86.

Q: To what extent do you think that there are opportunities in the future to leverage Stanford's facilities and faculty to do more programming beyond law school type programs?

L. Kramer: There are lots of opportunities, it's a question of resources. It a question of the faculty's willingness to do it relative to the other things that they want to do. One of the things that we have done is that 15 of us on the faculty have gotten together and put together a course called "thinking like a lawyer" which is designed for non-law students which will be taught next year.

Q: How is the law student that comes out of this program different? What expectations should we have employing these people?

L. Kramer: We'll see. These people should be more flexible and more capable of taking on a wider array of tasks and jobs.

Q: Are we rising/falling/steady compared to our peer schools?

L. Kramer: It depends on the audience. In the world at large, we're rising, but slowly. Amongst students, I hope the same thing.

Q: What are we doing to try to raise the profile of the school to attract the cream of the crop from outside the US to the LLM program.

L. Kramer: We have gone about far as we can at this point with our current resources. This is a money question. We have three defined programs, all of which have a set of special courses. We attract great students from Asia and South America. Our program is very small. Last year the program was opened up to the financial aid package in segregated amounts. This is important as it's the only way to internationalize our student body as it can't be done at the JD level. Our LLM program is limited to international students only.

Q: Have you thought about whether or not the school should be a little bit bigger in student body so there would be more of a critical mass in some of the specialized areas?

L. Kramer: We think about it all the time. Being small is what has made the Stanford experience so special to people over the years. We're not the only small school in the University. If we enlarge, there is not that much room for expansion anywhere else.

Q: Are you noticing any change in terms of trends as to what people do when they leave the law school?

L. Kramer: We don't know, we just started to collect data. Informally, our sense is the expected trends. About 25% of our class clerks, I would like that to be higher. There are two things that limit this. One is that our student body is slightly older with more diverse interest and they have other things that they'd like to do. The other, which is more of a problem, is that students want to clerk in only the most competitive markets.

Q: How do our faculty salaries compare to Harvard?

L. Kramer: I don't have hard data, but we think that our salaries lag behind Harvard at a rate of 10 to 15%, more at the junior level than the senior level.

Q: Could you put some context around what we are doing in the second and third year curriculum in the cross disciplinary areas versus what other schools are doing?

L. Kramer: Nobody else is doing anything like what we're doing. We want to give them more variety in the second and third year. What we're doing is getting rid of the "box". The closest to us is Penn.

Q: Is there something that we should do as a law school to get the word out about what we're doing, similar to what Harvard did?

L. Kramer: It's going to take some time. I'd feel more comfortable doing it after we've gone to quarters and we see what happens.