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Dean's Update to the Northeastern University School of Law Community - Volume 4 Number 1 - September 2008

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Dean's Update to the Northeastern University School of Law Community
Volume 4, Number 1 (2008-2009)
September 29, 2008

For those of you who are new to this community: The purpose of these periodic updates is to tell everyone – faculty (including adjunct faculty), staff, students and graduates – what has been happening, what is coming up, and to provide information on matters that may not always be sufficiently transparent without additional communication. We distribute these updates to faculty and staff via email, to alumni/ae via a link from their website (and linked to the new monthly e-newsletter), and to students via the WeBoard. If you have suggestions, please let me know.

Note: To access links: Ctrl + click

Note also that these links may change when the new website goes up this fall.

New building!

The completely rebuilt Dockser Hall is open! 25,000 net square feet of state-of-the-art classrooms, student lounges, and, finally, a gorgeous new moot courtroom. And the clinics have returned from Columbus Place to beautiful new digs on the first floor, adjacent to the moot courtroom. Many thanks are due to people all over NU for making this possible. We have already moved in, but we are planning a formal opening and dedication on Thursday, October 16 at 4:30 pm, to kick off our 40th Anniversary celebrations (see below).

We are now working on final plans for the much less extensive but exciting renovations in Cargill and Knowles. The entrance to the library will be moved down to the first floor (plaza) level, and there will be a wonderful atrium lounge around the library main desk on this level. The second floor, still filled by the old classrooms, will be split between library and computer room space, and administrative offices outside the library envelope. We hope that these renovations will be complete by the start of the 2009-10 academic year.

Northeastern named #1 law school for public interest law!

National Jurist has just named Northeastern the #1 law school for public interest law in the U.S. We are the only law school in New England to make the list. See http://www.northeastern.edu/nupr/news/0908/Law_School.html. The ranking was developed based upon reporting law schools have been doing to Equal Justice Works, the leading national public interest law organization. National Jurist developed its own ranking system based upon this publicly available information. The EJW information has been posted for the past two years on Newsweek.com (see <http://www.blog.nvbxjvz.newsweek.com/blogs/ejw/archive/2007/10/14/the-e-guide-to-public-service-at-america-s-law-schools-2007-08-edition.aspx>). In ranking us #1, National Jurist noted the breadth and depth of the Northeastern program. The rankings

and accompanying article are being published in the annual preLaw magazine, as well as in the November issue of the magazine National Jurist.

Welcome to the Class of 2011

On August 25, we welcomed the Class of 2011, 200 first year students. There is much to be said about each individual in the class, as always, but here is some general data on the new members of our community:

Total applications	3237(up 7% from last year)	Newly admitted students	198
LSAT median	161	Undergrad GPA median	3.44
Number of undergraduate schools	120	Number of graduate schools	17
Students of Color	66 (33%)	GBLT	25 (12%)
Men	87 (44%)	Women	111 (56%)
Average age	25	Age range	21-36

Among these students are people who speak many languages, who have lived all over the world ... who have been teachers and Peace Corps volunteers and Teach for America participants... athletes and musicians ... This is a remarkable group of people who now have joined the Northeastern community.

Upcoming 40th Anniversary of the reopening of NUSL

On October 16-18, 2008, we will celebrate the reopening of NUSL in 1968, kicking off the celebrations with a ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly renovated Dockser Hall on Thursday, October 16, and culminating in a Gala at the Moakley Courthouse on Saturday night, October 18, at which Anthony Lewis, Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and author will be the keynote speaker. On Friday and Saturday a number of panels and presentations are planned, as well as an informal gathering for all past faculty, graduates, students and staff.

For more information: <http://www.slaw.neu.edu/alumni/40anniversary/>

Moving forward with our key goals & NU Academic Plan

Last year, accompanying a University-wide planning process, we reviewed our strategic goals and objectives. This renewed planning process built on the extensive community planning that we began in 2005, and we are now working with five 'meta' goals:

- Build the best model of experiential legal education in the US
- Train the great and highly ethical lawyers of the 21st century
- Be a national leader in key areas in which law affects the public good

- Pursue translational and interdisciplinary research that will impact societal challenges; and
- Build NUSL's national and international community and reputation.

Much of our current work is focused on advancing these goals. Later this year we will be posting our strategic plan and accompanying five year objectives on our newly designed website.

Faculty comings & goings

Susan Montgomery, NUSL '86, has joined us as Executive Professor of Law and Business, working with both the law school and the College of Business Administration. She joins us after a career as a partner in the Boston law firm of Foley Hoag, where her practice focused on Intellectual Property in the international arena. She will be teaching in the areas of IP, International IP and transactional law, and working to build some joint projects between the two colleges.

Susan Sloane joins us this year as permanent Director of Legal Writing for the School.

Sonia Rolland, Assistant Professor of Law, will arrive at the beginning of January and will start teaching in the Spring quarter. She is an expert in the area of international trade.

John Linarelli, Visiting Professor of Law, will be here for three quarters teaching Corporations, Bankruptcy, International Business Regulation, and Law & Economic Development.

John McGoldrick will join us as a Visiting Professor starting in January, teaching Constitutional Law and Communications Law.

Welcome back to **Debbie Ramirez**, who rejoins us after a two year leave, and to **Clare Dalton**, who returns as Emeritus Matthews Distinguished Professor of Law after a one year leave.

Away this year: **Dan Givelber**, **Martha Davis** and **Margaret Burnham** are on sabbatical for the rest of this year; **Dan Schaffer** is on sabbatical until the Spring quarter; **Rashmi Dyal-Chand** is on sabbatical starting at the end of December; and **Dan Danielsen** is on leave for the year.

Hilary Farber, who has an appointment as an Assistant Professor in the College of Criminal Justice, will continue to teach courses at the law school as a visiting assistant professor.

Appointments / faculty hiring this year: We are gearing up a search for two new tenure track faculty in the fields of commercial law and immigration law, with hopes that two

new full-time faculty will join us in the fall of 2009. For more information, contact Wendy Parmet, Chair of the Faculty Appointments Committee.

Experiential learning, going forward: We are exploring options regarding a new tenure track position in experiential learning, to head up our efforts to build toward our #1 strategic goal of being the best law school in experiential learning – and in the integration of theory and practice – in the country. Last year, the faculty approved hiring a new faculty member to have broad responsibilities in helping us move forward in building our program in this area. Before we begin this search, we have invited three nationally recognized clinical professors from other law schools to visit with us and give us their observations and suggestions about our program. The three people we have invited, with the dates of their visits and links to their bios, are:

Vanessa Merton, September 26. http://www.pace.edu/page.cfm?doc_id=23181

Karen Tokarz, October 10. <http://news-info.wustl.edu/sb/page/normal/87.html>

Stephen Ellman, October 31. <http://www.nyls.edu/pages/363.asp>

After we have considered their ideas and recommendations, we will design our next steps. If you are interested in being involved in this conversation, please let me know.

Programs and collaborations

New dual degree programs:

J.D./Masters in Sustainable International Development: We have reached agreement with the Heller School for Social Policy and Management on a new dual degree program in which students in our J.D. program will have the option of receiving a Masters in Sustainable International Development from Brandeis in one additional year of study (instead of two). Students will be able to combine their field work for the Brandeis degree with co-op experiences for their Northeastern J.D. For more information, contact Margaret Woo.

J.D./Masters in Environmental Policy and Law: We are collaborating with Vermont Law School on a dual degree program in which students in the Northeastern J.D. program will have the option of earning a Masters in Environmental Law & Policy from Vermont, completing both degrees in the three years usually required for the J.D. alone. Vermont Law School has been a leader in environmental law for over 18 years; it is consistently ranked either #1 or #2 in the field by US News & World Report. Students will be able to combine their field work for the Vermont degree with co-op experiences for their Northeastern J.D., and will participate in a focused academic program in environmental law and policy at Vermont. For more information, contact Lee Breckenridge.

Continuing dual and joint degree programs:

The dual degree program with Tufts Medical School (**J.D./Masters in Public Health**) in which students earn the two degrees in 3.5 years has become a mainstay of our program and was the model for the two new dual degree programs launched this year. For more information on the JD/MPH, contact Brook Baker or Wendy Parmet.

We continue, as well, to have several joint degree programs with other Northeastern colleges, including the College of Business Administration (**J.D./Masters in Business Administration**) and the College of Arts and Sciences (**J.D./ Masters in Law Policy and Society**).

In development:

LLM program: We are looking at the feasibility of one or more LLM programs at Northeastern. An LLM program might meet one or more goals: attracting international students to come here; growing our relationship with the Sustainable International Development program at the Heller School; and expanding our financial base. We hope to complete initial planning during this academic year. For more information, contact Sara Sayess.

Collaboration with other NU colleges: We will be continuing to explore possible interdisciplinary efforts with the Bouvé College of Health Sciences and the College of Business Administration. Susan Montgomery will be assisting in development of our collaboration with the College of Business Administration, and we are extending these discussions to include issues of corporate governance & social responsibility, as well as social entrepreneurship and international trade.

Program on Human Rights and the Global Economy ([PHRGE](#))

The Program continues to build strength at NUSL while some faculty members are pursuing human rights projects while on leave this year. PHRGE founder Hope Lewis is at Harvard's DuBois Institute for the fall, writing on human rights and black migration, and PHRGE co-director Martha Davis is a Visiting Fellow at Harvard Law School Human Rights program for the year. Here at NUSL, Margaret Woo is working with UMass's McCormack Graduate School for Policy Studies and The MA Judges Conference under a grant from the USAID to develop a training program for Chinese judges on rule of law issues. And, as noted under NUSL on-line journals, more than 1000 papers have been posted on our SSRN journal, *Human Rights and the Global Economy*, resulting in nearly 80,000 downloads.

PHRGE Fellowships: Students are now working as PHRGE Fellows in funded placements every quarter with three human rights organizations: the Center on Housing Rights and Evictions in Geneva, the National Law Center on

Homelessness and Poverty in D.C., and Oxfam America in Boston. As part of this on-going collaboration, PHRGE is hosting a Human Rights Law Training session on October 6 with a national audio feed from the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty.

Valerie Gordon Human Rights Lecture: Our annual signature event, the Valerie Gordon Human Rights lecture, was expanded last year with funds from the MA Foundation for the Humanities to include a full day symposium and a CD and Study Guide, including materials designed to stimulate discussion on the role of human rights in local social justice campaigns. These materials are now being distributed to 100 social and racial justice organizations in Massachusetts with the goal of stimulating discussions about the role of human rights in social justice advocacy here in Massachusetts. The lecture this coming spring is currently being organized to focus on issues of human rights and sustainability.

Justiciability Conference: We will be hosting a meeting of international scholars and judges to discuss justiciability of economic and social rights in the Spring. For more information, contact Lucy Williams.

For more information about PHRGE activities, contact Margaret Woo, Lucy Williams or Martha Davis.

Public Health Advocacy Institute

PHAI held its [Fifth Conference on Public Health, Law, and Obesity](#) - A TIME FOR ACTION: An Obesity Agenda for the Next Administration at NUSL on September 19-21, 2008. The Institute is also engaged in continuing work, both nationally and internationally on public health issues related to tobacco use and obesity, including the following: working with the MA Department of Public Health on an initiative to promote smokefree housing in the state; working with the American Academy of Pediatrics as part of the Julius B. Richmond Center of Excellence to protect children from the dangers posed by secondhand smoke; internationally, providing technical assistance on a human rights-based approach to tobacco control; analyzing the after school and extracurricular school food legal and policy environment under Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Healthy Eating Research Program; developing resources for state tobacco control programs to make use of newly released internal tobacco industry documents stemming from the federal government's RICO case against the tobacco industry through a grant from the American Legacy Foundation; and developing a series of public health law case studies that deal with industry or other legal threats made when public health legal initiatives are announced by states or localities.

For more information, contact Richard Daynard. [Public Health Advocacy Institute](#)

Domestic Violence Institute (DVI)

DVI had its annual fall [Domestic Violence Institute Annual Conference](#), "Introduction

to Advocacy" on September 20 with over 20 lawyers/community leaders as panelists and 60 students/community advocates participating. The Boston Medical Center/DVI program is underway, with the highest number of first year students enrolling in many years. Although the BMC program involves students from other law schools in Boston, this year there are primarily NUSL students participating, and eight of the ten team leaders are upper level NUSL students. Motivated by student interest in legal/medical collaborations, DVI is also heavily involved in the development of a comprehensive hospital-wide response to domestic violence at the Boston Medical Center; continues to work with community partners, including Casa Myrna Vazquez, the Asian Task Force, the Association of Haitian Women, and the Community Advocacy Program; and has become more heavily involved in attempting to secure competent community advocacy for Dorchester Court.

For more information, contact Lois Kanter, DVI Director, or check the website: [Domestic Violence Institute \(DVI\)](#).

The Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project

This project focuses on the crimes of the civil rights era and various mechanisms of restorative justice. Working with students over the past two years, Professor Burnham has now filed a federal civil rights action on behalf of the families of two victims of a 1964 Klan murder. The case is based on newly discovered evidence that revealed the complicity of state law enforcement officials. Students are also working on a Cold Case Watch, particularly timely in view of the recent passage of the Emmett Till Cold Case bill, which authorizes federal investigation and funding regarding the cold cases from that era. Margaret Burnham and Daniel Williams are pursuing opportunities to engage students with local cold case prosecutions in the South, possibly in a clinical setting. CRRJ will sponsor a national workshop this Spring here at Northeastern on civil rights-era law enforcement, with a specific focus on bail issues.

The Marshall Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project.

Under the leadership of graduate Roy Karp '02, with faculty advising from Peter Enrich, Millie Drew and Mary O'Connell, and assistance from Jane Scarborough, we are training students to teach constitutional law in the local high schools. Contact Roy Karp for more information.

New collaboration on gender and sexuality

Libby Adler is working with faculty in the College of Arts & Sciences to develop a program that focuses on issues of gender and sexuality, co-sponsored by the School of Law, Communications Studies, the English Department, Women's Studies, the Office of Affirmative Action and University Libraries. The first lecture series, "Producing Sex: Literary, Legal, and Political Discourses,"

includes talks by Dean Spade, University of Washington School of Law (“Trans Politics on a Neoliberal Landscape” on January 6, 2009) and Janet Halley, Harvard Law School (“Governance Feminism: Which Feminist Ideas are Becoming Common Sense in International Law Today?” on March 12, 2009). On April 9, there will be a panel discussion on The Future of Studies in Sexuality at Northeastern, moderated by Libby Adler.

Givelber Distinguished Lecturer on Public Interest Law

This past summer we launched a visiting lecturer program, supported by the Daniel Givelber Fund which was established to support public interest activities. Two leading public interest practitioners will teach courses each year that focus on their specialty area of practice. To initiate the program, Nina Perales, Southwest Regional Counsel to the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund and a leader in voting rights litigation, taught an intensive course to upper level students on voting rights issues.

NUSL on-line journals

We have two active on-line journals publishing through SSRN. NUSL's [Human Rights and the Global Economy](#) edited by Rashmi Dyal-Chand, Hope Lewis, and Wendy Parmet, has had more than 1000 papers posted, and more than 80,000 downloads. The [Northeastern University School of Law Public Law & Legal Theory](#) series, edited by James Hackney with assistance from Joe Miranda, has now published 26 articles.

In addition, students have organized a new student-run journal, the *NU Law Journal*, designed as an on-line journal that will publish at least once annually. The publication will be a combination of practitioner and theoretical pieces coming from a symposium organized by the student staff. Students have organized the effort so that any student interested in participating can have a role. The first symposium, [The Northeastern University Law Journal - Symposium](#), held last spring, was titled “To Gitmo and Back: Challenges to Representing Guantanamo Detainees.” The Journal staff brought together practitioners involved in the Guantanamo litigation. The journal publication is now in development, and the students are organizing the second (annual) symposium that will focus on subprime and predatory lending.

Speakers @ NUSL

In addition to the myriad of speakers invited by student organizations, we sponsor or co-sponsor the [Northeastern Law Forum](#) (a series of external speakers who give community-wide lectures), a monthly faculty colloquium series, the Valerie Gordon Human Rights Lecture, the Carol and Richard Daynard Visiting Public Interest Fellows, the new Gender and Sexuality series, and the Boston-area IP Speaker Series. Rather than list them all here, you can find information on all of the speakers on our website at <http://www.slaw.neu.edu/news/default.htm>.

New website!

New website: We anticipate that we will have a new website up for beta testing quite soon. If you are interesting in being part of the group of faculty, students and staff who will be reviewing it for organization and content, please let Deborah Feldman know.

New mailings: We are continuing to hone the mailings that we send out to get the word out about Northeastern. In the past year, this has included a large mailing to lawyers and judges to invite them to participate in our co-op program (yielding quite a few inquiries) as well as a monthly postcard series that attempts to highlight key aspects of our program. If you have additional ideas, please let me know.

Supporting students

As we continue to build scholarship and need-based support for students in every way that we can, I wanted to update you on two important developments in the area of supporting students who pursue public interest opportunities:

Loan Deferral & Forgiveness Program:

While we continue to raise funds for this program, we are also reviewing the overall way in which we provide assistance to our graduates in public interest and public service positions. New federal legislation provides for reduced monthly payments (based on income), loan forgiveness after 10 years of full time qualifying employment, and some loan repayment for graduates who work in public interest jobs. I filed comments on proposed regulations this summer, and we are working with others, including Equal Justice Works, to ensure that public interest lawyers benefit as much as possible from the legislation. At the same time, we are doing a complete review of our own program, in order to maximize the effectiveness of our available resources. We anticipate that we will be undertaking a major fundraising effort for LDF. With the new federal legislation, we should be able to raise the necessary funds to meet close to full need for these graduates who are dually burdened by high debt and low salaries. If you want to know more about the federal legislation, see <http://www.finaid.org/loans/publicservice.phtml> or the Equal Justice Works website: <http://www.equaljusticeworks.org>.

Co-op Stipend Program

We continue to build the availability of co-op stipends for students who work in non-paying public interest co-ops. Last year, the first million dollar gift to the School of Law, from Justice Margot Botsford, was dedicated to providing an additional endowment for this effort, and we anticipate that this will strengthen our ability to expand the stipend program in the future. When we combine our own funding efforts with the availability of federal work-study support, we are

now able to provide over \$500,000 per year to students who need support during their co-ops.

Diversity @ NUSL

As I continue to serve as a member of the Boston Bar Association Task Force on Diversity in the Bar, I am struck by the challenge that we face if we are to be successful in building a genuinely diverse bar, in every sense and in every kind of practice. We continue to make this a priority for the law school. This year, we are excited to have admitted a class that is 33% students of color. This reflects both our continuing commitment and attention to recruitment strategies for students. Last year, we also initiated a new faculty advising system for students of color (on an opt-in basis), and a group of us has been meeting to discuss a wide range of issues relating to diversity in the community. CAIR, under the leadership of Karl Klare, continues to be active. If you're interested in learning more about these efforts, please contact Karl Klare or me.

Institutional advancement

In addition to the 40th anniversary celebration (see above), we are continuing to develop both electronic and other forms of communication with graduates, other law schools, and practitioners. A monthly email update is sent by our Office of Alumni/ae Relations. In addition to our magazine (see <http://www.slaw.neu.edu/magazine/archive.html>), we also initiated a regular postcard series last year that highlights, in short form, the strengths of our faculty and our programs (see <http://www.slaw.neu.edu/news/postcards.html>).

We now have alumni/ae groups functioning well in Boston, NYC, Washington D.C., New Hampshire, Los Angeles, San Francisco/Palo Alto, Seattle, Denver and Chicago. We will complete building a class agent system for annual giving this year. We have now held two alumni/ae conferences to discuss substantive areas of law in which our graduates are active: the first in Spring 2007 focused on labor and employment law; the second, Spring 2008, was an [Intellectual Property Conference](#).

We are beginning a campaign to involve current students in these activities. Students who are interested should contact Chris Nicholson, Director of Development and Alumni/ae Relations.

For alumni who would like to stay in touch, please visit <http://www.slaw.neu.edu/alumni/>

Curriculum, technology, student evaluations and related developments

International law & programming.

We are continuing to build opportunities for our students to learn about the global reaches of law. Courses now include basic courses in International Law and Comparative Law, and more specialized courses with international focus in areas including criminal law, business regulation, intellectual property, human rights,

tax, refugee and asylum law, and public health. Students are now pursuing co-ops around the world, in both human rights and business work. Our new dual degree program with the Heller School at Brandeis (see dual degrees, above) has strengthened our ability to attract and educate students interested in sustainable international development. As we develop our LLM program, we look forward to an increasingly diverse campus, as students from elsewhere join us here at NUSL.

Student evaluations update

Two years ago, after considerable discussion involving students, faculty and staff, we decided to initiate an addition to our traditional narrative grading system. It had become obvious that electronic submissions for employment would not accommodate our lengthy transcripts. Often, these systems – used by for federal employment, federal clerkships, career fairs and so on – limit submissions to 3-5 pages. We were committed to retaining the narrative evaluation system, but we concluded that we needed to have some differentiation on the one-page transcript, which previously only indicated Pass or Fail for our students. The final resolution of many discussions was to initiate a system for the Class of 2010 that would allow for the addition of ‘honorifics’ that would be entered on the one page transcript. Our official transcript will continue to be the full set of narrative evaluations with the one-page cover sheet. Starting this past summer, these students, who are now in their second year, can receive Honors or High Honors in upper level courses. No mandatory curve was set for the use of these honorifics, and the change was not extended to the first year courses, in order to ensure that we do not increase competitiveness during this crucial year. For the Class of 2010, we went to a Credit-No Credit grading system for the first year courses, in order to differentiate the first year from the new system instituted for the upper level courses. We will be evaluating carefully the effects of this change.

LSSC Update

We are now in our third year of developing a collaborative effort between the Social Justice (formerly Law Culture & Difference) and Legal Research & Writing (formerly Legal Practice) components of the first year program. We are delighted that Susan Sloane has joined us as Director of Legal Writing and is directing the LRW part of the LSSC program. Susan Maze Rothstein continues to direct the social justice components of the course. Each year, the faculty involved in the program go through considerable revisions of curriculum, and this year is no exception as new assignments have been developed. In addition, this year Lois Kanter has joined Peter Enrich and Susan Maze Rothstein as one of the three faculty members working with the law offices on their social justice projects.

We now assign students to law offices that move together through the first year program, including LSSC and other first year courses. Each law office has a general faculty advisor; a supervising faculty member plus Lawyering Fellows in the fall and winter (and advising attorneys) for work on their social justice

projects; and an Adjunct Professor who is responsible for teaching the research and writing curriculum. Teaching Assistants are also assigned to assist students in their research and writing work. We view these student law offices as 'hubs' for the delivery of critical components of our first year curriculum.

When we moved to this new model, we agreed that we would initiate a formal evaluation of the first year program. We are now in discussions with the Center for Social Policy at UMass-Boston, for the purposes of developing and initiating a three year evaluation of the LSSC course. Jim Rowan, who is faculty director for the overall program, is in charge of developing this evaluation.

Technology

The law school has moved into the 21st century: WiFi is in all buildings; students apply for jobs using the new co-op and career services employment system (Symplicity); we are developing a richer searchable database for these searches. Students now have an electronic place to store all of their information – co-op and academic evaluations, cover letters, resumes - in electronic student folders that are available to them as they progress through NUSL and after graduation for all their legal job searches. Our goal is to move to an entirely paperless system, with co-op employers as well as post-graduation employers being able to receive student applications electronically. Other technology initiatives include installation of a new alumni/ae portal in November and a university upgrade of core student and financial systems, a change much needed to improve access to information and the efficiency of student registration processes. The upgrade will take place over the next two-three years.

Governance

In 2001, the law school adopted a Charter that established a Council with faculty, student and administrative staff representation. It is now generally felt that the Council is in need of structural change. We remain committed to ensuring that students have a voice in the law school, and I am working with both students and faculty to develop an alternative structure.

Scheduling

Last year we successfully moved to a two year rolling curriculum, to allow both students and faculty to be able to plan for the future. We are investigating the possibility of creating an actual schedule for each quarter with more lead time, again to allow for better planning on all sides. Sara Sayess is working with Bill Greene and others on this project, and hopefully we will be posting course scheduling earlier starting later this year.

That's about it for now. I hope you all find wonderful ways to enjoy the fall before winter descends!

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