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EDUCATION

NZLSA Education initiatives Guide



AULSS Kensington Swan mentoring program

This program was started at Auckland Law School in 2005 and each year different EVPs have built on its success. The program pairs Part 2 students with senior Part 3 and 4 law students and encourages them to build an academic and social partnership, working together as Mentor and Mentee to facilitate academic help, advice on how to survive law school, tips on everything from time management to career options through an informal and relaxed relationship. The programme kicks off with a launch, kindly provided by Kensington Swan, where partners and senior staff speak about the programme and firm with students and faculty members.

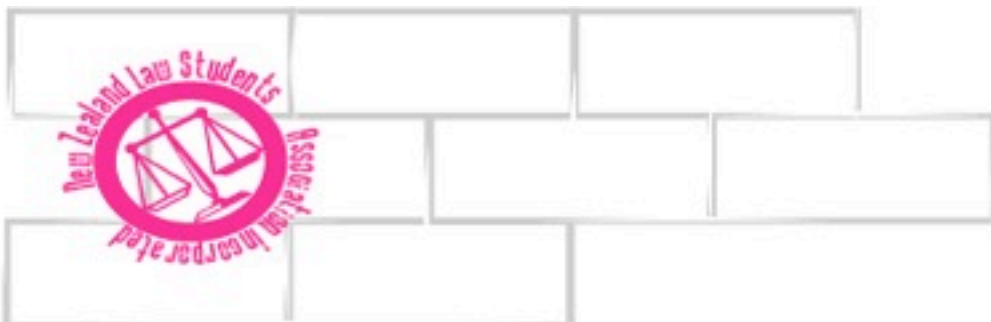
This year we are going to build on the success of previous years with the following:

- *Mentoring Guides* - These will be printed by Kensington Swan and include a brief welcome from the firm and from us, explaining the program and its aim. They explain what exactly a Mentor/Mentee is and how the relationship is supposed to work and set out guidelines for Mentors and Mentees on what to do/what not to do. They also include our contact details and other ways to keep in touch e.g. our Facebook group and website
- *Follow-Up Social Event* - This will be held early in Semester 2 to keep the momentum of the programme going. The social event is intended to get students together after the inter-semester break and re-match pairs who have been mismatched and make sure all partnerships work well. This will be an informal pizza night held at law school with a few spot prizes and certificates to recognise pairs who have worked well during the year.

Alternative careers seminars

Auckland Law School, with its proximity to Shortland Street and strong relationship with large commercial law firms, has traditionally had a commercially-oriented recruitment program. To complement this, an alternative careers seminar series was launched in 2008. The seminars are one-hour talks where we get three speakers working outside of corporate law to give a brief talk about their chosen career path, advice for young graduates, the mentoring they had along the way, any extra study they undertook or specific courses they studied at law school, advice on balancing their career with other commitments, the transition from study to working life etc. In 2010 we will have 4 career seminars with 2 each semester. They will be loosely based on the following themes:

1. Government Agencies and Departments
2. International Law
3. Media/Corporate Law/Intellectual Property
4. Entrepreneurship and IT



The Great Law Debate

We've borrowed this idea from SOULS last year with great success. This year we will be repeating the newly formed tradition running the debate in Semester 2, in conjunction with our Debating Society, most of whom are Law students. We will have a combination of lecturers and students participating in the debate and are in touch with DebSoc about possible topics.

Student Representation

We represent the student body in Faculty and Board meetings alongside the President of the Executive in order to ensure that students have a voice in policy decision-making. This year will be particularly important due to the extensive research that law school executives across the country are undertaking in association with NZLSA. It will important not only to relate feedback to NZLSA but also let the Faculty know how students feel on certain issues.

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(aulssevp2010@gmail.com)***



Buddy System

Using check boxes when signing up new members, we pair up senior and junior law students to give the junior students a contact within the law school. We also run a buddy night where the buddies can meet up and have a few free drinks. The only problem, we seem to have is that there are more juniors wanting buddies than senior buddies.

Tutoring Services

We link up students seeking a tutor with senior tutors. This is a paid service; the students and tutors organise their payment system. The system is most in demand before exams, however we have a steady flow throughout the year.

LAWS101 Tutorials

We run large tutorials for 101 students before each of their tests. The tutorials are usually free, and are run in conjunction with staff who give the tutors practise questions and advice on how to run through them.

Student Representation

We organise an education representative on the Law Faculty Board, in order to ensure the students have a voice in policy decisions, etc. The representative has voting and speaking rights, along with the President of LawSoc.

Tours

This year we are thinking of continuing the tours introduced last year for students around local Courts, police stations, prisons and a Marae. The prison visit was a particular success with a second trip needed last year due to demand.

Other services

We also provide tea and coffee services in the evenings for students who are studying late during exam time; this links to students' educational well-being.

EVP Contact at LawSoc: Ben Brown bmb60@student.canterbury.ac.nz

Otago University - SOULS

The Great Law Debate

One of the key "educational" events at Otago each year is the Great Law Debate, where staff and students debate on a topical issue (such as 'This Law School Needs a Male Quota')



and 'Law Firms Are Stealing Our Souls'). This event is usually very light-hearted with a humorous focus, and is a good chance for students to witness lecturers' more outrageous sides. It is run in second semester and is catered with food and drink.

Law Careers Evening

Also known as the "Alternative Careers Evening", this is traditionally an evening for law students to discover what they can do with their degrees other than work in the big law firms. We invite companies from all over New Zealand who set up stalls with the aim of opening students' minds as to their possible future career options. Attendees include the Army, the City Council, specialist firms and accounting firms. SOULS provides drinks and nibbles, and the companies generally give away branded freebies and lollies. There is also an option for firms to run breakout sessions with short presentations and time for questions in a group setting.

Ladies Night

Last year, in conjunction with OWLS (Otago Women's Law Society), we ran a series of successful 'women in law' evenings (though attendance is not only limited to girls!). The evening involves inspirational female speakers who have used their law degrees in interesting and unconventional ways. The speakers also cast light on the inherent tension between family and career commitments. Bubbles and nibbles are provided for the guests.

Debate exchange

As part of the SOULS/Canterbury LSS sports exchange, last year we ran a debate exchange with Canterbury. It is a serious debate about a current issue facing law students/law schools/the state of NZ law. This year a debating team will come to Otago from Christchurch and we aim to secure a guest judge for the evening, for example a High Court Judge.

Student Tenancy Project

In conjunction with a separate Committee, SOULS runs a Student Tenancy Project with the aim of increasing all students' knowledge about their tenancy rights. The project involves one professional lawyer and around 15 voluntary law students who run Halls of Residence talks, pamphlet production and marketing, a website, and most significantly, On Campus Advice sessions (run in the Community Law Centre format) every fortnight in conjunction with Gallaway Cook Allan (a local law firm).

Study Skills Workshop

SOULS runs a study skills workshop for LAWS101 students. It is held a few weeks out from end of year exams, and covers study tips and exam technique. It is run by the EVP and a trainer from the Student Learning Centre. It has been well received by first-year law students, although it has been met by a bit of resistance from the Law Faculty.

EVP contact at SOULS: Alice Osman (osmanalice@gmail.com)

Victoria University (VUWLSS)

Mentoring

Along with Kensington Swan VUWLSS is running a mentoring programme for 1st year students. We have kept this to small numbers 60:30. The process will kick off with an introduction evening. Prior to arrival at the KS office, we have some team building activities planned on Parliament lawn for everyone to get relaxed and familiar. During the evening at KS we will have a member of faculty speak and the Dean as well as someone from KS. We intend to repeat this in the second trimester for a chance for everyone to get together again.



We are hoping this year with smaller numbers mentors and mentees will be able keep the relationship going for longer than just the evening.

Talks series

We have, as an education team, along with the university book shop, formulated an idea to have a talks series at the university. We are looking at a variety of speakers in from different areas of the law (generally those that you can't learn about at law school) to talk to a small audience of around 30 about their area of law. The process is still in the incubation stage, but we have the law school on side, which is a start.

LLB Review

In 2006 the Law Faculty at Victoria University began the process of reviewing the LLB. The purpose of the review was to examine the key aspects of the LLB programme with the objective on ensuring that the degree continued to be competitive, offering excellent learning opportunities while balancing the faculty's other objective of producing quality research and scholarship. Such issues being considered are the workload of students and staff, entry requirements, the elective courses on offer, compulsory papers, etc.

The review process itself is being undertaken mostly by the faculty itself however, given the implications that any decisions will have, student input is hugely important. The role of the VUWLSS in this process thus far has been to ensure that students' views are considered at a faculty level through the education officers who participate in faculty meetings.

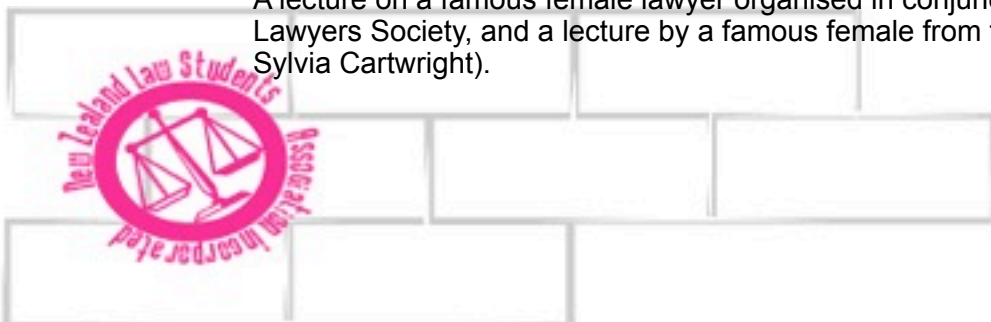
While the process has being moving along quite slowly, the first half of this year has been marked down for student consultation. This process will be organised and run by the VUWLSS. The process shall consist of three parts which shall take place over four weeks. First, the preparation of a summary document based upon proposed changes which the faculty is considering (there will also be full copies of the proposed review for students who are interested). Secondly, students will be able to take part in a survey based around important issues and allowing for suggestions and opinions. The final process of the consultation shall be the collecting of these results and the summarising them in a document for faculty members.

Women in Law Evenings

These nights place a special focus on women in the legal profession, and are aimed at discussing some of the past and current challenges women in the profession have faced

(pay gaps, discrimination, exclusion, slower career advancement etc). There have been a number of different formats for these evenings:

- Three female speakers (a judge, a solicitor and a professor) giving a 10-15 minute talk each on their careers, interspersed with wine tasting;
- A panel discussion of female lawyers from private and public practice around any challenges they've faced, followed by nibbles and drinks;
- A comedy debate with female participants; and
- A lecture on a famous female lawyer organised in conjunction with the Women Lawyers Society, and a lecture by a famous female from the legal profession (Dame Sylvia Cartwright).



Obviously some of these events have been more successful than others. The key seems to be having a situation where people feel free to ask questions and where you can have successful females talking about their legal careers and also about any challenges they have faced. Men were always welcomed at these events and often attended. Each event was sponsored by a large law firm.

The point of the events isn't be to push a certain agenda, but to provide a time to focus on how gender may inhibit female lawyers achieving their goals, and also what could be done, if anything to stop real or perceived barriers to females achieving in the legal profession. At its most basic level, it provides an excellent opportunity for law students to interact with some top professionals in law, who are willing to attend the event because they feel that the event is a worthy cause.

EVP Contact at VUWLSS: Ed McGimpsey (ed.mcgimpsey@gmail.com)

Waikato University - WULSS

Mentoring Program

This year the mentoring program at Waikato began with sign ups commencing on the day after orientation day for first years at the law school. Once again we acquired sponsorship from Kensington Swan. The idea of the program is to get senior students to mentor new students. This year, the mentoring program was expanded and modernised. Signing up for the mentoring program was moved online – a simple process where mentors and mentees would show their interest in the program by sending an email to a designated address. Therefore the number of those signing up has increased within the first few days of the program and is projected to exceed last year's participation. The promotion for the program began on the first day of orientation for new students and will be continued through law school orientation week until the Mentoring evening. The mentoring evening is anticipated to be an event with a good turnout as it has now been moved to the cafe located in the newly build Performing Arts Centre on campus.



Part of the process of modernising the program, this year was to tackle the issue of accountability (mentors not accountable to mentees). A prize pool was created to encourage mentees who were offered outstanding support by their mentors, to nominate their mentors to the student committee. The expectations of mentors and mentees, were also outlined in letters which will be distributed to participants. Also a complaints mechanism was also created. If mentees or mentors had issues about the program, they were encouraged to contact the education officer and I would deal with it appropriately.

A challenge that remains every year is to find suitable mentors and reduce the ratio (normally 3 mentees to one mentor) to a one is to one ratio to provide a more personal attachment between the participants. Currently the ratio is one is to two.

'Mock interviews'

This year, as education officer I also tried to initiate a program run at leading Australian Universities called the mock interview. Students who obtain interviews with top firms in Australia are given the opportunity to be examined by the law school on their interview technique and are given a mark back. This enables students to obtain a better idea of their chances at a real interview. This program is run in a small part at the careers office at the University. This year I connected law students with this service at the careers office and also found alumni from the University in human resources to lend a hand. The problem remains that the mock interview process is more general at careers, therefore I have supplied the office with more 'law related' procedures and intend to direct high achieving law students into that office. I hope to review how well this program runs.

Summer Clerk Seminars

This year my aim was to give Waikato students a greater idea of the importance of clerking. I also wanted to create a culture where Waikato law students felt responsible for the successes of others from their own law school. I was able to obtain previous summer clerks to volunteer at what I can loosely describe as a 'seminar', and provided a list of questions for them to answer about their respective experiences. The creation of other seminars such as an interview seminar run by former Waikato alumni in human resources is also on the cards.

Seminar Series

This year, with the growth of the law school and a new dean there has been some changes. One of those is the creation of several seminars from keynote speakers and academics from around New Zealand. This year in tandem with the law school, the student association will be promoting these seminars by word of mouth in class and by email. This is a new addition to the Education Portfolio that I have taken upon myself.

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