



# ROBERT H. MCKINNEY SCHOOL OF LAW

INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
Indianapolis

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## STRATEGIC PLAN

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*(adopted by the faculty on April 13, 2010)*

**The Mission of the IU Robert H. McKinney School of Law is to be a premier public law school that advances understanding of the law; prepares students to be excellent, ethical professionals and leaders; provides service to society at a local, state, national, and international level; and promotes a diverse, humane, and supportive community of persons engaged in influential scholarship, teaching, and service.**

## **Themes/Vision**

The Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law will pursue its mission with focus and attention given to the following themes when developing implementation plans for the goals and carrying out the actions to bring those plans to reality.

- 1. Educating students to be highly skilled, ethical lawyers, leaders, and other professionals wherever in the world they apply their legal education, while recognizing that we are the leading educator of legal professionals in Indiana.**

Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law, the largest law school in Indiana, prepares students for practice all over the world. Over half the legal professionals in Indiana receive their education from the Indiana University Law School – Indianapolis. Our graduates occupy key leadership roles in government, business, and the community. These facts present a unique opportunity to shape the quality of and access to Indiana’s legal system, while recognizing that our graduates increasingly apply their skills nationally and internationally.

- 2. Blending traditional analytical legal training with interdisciplinary, experiential, and skills education that enables students to be optimally prepared professionals upon graduation.**

Interdisciplinary, experiential, and skills education are among the trademark competencies of the school that can be further developed to the advantage of the school and its students. This vision is consistent with the demands of the legal profession and directions in legal education, and builds upon the core strengths that exist within the Law School, the school’s location in downtown Indianapolis, and its position within a world-class university.

- 3. Supporting a community of scholars to conduct research and influence thinking related to important legal and public policy issues.**

Strengthening the school’s reputation requires growing and retaining a faculty of influential scholars and excellent teachers. Scholarship is integral to the school’s mission of educating highly skilled lawyers, leaders, and other professionals. The faculty must consider excellence in scholarship when hiring new faculty, and there should be increased opportunities and incentives for scholarly productivity. Faculty research and scholarship should also be widely disseminated to strengthen its impact.

- 4. Engaging the law school community with the Indianapolis community and the State of Indiana so as to enhance the educational experience of our students and the national prominence of the school while promoting diversity, justice, economic development, and the public good.**

Indianapolis is one of the few cities of its size with only one law school. It is also the State capital and the economic center and strength of the State. These facts present a unique opportunity to serve the city and state by building on core strengths while pursuing new opportunities to enrich the educational offerings and experiences available to the school's students.

**5. Integrating international and comparative dimensions into our curricular and extracurricular activities.**

The Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law enjoys a growing international reputation and maintains a number of international relationships and programs. Indiana and its institutions are increasingly engaged in the global community. International and comparative legal analysis and activities are becoming a greater part of legal education and thinking. These developments, along with the interest and expertise of the school's faculty and the strategic priorities of Indiana University, make it imperative that our existing international and comparative dimensions continue to be developed and integrated into the activities of the school.

## **Priorities/Goals**

The Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law will pursue the following goals.

**1. Increase the size of, improve the diversity of, and strengthen the faculty to serve the needs of a dual division school.**

Increase the number of tenure-track and long-term contract track faculty. Increasing the size of the faculty will improve our student-faculty ratio and allow faculty to become more engaged with students, alumni, and the community, and to pursue teaching innovations. These activities are critical to the school's core missions of research, teaching, and service.

**2. Develop further resources for scholarships and other financial aid in order to attract and retain an increasingly talented and diverse student body, improve the quality of the overall program, and make law school more affordable.**

Obtain gifts and grants from alumni, friends of the school, foundations and corporations to both named and general endowment funds for scholarships, as well as increase the availability of other financial assistance for students, which will reduce the cost, and in turn the debt incurred, to obtain a legal education at the school.

**3. Strengthen current programs and pursue new opportunities where the school has natural advantages in order to enhance its reputation and make it a destination law school for highly qualified students. These programs include:**

**a. Healthcare and Life Sciences Law**

Build upon the school's national reputation in this area by developing a dual emphasis in the provision of healthcare services and the regulation of pharmaceuticals/medical devices. Develop relationships with potential partners in Indiana and elsewhere that share the school's interest in this area of law, including the growing life sciences business community and other schools focusing on health and life sciences.

**b. Intellectual Property Law**

Strengthen the school's reputation in this area with the addition of prominent intellectual property scholars and with related programs. Engage outside interests in developing the program, including businesses, organizations, and other schools that focus or depend on intellectual property.

**c. State and Local Government Law**

Leverage the school's location in the State capital to develop curricular and extracurricular activities that serve the legislature, judiciary, state agencies and offices, and local governments while offering unique educational opportunities for the school's students. Create an Indiana law institute to become an additional resource for state and local governments.

**d. International and Comparative Law**

Further develop the school's existing international programs and relationships, and encourage faculty members who have demonstrated their commitment to developing aligned international, comparative, and international human rights law programs.

**e. Sports and Entertainment Law**

Develop a national reputation in sports and entertainment law by establishing partnerships with entertainment organizations and professional and amateur sports organizations in central Indiana.

**4. Increase and strengthen opportunities for experiential learning through our clinics, externships and other programs that involve faculty and students in addressing the legal needs of our communities.**

Enhance experiential learning opportunities through clinics, externships, and other existing programs. In addition to practice placements, promote experiential learning by incorporating simulations, applied learning, and problem-solving methodologies in classroom courses and priority programs. These experiences will connect the law school

to the community and enable the students to learn how law can address the legal needs of our communities and promote social justice.

**5. Support and enhance our nationally acclaimed legal writing program.**

Build upon the school's national and international reputation in legal writing and strengthen opportunities for intensive instruction in analytical written and oral communications in all areas, including litigation, transactions, and legislative drafting.

**6. Emphasize and support research and scholarship among all faculty to raise the school's profile as a leading research institution.**

In keeping with the emphasis of Indiana University on maintaining its international prominence as a research institution, and to support our teaching mission, we will advance our scholarly productivity and prominence. We recognize the interdependence of this priority with our other priorities, including strengthening the faculty, expanding our programs, pursuing experiential learning opportunities, and establishing the school's distinctive identity.

**7. Establish a distinctive identity for the school based upon its mission, guiding themes, and the blending of theory and practice.**

This plan is the basis for creating or reconfirming a distinctive identity for the school. The mission, themes and goals set forth in this plan will be used to manage the reputation of the school through a consistent external communication strategy, and to build the programs that are consistent with the mission and vision set forth in this plan. This consistency will reinforce that Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law is committed to serving Indiana's interests while, at the same time, conveying and demonstrating a national and international awareness that enhances the school's reputation outside of Indiana.

**8. Enhance the infrastructure and build a culture of commitment to the law school among its external constituencies in order to develop new resources and revenue streams that are essential for implementing this plan.**

This plan will require a significant increase in financial resources to implement it adequately. It merits increases from existing private and public sources where and whenever possible. However, the reality is that much of it will have to come from new sources. This will require the school to become much more aggressive and effective in seeking grants and private contributions from alumni, friends of the school, foundations and corporations, as well as necessitate the development of entrepreneurial programs that produce net income to be applied to implement the school's plans.