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Fordham Law Forward: Community, Service, Excellence: The Fordham Law Strategic Plan

Fordham Law School

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Fordham Law *Forward*

COMMUNITY, SERVICE, EXCELLENCE



THE FORDHAM LAW STRATEGIC PLAN

Dear Members of the Fordham Law Community,

As Fordham Law plans for the future, we must focus on carrying our School's vibrancy forward in a changing world. With this goal in mind, we convened a dynamic committee of faculty, students, alumni, and administrators to gather information and feedback to help shape our direction for the future. **Fordham Law Forward** is the strategic plan that we have developed based on the broad input we received from the Fordham Law community. The outreach confirmed a broad consensus about the School's identity and goals. The core values of Fordham Law are built on the unfaltering conviction that the legal profession should—indeed must—be committed to service. Fordham Law's educational mission is centered on equipping students to succeed at the highest levels of the profession and instilling in them values that place service at the heart of all they do. These values allow our students to improve the lives of clients, further the public good, and lead fulfilling professional lives.

The challenge is to accomplish this mission in our rapidly changing profession and world. **Fordham Law Forward** provides a clear road map. This strategic plan shows how we can address developments in law, technology, culture, government, and business in ways that are rooted in our core shared values so that all Fordham lawyers are prepared to lead the profession into the future and make a difference in the world.

As you will learn in the following pages, **Fordham Law Forward** focuses on six main areas. These objectives will help the Law School continue to improve its singularly compelling mission: to educate the next leaders in the law to practice their calling always in the service of others.

Fordham Law Forward offers a plan that is consonant with the University's strategic framework, which places at its center the people of Fordham—those with restless hearts, discerning curiosity, and the singular ability to be more and do more for the world.

I am very appreciative of all the support you have already given the Law School, and I am excited to continue to work with you as we implement this most important of plans for the future of Fordham Law.

Sincerely,

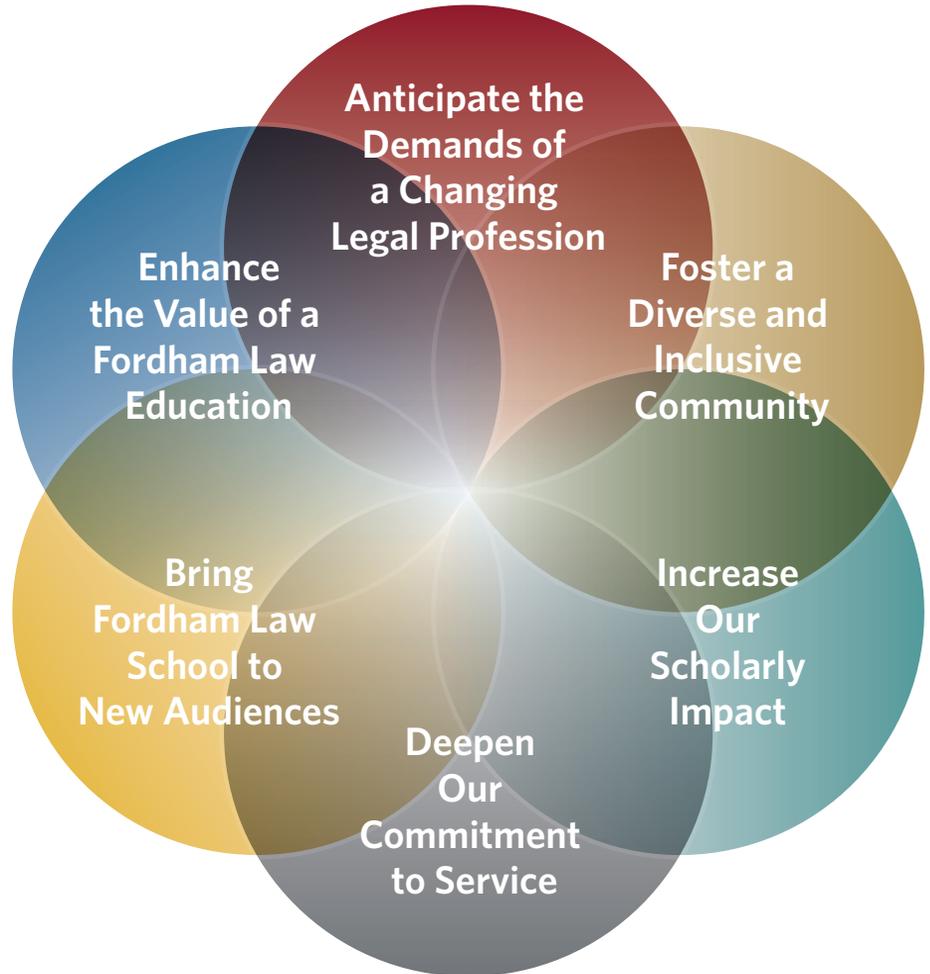


Matthew Diller
Dean and Paul Fuller Professor of Law



Six Strategic Objectives

Fordham Law *Forward* sets a deliberate course that will carry the values and strengths of a Fordham Law education into the future and ensures that the lawyers we graduate will be more effective and inspired than ever.





Anticipating the Demands of a Changing Legal Profession

The rapidly changing practice of law demands new tools and abilities.

Fordham Law School is anticipating those developments.

New lawyers must not only possess strong analytic skills and foundational legal knowledge but also craft solutions, communicate effectively, work collaboratively, and maintain high ethical standards. They must have an understanding of the contexts in which legal issues arise and have developed the practical wisdom to appreciate what is important in the real world.



“We will focus on enhancing existing courses and creating new ones that focus on 21st-century skills like emotional intelligence, cultural competence, leadership, teamwork, and project management, to name a few.”

LEAH HILL, ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION,
CLINICAL ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF LAW

To anticipate these changing demands, the Law School will pursue the following objectives:

- Maintain and enhance areas of traditional curricular strength and continue to adapt our curriculum to emerging dimensions of legal practice, such as corporate compliance, entrepreneurial law, and new frontiers in civil rights and social justice
- Elevate our focus on such core competencies as problem solving, collaboration, ethics, leadership, management, cultural competence, and technological sophistication
- Ensure that all students who graduate from Fordham participate in experiential learning in a carefully structured, supervised setting by building on the excellence of our clinical programs
- Renew attention to improving students' research and writing experiences by emphasizing supervision and mentorship and by creating opportunities for new professional writing experiences
- Continue to improve the academic support services for students as the demands of the profession increase

Fostering a Diverse and Inclusive Community

Today more than ever, our profession requires lawyers who can engage a multiplicity of viewpoints and perspectives.

Fordham Law School must reflect the diversity of the global society in which we live.

From our origin as a gateway school for newly arrived immigrants to our role as a leader in modern legal education, Fordham Law has always produced outstanding lawyers who meet the needs of a diverse array of clients—locally, nationally, and globally.

The Law School must be a place of learning for everyone, regardless of race and ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, religious faith, and personal and political commitment. Fordham Law is committed to creating a community that emphasizes inclusiveness, interconnectivity, and an openness to differing viewpoints.

Our commitment to inclusion spans all our educational programs, including serving the needs of those seeking a part-time legal education as well as international students.

The Law School will develop and implement a diversity plan that will realize our commitment to community and inclusion through the following efforts:

- Continue to develop holistic admissions processes and award more generous financial aid packages to ensure a broadly diverse student body
- Expand pipeline programs for talented high school and college students from a range of socioeconomic, ethnic, and racial backgrounds
- Recruit and retain faculty and staff from historically underrepresented groups
- Better engage alumni from historically underrepresented communities
- Move toward a “house” system in which every student has a lifelong community of peers, supported by career counseling and faculty and alumni mentorships
- Ensure that our part-time J.D. program meet the needs of working students in a broad range of industries
- Promote an environment that fully incorporates our LL.M., M.S.L., and S.J.D. students into the Fordham Law School community
- Provide even greater opportunities for alumni to engage with the School and for students to work with, and learn from, our vast alumni networks



“I am proud that my alma mater is at the forefront of efforts to create a more diverse legal industry by highlighting the importance of diversity.”

**ANILU VAZQUEZ-UBARRI '02, MANAGING DIRECTOR,
CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER, GLOBAL HEAD OF TALENT, GOLDMAN SACHS**

Increasing Our Scholarly Impact

Our age is in danger of being defined by facile sound bites and specious argument.

Fordham Law School nurtures a depth of understanding that is urgently needed.

Our faculty produces work that sheds light on some of the most difficult issues we face as a society. Our traditional scholarly excellence in core disciplines such as business law, constitutional history, evidence, intellectual property, and legal ethics is strong, and newer vistas such as immigration, information law, urban law, race and the law, and statutory interpretation are ever-growing.

To harness and expand the relevance, rigor, and reach of faculty scholarship, the Law School will do the following:

- Strengthen our world-class faculty through the hiring and retention of first-rate scholars
- Nurture groundbreaking scholarship by creating new faculty chairs
- Foster innovative scholarship by providing interdisciplinary research opportunities, recognizing superlative scholarly contributions, and maintaining a service-oriented and technologically sophisticated law library
- Support and encourage faculty members to advance law-reform efforts by working with courts, legislatures, and policymakers
- Promote and recognize outstanding student scholarship while embracing new models of scholarly communication for our student-edited law journals



“Faculty here are writing papers that are being cited by the U.S. Supreme Court. We’re playing a role in how laws are written and interpreted. And that benefits the public and our students alike.”

JOHN PFAFF, PROFESSOR OF LAW

Deepening Our Commitment to Service

Access to justice is unavailable to millions of people in disputes involving even the most basic and important human needs.

The Law School's commitment to service is critical in forming Fordham lawyers committed to promoting the rule of law worldwide.

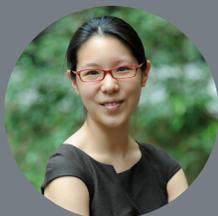
Fordham Law School will deepen our commitment to service through clinics, pro bono initiatives, and centers and institutes.

Our clinics' accomplishments are numerous and include securing access to quality education for children, ensuring family unification by securing legal status for immigrant parents and children, fighting unscrupulous business practices, promoting sustainable development, and defending the human rights of marginalized populations at home and abroad.

Our centers and institutes also make a profound impact by addressing social problems, connecting faculty scholarship and ideas to legal actors and constituencies who can draw on the insights and knowledge in their work, and serving as a bridge to engage our students in real-world challenges.

To deepen our culture of service and public interest, the Law School will do the following:

- Enhance and solidify a culture of service across the School by integrating and promoting the vital public service work of clinics, centers and institutes, and related programs
- Expand students' ability to explore public interest careers by drawing on the unique expertise and guidance of alumni in public service careers
- Provide greater financial aid and loan repayment assistance for students pursuing public interest and public service careers



“I take great inspiration from the fact that every time I go back to Fordham, it is clear that the School remains steadfastly dedicated to service and justice and contributing to something bigger than itself.”

CAROLINE HSU '09, EQUAL JUSTICE WORKS FELLOW

Bringing Fordham Law School to New Audiences

Legal and regulatory systems have become more complex and interconnected.

The Law School must be prepared to offer high-quality degree and non-degree programs to a range of new professional audiences.

Fordham Law School's LL.M. programs are already well established and have strong global reputations, and the School has recently launched two new Master of Studies in Law programs for non-lawyers. New programs like these, which allow professionals to gain legal knowledge in cost-efficient ways, are only some of the ways that Fordham Law School is bringing its expertise to new audiences.



“A top priority is reaching a larger market for our newly created Master of Studies in Law programs. We also will explore online learning opportunities and degree programs in an online format. This is an important way to reach busy professionals looking for a quality educational experience that fits their schedules.”

TONI JAEGER-FINE, ASSISTANT DEAN, INTERNATIONAL AND NON-J.D. PROGRAMS

To further expand our reach to new audiences, the Law School will pursue the following objectives:

- Foster collaborative scholarship, classroom offerings, dual-degree programs, and participation in conferences and lectures with the Gabelli School of Business, the Graduate School of Social Service, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and the School of Education, among others at Fordham University
- Explore executive education offerings and certificate programs—both in-person and online—across areas of distinctive and emerging strength
- Expand collaborations with domestic and international educational partners to develop customized programs for law students and graduates who seek specialized training in one or more areas of U.S. law
- Build new non-degree programs for international law school students and graduates to serve as a gateway to law study in the United States and for those wishing to pursue non-degree law studies in the United States

Enhancing the Value of a Fordham Law Education

Law students face increasing career and economic pressures.

Fordham Law School provides great value to students, in terms of quality, career success, and student satisfaction.

At the core of the value we offer is ensuring that our students are prepared to excel in a range of environments—from the nation’s largest law firms to their small and midsize counterparts, from government agencies to judges’ chambers, and in a range of for-profit and nonprofit settings, including academia and other areas of practice and employment.

A Fordham Law School education offers students a broad array of professional opportunities, preparing them for traditional roles in public and private law practice as well as careers in business, media, education, and government.

To realize our commitment to value, Fordham Law School will do the following:

- Expand financial aid with new fundraising and enhance our loan forgiveness programs to support the affordability of a Fordham Law education
- Strengthen the financial foundation of Fordham Law School to ensure long-term sustainability and growth by seeking new sources of revenue and ensuring that we continue to use our resources efficiently and wisely
- Advise and guide our students for successful careers in an increasingly broad range of settings, ensuring that our students understand the wealth of career paths across the country—and beyond



“Investing in a Fordham Law education is good common sense. There is widespread recognition throughout legal practice that Fordham Law graduates are well-prepared to excel in the profession.”

BRAD BUTWIN '85, CHAIR, O'MELVENY & MYERS

Fordham Law Forward will ensure that Fordham Law School realizes its core mission to advance the law “in the service of others.”

Fordham Law School’s commitment to innovation, diversity and inclusiveness, scholarly impact, service, new audiences, and value all work together to foster a new generation of Fordham lawyers who understand difference and other points of view, focusing our graduates on the contributions they can make rather than on themselves.

As our profession responds to accelerating changes across regulatory, political, cultural, and socioeconomic domains, the Law School will continue to produce graduates with the knowledge and tools to keep them at the forefront of the profession.

You're a part of the plan

Your support of the strategic plan is critical to its success.

You can contribute in a number of ways.

Learn more

law.fordham.edu/strategicplan

Make a gift

law.fordham.edu/strategicplan/invest

Contact us

strategicplan@law.fordham.edu or 212-636-6529

Matthew Diller, Dean and Paul Fuller Professor of Law

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