

# **A Guide to Preparing Law Students and Rising Lawyers to Thrive in Law School, the Legal Profession, and Beyond**

*By the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Standing Committee on Lawyer  
Well-Being<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Committee, the following individuals made significant contributions to the drafting and publication of this Guide as part of the Standing Committee's Legal Education Subcommittee: Dean Angela Onwuachi-Willig (Chair), Boston University Law School; Professor Lisle Baker, Suffolk University Law School; Travis Bouche, 3L, Suffolk University Law School; Antonio Coronado, 2L, Northeastern University Law School; Eric Lassar, 3L, Boston College Law School; Professor Jeffrey Cohen, Boston College Law School; Court Diercks, 2L, Boston University Law School; Laura Ferrari, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, Suffolk University Law School; Hannah Jellinek, Assistant District Attorney, Middlesex County; Michael A. Johnson, Associate Dean for Law Student Affairs and Enrollment Planning, Western New England University School of Law; Jordan Michelson, 2L, Boston College Law School; Natalie Newsom, 3L, University of Massachusetts School of Law; Professor John Rice, University of Massachusetts School of Law; Professor Sarah Schendel, Suffolk University Law School Cassidy Seamon, 3L, Boston College Law School; and Professor Kathy Zeiler, Boston University Law School.

## About This Guide

The primary focus of this Guide is to highlight some of the resources, strategies, and practices that you can adopt to help foster an institutional culture of well-being. Law schools and the legal profession need to be responsive to the well-being of our community members – now more than ever.

In the 2021-2022 academic year, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court’s Standing Committee on Lawyer Well-Being (the “Committee”) hosted a series of Town Halls to hear from law students across the Commonwealth about, in part, their lived experiences with well-being and challenges regarding the same. Several prevalent themes quickly emerged. For example, students reported feeling stressed by law school in general and by their respective institutions specifically, in part due to a lack of availability and transparency regarding support systems. There were also reported feelings of isolation where students struggled to learn from relatively inflexible, traditional legal education methodologies. This was especially the case for students from historically underrepresented communities in the legal profession. In addition, student organization leaders, many of whom are from such marginalized backgrounds, reported having to expend substantial effort and time coordinating well-being programming for their peers, filling a need unmet by their law schools.

Additionally, in February 2022, the American Bar Association amended its law school accreditation Standard 303(b) on curriculum to require, among other things, that law schools “provide substantial opportunities to students for . . . (3) the development of a professional identity.” Accompanying Interpretation 303-5 explains in relevant part that “[t]he development of a professional identity should involve an intentional exploration of the values, guiding principles, and well-being practices considered foundational to successful legal practice.”<sup>2</sup>

With these revisions, the ABA has underscored the importance of incorporating well-being in the fabric of legal education. Accordingly, this Guide provides strategies and resources law schools can use to meaningfully and purposefully integrate wellness in law school curricula and programming.

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<sup>2</sup> 2021-2022 *Standards and Rules of Procedure for Approval of Law Schools* 2-3, ABA SECTION OF LEGAL EDUCATION AND ADMISSIONS TO THE BAR, [https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/legal\\_education\\_and\\_admissions\\_to\\_the\\_bar/standards/2021-2022/21-22-standards-book-revisions-since-printed.pdf](https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/legal_education_and_admissions_to_the_bar/standards/2021-2022/21-22-standards-book-revisions-since-printed.pdf) (last visited Aug. 11, 2022).

This Guide was prepared by the Standing Committee in collaboration with its Legal Education Subcommittee – a group of current law students, faculty, and administrators – to help you best support law students in their new journey through legal education. The below sections of this Guide proceed as follows:

[Part I. The data behind our crisis of well-being](#) (page 4)

[Part II. General tools for promoting well-being](#) (page 6)

[Part III. Strategies for cultivating a culture of well-being](#) (page 7)

The Appendices of this Guide provide additional support for educators, staff, & administrators:

[Appendix A. Sample Wellness and Well-Being Resource Sheet for Law School Faculty, Staff and Administrators](#) (page 19)

[Appendix B. Additional Resources to Promote Law Student Wellness and Well-Being](#) (page 22)

[Appendix C. Additional Resources for Wellness and Well-Being-Centered Law School Pedagogy](#) (page 27)

[Appendix D. Sample Law School Syllabus Featuring Wellness and Well-Being Concepts](#) (page 28)

[Appendix E. Sample Email to Students Regarding Wellness](#) (page 32)

We believe that law schools and the legal profession must do more than simply educate law students about the tools they can use to improve their own well-being; they also must be proactive in attending to the well-being of community members, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds. The Standing Committee is dedicated to working with those involved in legal education to improve the structures and systems that have adversely affected law student well-being for too long. If you are interested in joining this effort, please feel free to email Standing Committee Director Heidi Alexander at [heidi@lawyerwellbeingma.org](mailto:heidi@lawyerwellbeingma.org).

## Part I. The Urgency of Promoting Lawyer Well-Being

### **The Data**

- In 2016, the American Bar Association (ABA) Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs and Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation published a study of nearly 13,000 practicing lawyers.<sup>3</sup> It found that between 21 and 36 percent qualify as problem drinkers, and that approximately 28 percent, 19 percent, and 23 percent are struggling with some level of depression, anxiety, and stress, respectively. The highest rates of problem drinking and depression were found among younger lawyers *in the first ten years of practice* and those working in private firms. In addition to substance use and mental health concerns, the results also indicated low levels of career satisfaction in law.
- Around the same time, a study of law students was released.<sup>4</sup> That study found that while law students started law school with rates of stress and depression that mirrored the national average, the rates sharply increased in the first year of law school. Results of the study also indicated high rates of drinking and binge drinking, higher than average rates of suicidal thoughts, and high rates of diagnoses of depression upon starting law school.

### **The Report**

- In 2017, the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being, originally formed as a grassroots collective of various national organizations, including the American Bar Association, and which recently transitioned to an independent 501(c)(3) named the Institute on Well-Being in Law, published its groundbreaking report: [The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change](#).<sup>5</sup> The recommendations of the National Task Force focused on five central themes:
  - (1) Identifying stakeholders and the role each of us can play in reducing the level of toxicity in the profession;
  - (2) Eliminating the stigma associated with help-seeking behaviors;
  - (3) Emphasizing that well-being is an indispensable part of a lawyer's duty of competence;

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<sup>3</sup> See [https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer\\_assistance/research/law\\_student\\_survey/](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/research/law_student_survey/).

<sup>4</sup> This study was conducted by Jerome M. Organ, David B. Jaffe and Katherine M. Bender and was funded by the ABA Enterprise Fund and the Dave Nee Foundation. See

[https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer\\_assistance/research/colap\\_hazelden\\_lawyer\\_study/](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/research/colap_hazelden_lawyer_study/).

<sup>5</sup> See <https://lawyerwellbeing.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Lawyer-Wellbeing-Report.pdf>.

(4) Educating lawyers, judges and law students on lawyer well-being issues; and  
(5) Taking small, incremental steps to change how law is practiced and how lawyers are regulated to instill greater well-being in the profession.

- The National Task Force recommended that each state implement a commission on well-being to study these issues and execute its own action plan. You can find out more information about the Institute For Well-Being in Law at their website (<https://lawyerwellbeing.net>) and about individual state efforts in Professor Lisle Baker's Jan. 15, 2021 Law Practice Today article, "Emerging State Bench and Bar Resources for Attorney Well-Being."<sup>6</sup>

### **Law School Involvement**

- The National Task Force Report ignited a movement across the nation to change the legal profession and to make the practice of law more sustainable, rewarding, safe, and inclusive. To effectively make those changes, we must acknowledge that these efforts should begin in law school.
- This starts with a shift away from the traditional "tough it out" approach of law school. Schools must recognize that there are many factors impacting student performance—such as systemic racism, financial challenges, family and work commitments, mental health, among many other overlapping aspects of our lives. The old saying "Look to your left and then to your right, and three years from now, only one of you will still be here" has no place or purpose in our law schools.
- Well-being, as a cornerstone of legal education, will yield an array of benefits: more positive experiences for law students, more effective training for young lawyers, significant positive changes to law practice, a more diverse and inclusive bar, and improved well-being in the profession. For these reasons, law students should be trained in well-being, adaptability, and cultural competence. This training should include a close look at the relationship between these concepts and professional competency.
- A commitment to well-being means that schools must also reconsider how to best prepare students to transition into practice. Oftentimes, the shock of practice for many new lawyers leads to significant and preventable stress and anxiety. As part

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<sup>6</sup> See <https://www.lawpracticetoday.org/article/emerging-state-bench-and-bar-resources-for-attorney-well-being/>.

of the practical skills training now required in many law school, schools should incorporate a focus on building well-being and practice management skills. Such practices would ensure new lawyers are better equipped to take on challenges, more confident when entering practice, and more effective advocates.

- Fortunately, some of this work has already begun. In June 2020, the ABA Law Student Division and the ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs (CoLAP) released a toolkit for law schools.<sup>7</sup>
- Changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic have drawn further attention to the importance of well-being. During this unprecedented time, law school faculty, staff and administrators have worked to engender a culture of well-being through intentional steps to create a supportive and collaborative atmosphere that both facilitates effective learning and empowers students to reach out when they need help.

## Part II. General Tools for Promoting Well-Being

Below is an introductory list of tools faculty, staff, and administrators from all levels can use in their work to create a culture of well-being in law school.

- **“Put Your Oxygen Mask on First”**  
In the case of midflight emergencies, airplane passengers are encouraged to “put your oxygen mask on first” before assisting others. The same is true for those who work to support law students: Addressing the well-being of faculty, staff, and administrators must happen first. You cannot attend to the well-being needs of your students without first attending to your own well-being. further, the way we manage our own stress and well-being has a direct impact on those around us. By

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<sup>7</sup>See [https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/lawyer\\_assistance/lc\\_colap\\_mental\\_health\\_toolkit\\_new.pdf](https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/lawyer_assistance/lc_colap_mental_health_toolkit_new.pdf). While providing welcome information for responding to law student distress, the ABA Toolkit does not address the intersection of well-being and diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in law school, or the particular ways that law school environments can negatively impact the well-being of students (and faculty, staff, and administrators) from underrepresented populations. We believe that addressing these issues is an essential component of promoting a culture of well-being in law school.

learning, implementing, and highlighting the different ways by which we tend to our own well-being, we can also model it for our students.

For example, at Mitchell Hamline School of Law, faculty and staff are encouraged to engage in “Community of Practice”<sup>8</sup> exercises designed to help each other learn and discuss new educational strategies which can then be integrated within courses and across sections. One goal of these exercises, which can be conducted in-person or virtually, is to create a safe space to explore and implement equitable teaching strategies while allowing vulnerability and honesty about the experience.<sup>9</sup>

- **Review the Standing Committee’s Guide to Law Student Wellness and Well-Being**

The Law Student Guide aims to highlight resources, tips, and practices that law students can utilize to improve their wellness, well-being and success in law school. Many of these resources are not only applicable to law students, but also faculty, staff, and administrators. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the Law Student Guide and to encourage your students to review it as well.

### Part III. Strategies for Cultivating a Culture of Well-Being

You are likely wondering what can you do in your role as faculty, staff, and/or administrator to promote a culture of well-being at your law school. This section will explore some of the tangible and intentional strategies you can employ to prioritize the well-being of law students at your institution. These approaches are not linear – there is no single answer to problems of well-being. Rather, these strategies are overlapping and additive; they complement one another, and some will work better than others in certain circumstances and environments.

#### Strategy 1. Address Students’ Fundamental Needs

- If we want to achieve equity in the profession and adequately train new lawyers, the first place to start is by **ensuring that all students’ fundamental physiological**

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<sup>8</sup> Etienne & Beverly Wenger-Trayner, *Communities of Practice: A Brief Introduction* (2015), <https://wenger-trayner.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/07-Brief-introduction-to-communities-of-practice.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> The Association of American Law Schools, *An Interdisciplinary Approach to Professional Identity Formation*, YOUTUBE (June 15, 2022), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rs9zPF9rjv4>.

**needs are met.** This concept is especially salient in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, during which so many have lost housing, jobs, and loved ones.

- The responsibility of self-care cannot only be placed on the shoulders of an individual but must be extended to other spheres within an institution. As Professor Sarah Schendel describes in *The Pandemic Syllabus*,<sup>10</sup> including a “basic needs statement” in a syllabus can demonstrate your institution’s acknowledgment of the well-being challenges that some students face and provide an opportunity to give essential resources to students in need. The implementation of basic needs policies in various settings beyond the classroom is in already in place in institutions such as the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law.<sup>11</sup> In addition to addressing housing and food, consider other aspects of a students’ home that could impact learning (e.g., sleep, caretaking, finances). (See Appendix D for an example of a “basic needs statement”).
- **Support for students’ basic needs** during the schoolyear should dovetail with support for exam and bar studies. Many students who work full-time jobs or otherwise have outside responsibilities are at a significant disadvantage when preparing for regular exams and the bar.
- Schools should consider **offering funds or grants to help support students during bar study** if such a structure is not already in place. At least one Massachusetts law school includes in their tuition the cost of the Barbri course, thus ensuring that all students have access to the same program.
- Administrators should **prioritize the accessibility and transparency of resources** that contribute to student success. Beyond simply featuring resources on a website, identify whether there are student support systems that you can incorporate into the daily operations of your department/area. These might include: regular student newsletters, financial aid workshops, alumni/ae programming, outside funding opportunities, highlighting loan forgiveness programs, worksheets on how to access SNAP benefits or other forms of government assistance as law students, an FAQ page specifically for law students in on-campus housing, resources for students that are ineligible for federal aid, a

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<sup>10</sup> S. Schendel, *The Pandemic Syllabus*, DENVER L. REV. FORUM Vol. 98 (2020), available at: <https://www.denverlawreview.org/dlr-online-article/pandemicsyllabus>.

<sup>11</sup> The Association of American Law Schools, *Well-Being Offerings*, YOUTUBE (July 27, 2022), [https://youtu.be/OT\\_FXuIm2CE](https://youtu.be/OT_FXuIm2CE).

repository of local or community-based resources that are provided at low or no cost to law students, etc. Consider how you can ensure that resources are available and accessible before a student is in urgent need of support, and especially for particularly vulnerable or historically underserved law students. These questions should guide law schools' commitment to addressing students' needs.

## Strategy 2. Encourage Self-Care/Repair

- After putting your own oxygen mask on, it is time to help put on the oxygen masks of your students. With less stigma around discussing mental health and self-care in recent years, many students are increasingly open to new activities and ideas to help improve their well-being. As faculty, staff, and/or administrators, you can provide resources and examples.<sup>12</sup>
- Consider **publicizing and repeatedly reminding students of a listing of free resources offered by the law school, broader college/university or other local organizations.** For example, see Appendix A for a sample form list of resources available to students at a particular school that could easily be provided to every faculty member as a reference. 1L orientation events are excellent settings to introduce the availability of such resources. You might include school-provided counseling and psychiatric care, peer support groups, student support and diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging resources, meditation and mindfulness apps and programs, free yoga and other exercise programs, and schoolwide clubs and events. Many schools began offering the Headspace app to their communities shortly after COVID-19 shutdowns began.
- **Modeling well-being behaviors** can be effective in encouraging students to practice self-care. Students *need* to trust their educators and administrators. For this to happen, institutional leaders need to show students that they are worthy of that trust and rapport. Being an authentic institutional leader can help break down power dynamics and barriers by demonstrating genuine care for the students and validation of the issues they face. Through sharing your own challenges and how you've sought to address them, you model to students that they too can be their authentic selves and get the help they need to succeed.

## Strategy 3. Recognize Students in Distress and Know Where to Refer Them

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<sup>12</sup> B. Clarke, *Coming out in the classroom: Law Professors, Law Students and Depression*, 64 J. LEGAL ED. 403 (Feb. 2015), available at: <https://jle.aals.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1029&context=home>.

- It is not enough to tell students that resources exist to support their well-being. **Faculty, staff, and administrators need to be trained to identify students who may be in serious distress**, how to help them get support, and be confident that they have the skills to successfully intervene when to support a student in crisis.
- Faculty, staff, and administrators do not need to be licensed mental health professionals to solve student problems; they do need to know what to do when supporting a student in need. This may be as simple as validating for a student that asking for help is not a sign of weakness, but a necessity for their success and ability to thrive.
- **Students from underrepresented backgrounds often navigate additional stressors beyond those experienced by peers outside these groups.** Recognizing when students from marginalized and underrepresented backgrounds may be experiencing individual or communal trauma due to public events (such as the killing of George Floyd) or even issues or cases covered by your course materials (such as sexual assault survivors struggling when discussing cases relating to events similar to those they may have experienced) is critical to supporting the well-being of these students, and ultimately, promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in the profession.
- If you refer a student to a well-being resource, it is important to ask the student if they are comfortable with you following up with them. If they are, make sure to do so in a timely manner. If they are not, you should let them know that they are more than welcome to reach out to you for a check-in in the future. **Administrators should provide and ensure that each faculty member has access to a quick reference guide, including a list of well-being and mental health-related resources available to students (see, e.g., Appendix A).**
- In the best of all cases, a student will take the initiative to seek out help from faculty, staff, or administrators. This is more likely to happen if you take the time to get to know your students and build rapport so that they feel comfortable reaching out to you for support. Further, hearing about your own personal well-being challenges can help reduce stigma that often acts as a barrier to seeking and receiving help.
- Various methods can be used to develop deeper relationships with students. For example, at Florida International University Law, Professor of Legal Skills &

Values and Director of Well-Being in Law Rosario Lozada has her students engage in countercultural exercises that can be incorporated within and outside of the classroom. One of them, called “At My Best,” involves positive psychology and asks students to write about a time when they were at their best, or at a time when they felt fulfilled, content, or in a state of flow. Crucially, feedback is then given on each submission, and after some time passes, students are asked to take a personal strengths test using the VIA Survey of Character Strengths. In class, students then have an opportunity to share and discuss their survey results with each other, and then reflect alone vis-a-vis their “at my best” narrative. Exercises that include professor feedback simultaneously help professors better understand their students and give students an opportunity to consider their possible paths in the law.<sup>13</sup>

BAR ADMISSION NOTE: Faculty, staff, and administrators should be aware that some students may avoid seeking help for fear that it will negatively affect their bar admission. Kandace Kukas ([info@bbe.state.ma.us](mailto:info@bbe.state.ma.us)), Executive Director of the Massachusetts Board of Bar Examiners, and/or Barbara Bowe ([barbarab@lclma.org](mailto:barbarab@lclma.org)) at Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of Massachusetts, regularly advise students and faculty, staff, and administrators on character and fitness issues. We encourage faculty, staff, and administrators to reach out directly to Kandace and/or Barbara for assistance and to refer students directly. Most importantly, you should encourage law students to get the help they need.

#### Strategy 4. Seek Additional Education, Training, and Discussion

- For faculty, staff, and administrators to recognize and support students in distress, it is important that they **receive ongoing training on the subject**. That goes for all areas of equity- and inclusion-centered student support.
- Administrators can and should **encourage University/College leadership to provide regular and mandatory training on well-being-related topics**, such as those described previously in this guide. In addition to well-being practices described above, workshop topics might include unconscious bias and anti-racism, inclusive practices, cultural competency, allyship, microaggressions and upstander advocacy, systemic inequity and intersectionality.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The Association of American Law Schools, *An Interdisciplinary Approach to Professional Identity Formation*, YOUTUBE (June 15, 2022), <https://youtu.be/rs9zPF9rjv4>.

<sup>14</sup> Issues relating to diversity, equity and inclusion have a dramatic impact on the well-being of students at all points of their journey through and beyond legal education. As such, it is essential to advocate for

- Additionally, administrators should **provide faculty and staff with both required and supplemental practices for how to incorporate well-being into curricula, course design, and other law school programming.** Providing education and training on areas such as well-being practices, responses to systemic racism, economic inequity, gender inequity, and inclusivity will help empower faculty to address these issues in their own classrooms.
- Such reflective work, in turn, allows **educators to better intervene in the case of classroom microaggressions** while facilitating the deconstruction and active mitigation of any biased micro- or macro-aggressions that educators may be perpetuating themselves.
- **Consider establishing monthly or quarterly opportunities for faculty to meet and discuss equity-related challenges they have encountered** – instead of solely establishing these opportunities following moments of crisis like those in the Summer of 2020. Further, consider forming groups for faculty, staff, and administrators to share student concerns. Such spaces could potentially be facilitated by a mental health professional to discuss any mental health issues that might arise. Our support for students must be long-term, intentional, and structural.

### Strategy 5. Adapt Your Teaching to Promote Well-Being

- **You have the opportunity to directly impact law school culture.** This begins with your syllabus and course design. In her paper *The Pandemic Syllabus*,<sup>15</sup> Suffolk

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structural change reflecting the importance of DEI in any attempt to improve well-being in the legal profession. See, e.g., “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement,” Mass. Supreme Judicial Court Standing Committee on Lawyer Well-Being (Dec. 2020), available at <https://lawyerwellbeingma.org/dei-statement>; Open Letter from Georgetown University Law Center Black Faculty (Mar. 2021), available at: <https://taxprof.typepad.com/files/georgetown-black-faculty-statement.pdf> (“We are deeply concerned that our Black students will (rationally) spend their time worried that their law professors may hold white supremacist viewpoints. Many will preemptively strategize how and in what ways to approach faculty who in fact are employed to educate and promote their well-being. They will worry if their class performance will be assessed through a racialized lens. Responding to anti-Black racism and bias regularly consumes our Black law students’ time and energy. It is demoralizing, and it is unfair. They deserve the same opportunities as other students to pursue excellence.”); A. Coronado, “Report on the State of BIPOC at Northeastern University School of Law,” Commissioned by the Committee Against Institutional Racism at Northeastern University School of Law (Sept. 2020).

<sup>15</sup> See Footnote 3 above.

University Law School Assistant Professor of Academic Support, Sarah Schendel, offers a range of ideas for inclusion in law school syllabi. Some of these include:

- **Set an inclusive and collaborative tone.** Writing in a “friendly” tone, which “evoke[s] perceptions of the instructor being more warm, more approachable, and more motivated to teach the course.” Using inclusive language such as “we” rather than “you” and “I” helps decrease the power dynamic and lends to a more collaborative environment.
- **Explain how you’d like students to address you, including your pronouns and name.** This includes asking how your students would like to be addressed and welcoming (but not requiring) them to share their pronouns.<sup>16</sup> Including your pronouns “helps make your classroom more welcoming for any trans, nonbinary, or gender nonconforming students.” Request that students provide you and other classmates their pronouns and ask for the pronunciation of their names. Asking for pronunciation rather than avoiding saying their name will help certain students feel included.<sup>17</sup>
- **Be clear about your attendance policy.** Encourage students to reach out to you if they experience challenges and discuss what options are available to them.
- **Explain your expectations for participation and considering alternative options.** As the COVID-19 pandemic continues (and moving forward), think about whether students need to have their cameras on as some students may not be comfortable sharing their surroundings. If you plan to cold call, provide students with that expectation. Consider different methods to support and facilitate participation by all students.

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<sup>16</sup> The current recommended phrasing of this would be to state “my pronouns are...” or to ask, “what are your pronouns?” Previously, organizations would ask for individuals’ “preferred pronouns,” but that practice has been criticized for implying that pronouns are simply a preference, and not a critical component of gender identity.

<sup>17</sup> On a systemic level, rather than putting this burden on individual professors, law school administrators should consider asking students to add their name pronunciations and pronouns to their student records, and then automatically adding this information to seating charts printed for professors. This may require collaboration and advocacy by faculty with academic affairs or other relevant law school offices, along with intentional collaboration with the school’s LGBTQIA2S+ student group before anything like this is finalized.

- **Include a basic needs and mental health statement** (See Appendix D). This demonstrates your commitment to their well-being and encourages students to reach out if they need help.
- **Incorporate a diversity statement** that provides for respect of opinions, perspectives, and experiences, but clearly states that racism and bias have no place in your classroom's discourse (See Appendix D). Include language supportive of anti-racist pedagogy, in addition to recognition of stress and trauma that historically underrepresented students face.
- **Consider Unintended Consequences of Certain Practices.** Incorporating mid-terms, essay or journal projects, and even class participation into students' evaluations/grades can remove a significant amount of the unhelpful stress placed on them by entirely basing their performance on one end-of-term examination. As another example, consider the 24- or 48-hour take-home exam. While a professor may think that this is a favorable structure that grants students the time they need, many students will likely wind up working on the exam for the full 24 or 48 hours without sleeping. In addition, consider the timing of your deadlines. Early morning deadlines or deadlines at midnight encourage students to stay up late or all night to complete work. It may ease students' stress to acknowledge that no assignment or exam administration format will work perfectly for all students in a given class and to issue reminders regarding your availability and student self-care during exam periods.
- **Consider how non-faculty members can be involved in integrating well-being into student affairs.** For example, at Wake Forest University School of Law, the 1L professional development course is taught by members of the career office.<sup>18</sup> There is value in having career services professionals as instructors due to their involvement in both academia and the legal profession. The course is one credit and students receive a letter grade that is not factored into their GPA, an arrangement that ensures student engagement without putting their overall standing at risk. The course has three primary components: understanding the profession, professional identity formation, and job search skills. The professional identity portion consists of self-assessment; well-being and mental health; emotional intelligence; and cross-cultural competency. Tools such as the [CliftonStrengths Assessment](#), [Attorney Assessment](#), and [LawFit](#) are utilized to

give students a starting point for self-reflection. In addition, critical concepts regarding diversity, well-being, and resilience are communicated through creative methods such as hypotheticals, reframing, and community-based storytelling and podcasts.

- See Appendix C for additional tips and strategies for developing and implementing well-being-centered pedagogy.

#### Strategy 6. Create a Student Well-Being Committee

- Some law schools may have student organizations or initiatives that are dedicated to student well-being. A Student Well-Being Committee, in any form, is important for its multiple benefits to an institution, but **we recommend creating a standing committee that is comprised of students, faculty, and administrators, with specific representation from the school’s law student affinity groups**. It is extremely important that these opportunities are compensated either through work study, academic credit, and/or funding – we cannot promote well-being while failing to ensure our student leaders are supported and fairly rewarded for their advocacy, labor and time spent supporting the school as a whole. For example, at Fordham University School of Law, upper-level students are hired to support 1Ls as Student Professionalism Fellows and receive a stipend for their year in service.<sup>19</sup>
- Such a committee can **host well-being events, provide resources to students, and help to reduce stigma around responding to mental distress**. This can help structurally bridge gaps between students and administration. Members of this group may be well-suited to participate in meetings with the Dean of Student Services to share information and struggles of students in an anonymous way.

#### Strategy 7. Offer or Require Well-Being-Related Courses

More and more U.S. law schools are offering well-being related courses. This trend indicates the growing prioritization of wellness and well-being within the legal profession. As an example, Suffolk Law School, currently the only law school in Massachusetts that has adopted the ABA well-being pledge,<sup>20</sup> offered a

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<sup>19</sup> The Association of American Law Schools, *1L Professional Identity Formation*, YOUTUBE (June 7, 2022), <https://youtu.be/nMRZyOu6deo>.

<sup>20</sup> As of the date of this Guide, the following law schools have signed the ABA’s Well-Being Pledge: American University Washington College of Law, Ave Maria School of Law, Benjamin N. Cardozo School

pilot first-year course in 2021-22 for credit in well-being, professionalism, and inclusion.<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, Western New England University School of Law has instituted a requirement that all students satisfactorily complete at least one Anti-Racism and Cultural Competency course before graduating.<sup>22</sup> A few other examples of these types of courses include:

- Business Law from an Antiracist Perspective  
*Bob Statchen, Western New England University School of Law*
- Contemplative Lawyering  
*Deborah Calloway, University of Connecticut School of Law*
- Contemplative Lawyering  
*Rhonda Magee, University of San Francisco*
- Critical Lawyering Skills  
*Thiadora Pina, Santa Clara University School of Law*
- Critical Race Theory  
*Bridgette Baldwin, Western New England University School of Law*
- Effective and Sustainable Law Practice: The Meditative Perspective  
*Charles Halpern, Berkeley Law*

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of Law, FIU College of Law, Fordham University School of Law, Gonzaga University School of Law, Howard University School of Law, Loyola Law School - Loyola Marymount University Los Angeles, Loyola University Chicago School of Law, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law, Regent University School of Law, Rutgers Law School, Santa Clara University School of Law, S.J. Quinney College of Law, Southwestern Law School, Suffolk University Law School, UIC John Marshall Law School, UC Irvine School of Law, University of Cincinnati College of Law, University of Connecticut School of Law, University of Idaho College of Law, University of Maine School of Law, University of Miami School of Law, University of Michigan Law School, University of Minnesota Law School, University of Mississippi School of Law, University of San Diego School of Law, University of St. Thomas School of Law (MN), USC Gould School of Law, University of Toledo College of Law, University of Tulsa College of Law, Vanderbilt Law School, and West Virginia University College of Law. *See*, [https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer\\_assistance/well-being-in-the-legal-profession/](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/well-being-in-the-legal-profession/).

<sup>21</sup> *Course Offerings*, SUFFOLK UNIV. L. SCH., <https://www.suffolk.edu/law/academics-clinics/juris-doctor/course-offerings> (last visited Aug. 18, 2022).

<sup>22</sup> *See*, Western New England University, "School of Law Adds Race-Related Coursework Requirement for Graduation" (May 17, 2021), available at: <https://www1.wne.edu/news/2021/05/law-arcc-requirement.cfm>.

- Emotional Intelligence  
*William Blatt, University of Miami School of Law*
- Emotional Intelligence in Law  
*Richard Reuben, University of Missouri School of Law*
- Law and Social Change  
*Harris Freeman, Western New England University School of Law*
- Law Practice Planning: Law as a Career and an Enterprise  
*Lisle Baker, Suffolk Law School*
- Legal Skills and Values, Professional Identity and Well-Being Practices, Professional Responsibility, and Mindfulness and the Law  
*Rosario Lozada, Florida International University Law*
- Leadership and Character Strengths  
*Lisle Baker, Suffolk Law School*
- Mindful Lawyering  
*Lynn Boepple Su, New York Law School*
- Mindfulness and Contemplative Practices for Lawyers  
*Filippa Anzalone, Boston College School of Law*
- Mindfulness and Professional Identity  
*Angela Harris, UC Davis School of Law*
- Professional Identity  
*Aric Short, Texas A&M University School of Law*
- Professional Development  
*Judith Gordon and Ken Klee, UCLA School of Law*
- Professionalism and Well-Being Skills for the Effective Lawyer  
*Debra Austin, University of Denver Sturm College of Law*
- The Law and Your Life: Aligning Personal Values with the Practice of Law / Fundamentals of Thriving in the Law  
*John Hollway, University of Pennsylvania School of Law*
- Tools of Awareness for Lawyering Course (a.k.a. Conflict Management in the Legal Profession)  
*Len Riskin, University of Florida School of Law*

## Strategy 8. Provide Other Law School Programming

Outside of full course offerings, law schools can offer many other programs to demonstrate, encourage, and promote well-being. Some examples of these include:

- **Host** regular programs featuring bar leaders, law school leaders, and/or young lawyers that center on law school experiences and challenges, their own personal and professional challenges, and strategies for achieving success while managing stress, anxiety, and/or depression.
- **Coordinate** programs on mental health and well-being with local lawyer assistance programs. For schools in Massachusetts, reach out to Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of Massachusetts (<https://www.lclma.org>).
- **Host** regular programs and town halls on cultural competency, systemic racism, LGBTQ and gender inclusion, and other identity-based topics. Provide transparency on tangible and measurable actions that are being taken as a result of such events.
- **Compensate** students with credit or funding for time they spend working to improve well-being or diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging issues at the school.
- **Celebrate** and program around October 10<sup>th</sup>, National Mental Health Day (<https://abaforlawstudents.com/events/initiatives-and-awards/mental-health-resources/>).
- **Celebrate** and program around July, BIPOC Mental Health Month (<https://www.mhanational.org/BIPOC-mental-health-month>).
- **Celebrate** and program around Well-Being Week in Law (<https://lawyerwellbeing.net/lawyer-well-being-week>).
- **Ask** state, regional, and affinity bar associations to provide programming and opportunities for students (e.g., presentations, networking, and mentorship)<sup>23</sup>
- **Train** students in providing peer support and create paid peer support student positions
- **Offer** student support groups on certain topics, or collaborate with LCL to do so
- **Offer** listening sessions or town halls to hear from students

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<sup>23</sup> See, e.g., The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: A Toolkit for Bar Associations in Massachusetts, Mass. Bar Association & SJC Standing Committee on Lawyer Well-Being (Feb. 2021), available at: <https://www.massbar.org/docs/default-source/wellbeing/mbawellbeingtoolkit.pdf>.

- **Circulate** annual experience and climate surveys, and ensure follow up on the results of such surveys
- **Provide** on-site or in-university counseling by health services, lawyer assistance programs, or private providers
- **Create** a fund for basic financial needs and needs of students
- **Host** career fairs for alternative and non-traditional legal careers and encourage career services offices to identify and communicate the application timelines typically associated with different career paths.

## Appendix A: Sample Wellness and Well-Being Resource Sheet for Law School Faculty, Staff and Administrators

### **Mental Health and Counseling**

- *School-Provided Resources:* [Insert 1-3 sentences about law school-specific and/or college/university mental health and counseling resources available to law students. Confirm whether information disclosed in these sessions is as confidential as external counseling, or if it can be used with respect to the student's academic career in any way.]
  - Website: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- *Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of Massachusetts* – Provides free and confidential mental health, addiction and recovery, career and practice management support and resources, as well as law student support groups.
  - Website: <http://lclma.org>
  - Phone Number: 617-482-9600
  - Helpline: 1-800-525-0210
  - Email: [email@lclma.org](mailto:email@lclma.org)
- *Local Hospitals:* [Insert information about local hospitals that offer in-patient and outpatient services.]
- *National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Massachusetts* – Provides information and resources to help people diagnosed with mental health conditions and their families, including education trainings, peer support groups, and resources to navigate the mental health system and related systems of care (called Compass).
  - Website: <https://namimass.org>
  - Phone Number: 617-580-8541
  - Compass Helpline: 1-800-370-9085
  - Email: [info@namimass.org](mailto:info@namimass.org)
- *National Suicide Prevention Lifeline* – Provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals.
  - Helpline: 1-800-273-8255
- *SafeLink Massachusetts* – Statewide toll-free domestic violence hotline.

- Helpline: 1-877-785-2020
- *Samaritans of Boston* – Provides 24/7 crisis services via call and text; grief support services; and community education and outreach.
  - Website: <https://samaritanshope.org>
  - Helpline: (877) 870-4673 (call or text)
  - Email: [info@samaritanshope.org](mailto:info@samaritanshope.org)

### **Student Support Services**

- If students have questions about issues relating to accessibility, academic support (including accommodations), Title IX, or personal/medical emergencies, refer them to the Dean of Students’ office.
  - Website: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- If students believe they have experienced or witnessed<sup>24</sup> instances of bias/discrimination, or microaggressions relating to any aspect of their or another student’s identity, refer them to the [Diversity Office / Dean of Students’ office].
  - Website: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Well-Being & Stress Management**

- [Insert 1-3 sentences about trainings, programs, and events hosted by the law school addressing these topics. These could include mindfulness sessions, yoga, resilience/stress management trainings, positive psychology workshops, trainings on dealing with incidents of bias/discrimination, etc.]
  - [If the school has a website listing out these resources, include the link here.]
  - [If the school has a Committee or Office specifically addressing well-being, include its contact information here.]
- *Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Standing Committee on Lawyer Well-Being* – Provides various resources, training, and programming, and develops various

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<sup>24</sup> Encouraging students who witness potentially biased behavior to report such incidents helps create a culture of upstander advocacy, where the burden of reporting does not continually fall on students from systemically oppressed populations.

initiatives to support law student and lawyer well-being in MA. Does not provide direct counseling services.

- Website: <http://lawyerwellbeingma.org>. Sign up on this page for regular updates.
- Phone Number: 617-865-5777
- Email: [Heidi@lawyerwellbeingma.org](mailto:Heidi@lawyerwellbeingma.org)

## Appendix B: Additional Resources to Promote Law Student Wellness and Well-Being

Below is a glossary of resources that can aid in our cultivation of well-being within the legal profession. Click on each resource to be directed to the respective paper, toolkit, or website. You may also visit the Committee's [webpage, https://lawyerwellbeingma.org/research-reports-news](https://lawyerwellbeingma.org/research-reports-news), to access a regularly updated compilation of research, reports, and news on well-being in the legal profession.

### **Reports, Toolkits, & Organizations**

[Click Here](#) – National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being - The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change

[Click Here](#) – Report of Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Steering Committee on Lawyer Well-Being

[Click Here](#) – ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs (CoLAP) - Resources for Law Students and Law Schools

[Click Here](#) – Association of American Law Schools - Law Deans Antiracist Clearinghouse Project

[Click Here](#) – Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Standing Committee on Lawyer Well-Being – Report Summarizing Affinity Bar Town Hall Meetings

[Click Here](#) – ABA Substance Use and Mental Health Toolkit for Law School Students and Those Who Care About Them

[Click Here](#) – Massachusetts Bar Association – The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: A Toolkit for Bar Associations in Massachusetts

[Click Here](#) – Institute for Well-Being in Law

[Click Here](#) – American Bar Association Presidential Working Group - Well-Being Toolkit Nutshell: 80 Tips For Lawyer Thriving

[Click Here](#) – The National Association of Law Student Affairs Professionals (NALSAP)

[Click Here](#) – Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Standing Committee on Lawyer Well-Being

[Click Here](#) – Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE) Survey

[Click Here](#) – Suffolk Center for Teaching and Scholar Excellence

[Click Here](#) – Boston College Center for Teaching Excellence

[Click Here](#) – Clifton Strengths Assessment

[Click Here](#) – Attorney Assessment

[Click Here](#) – LawFit

[Click Here](#) – VIA Survey of Character Strengths

### **Podcasts & Webinars**

[Click Here](#) – *Path to Law Student Well-Being Podcast Series*, AM. BAR ASS'N.

[Click Here](#) – *ABA Law Student Podcast*, LEGAL TALK NETWORK.

[Click Here](#) – Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program, *Just Ask: How We Must Stop Minding Our Own Business in the Legal World*, YOUTUBE (June 28, 2021).

[Click Here](#) – ABA Law Student Division & ABA COLAP Law School Committee, *Protecting Well-Being in Law School and in the Transition to Law Practice*, YOUTUBE (Oct. 7, 2021).

[Click Here](#) – *Section Webinars*, ASS'N. AM. L. SCH.

### **Research, Scholarly Articles, and Books**

[Click Here](#) – Bryan Adamson, Lisa Brodoff, Marilyn Berger, Anne Enquist, Paula Lustbader, John B. Mitchell & John M. Mitchell, *Can the Professor Come Out and Play? – Scholarship, Teaching, and Theories of Play*, 58 J. LEGAL EDUC. 481 (2008).

[Click Here](#) – JUSTIN ANKER & PATRICK R. KRILL, *STRESS, DRINK, LEAVE: AN EXAMINATION OF GENDER-SPECIFIC RISK FACTORS FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AND ATTRITION AMONG LICENSED ATTORNEYS* (Osama Ali Abulseoud, ed., 2021).

[Click Here](#) – Tiffany Atkins, *Amplifying Diverse Voices: Strategies for Promoting Inclusion in the Law School Classroom*, in 31 LEGAL WRITING INST., THE SECOND DRAFT 10 (2018).

- [Click Here](#) – Tiffany Atkins, *#Fortheculture: Generation Z and the Future of Legal Education*, 26 MICH. J. RACE & L. 115 (2020).
- [Click Here](#) – HEIDI K. BROWN, *THE FLOURISHING LAWYER: A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL APPROACH TO PERFORMANCE AND WELL-BEING* (ABA Book Publishing 2022).
- [Click Here](#) – Jill Carnell, *An Introduction to the Brahmavihāras: For Lawyers, Law Students, & Judicial Officers*, in LESLEY UNIV. GRADUATE SCH. OF ARTS AND SOC. SCIENCES, *MINDFULNESS STUDIES THESES* (2021).
- [Click Here](#) – Christine Charnosky, *'There Are Long-Term Consequences': Why Improving Mental Health in the Legal Profession Must Begin in Law School*, LAW.COM (Apr. 18, 2022, 11:24 AM).
- [Click Here](#) – TIFFANE COCHRAN, KELSEY RISMAN, NANCY CONNEELY, CHRISTOPHER KEENAN, JOSHUA JACKSON & DOMONIQUE EDWARDS, *STUDENT DEBT: THE HOLISTIC IMPACT ON TODAY'S YOUNG LAWYER* (2021).
- [Click Here](#) – Jordana Alter Confino, *Where Are We on the Path to Law Student Well-Being?: Report on the ABA CoLAP Law Student Assistance Committee Law School Wellness Survey*, 68 J. LEGAL EDUC. 650 (2019).
- [Click Here](#) – Lisle Baker, *Designing a Positive Psychology Course for Lawyers*, 51 SUFFOLK L. REV. 207 (2018).
- [Click Here](#) – Lisle Baker, *Integrating Positive Psychology into Legal Education*, 48 SOUTHWESTERN L. REV. 295 (2019).
- [Click Here](#) – Lisle Baker & Daniel P. Brown, *On Engagement: Learning to Pay Attention*, 36 U. ARK. LITTLE ROCK L. REV. 348 (2014).
- [Click Here](#) – Alyssa Dragnich, *Have You Ever...? How State Bar Association Inquiries into Mental Health Violate the Americans with Disabilities Act*, 80 BROOKLYN L. REV. 677 (2015).
- [Click Here](#) – Mary W. Fitzpatrick & Rosemary Queenan, *Professional Identity Formation, Leadership and Exploration of Self*, UMKC L. REV. (forthcoming Dec. 2020).

- [Click Here](#) – Nisha C. Gottfredson, A. T. Panter, Charles E. Daye, Walter T. Allen, Linda F. Wightman & Meera E. Deo, *Identifying Predictors of Law Student Satisfaction*, 58 J. LEGAL EDUC. 520 (2008).
- [Click Here](#) – SHAWN HEALY & JEFFREY FORTGANG, THE FULL WEIGHT OF THE LAW: HOW LEGAL PROFESSIONALS CAN RECOGNIZE AND REBOUND FROM DEPRESSION (2017).
- [Click Here](#) – INT’L BAR ASSOC., MENTAL WELL-BEING IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION: A GLOBAL STUDY (2021).
- [Click Here](#) – David Jaffe, Katherine Bender & Jerome M. Organ, 'It is Okay to Not Be Okay': The 2021 Survey of Law Student Well-Being, U. LOUISVILLE L. REV. (forthcoming June 2022).
- [Click Here](#) – HANNAH JELLINEK, SOUND MIND, SOUND LEGAL EDUCATION: THE DISCONNECT BETWEEN LAW STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS AND ACCESS (2019).
- [Click Here](#) – Erin C. Lain, *Racialized Interactions in the Law School Classroom: Pedagogical Approaches to Creating a Safe Learning Environment*, 67 J. LEGAL EDUC. 780 (2018).
- [Click Here](#) – LAURA VAN DERNOOT LIPSKY & CONNIE BURK, TRAUMA STEWARDSHIP: AN EVERYDAY GUIDE TO CARING FOR SELF WHILE CARING FOR OTHERS (2009).
- [Click Here](#) – Rhonda V. Magee, *Mindfulness Plays Role in Educating Lawyers to Confront Racism*, ABA JOURNAL: MAGAZINE (Aug. 1, 2016, 2:20 AM).
- [Click Here](#) – Rhonda V. Magee, *The Way of ColorInsight: Understanding Race and Law Effectively Through Mindfulness-Based ColorInsight Practices*, 8 GEO. J. L. & MOD. CRITICAL RACE PERSP. 251 (2016).
- [Click Here](#) – Rhonda V. Magee, *Educating Lawyers to Meditate?*, 79 UMKC L. REV. 535 (2011).
- [Click Here](#) – EMILY NAGOSKI & AMELIA NAGOSKI, BURNOUT: THE SECRET TO UNLOCKING THE STRESS CYCLE (2020)

- [Click Here](#) – Jerome M. Organ, David B. Jaffe & Katherine M. Bender, *Helping Law Students Get the Help They Need: An Analysis of Data Regarding Law Students' Reluctance to Seek Help and Policy Recommendations for a Variety of Stakeholders*, 84 THE BAR EXAMINER 9 (2015).
- [Click Here](#) – Jerome M. Organ, David Jaffe & Katherine Bender, *Suffering in Silence: The Survey of Law Student Well-Being and the Reluctance of Law Students to Seek Help for Substance Use and Mental Health Concerns*, 66 J. LEGAL EDUC. 116 (2016).
- [Click Here](#) – Destiny Peery, Paulette Brown & Eileen Letts, LEFT OUT AND LEFT BEHIND: THE HURDLES, HASSLES, AND HEARTACHES OF ACHIEVING LONG-TERM CAREERS FOR WOMEN OF COLOR (2020).
- [Click Here](#) – Joshua E. Perry, *Thinking Like a Professional*, 58 J. LEGAL EDUC. 159 (2008).
- [Click Here](#) – Nancy B. Rapoport, *Training Law Students to Maintain Civility in their Law Practices as a Way to Improve Public Discourse*, 98 N.C. L. REV. 1143 (2020).
- [Click Here](#) – Hon. Paul Reiber & Bree Buchanan, *Change Is Coming: The Institute for Well-Being in Law Sets Out to Transform the Legal Profession*, 90 THE BAR EXAMINER 34 (2021).
- [Click Here](#) – Richard C. Reuben & Kennon M. Sheldon, *Can Mindfulness Help Law Students with Stress, Focus, And Well-Being? An Empirical Study of 1Ls At a Midwestern Law School* 48 SW. L. REV. 241 (2019).
- [Click Here](#) – Stephanie A. Scharf & Roberta D. Liebenberg, PRACTICING LAW IN THE PANDEMIC AND MOVING FORWARD: RESULTS AND BEST PRACTICES FROM A NATIONWIDE SURVEY OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION (2021).
- [Click Here](#) – Sarah Schendel, *Listen! Amplifying the Experiences of Black Law School Graduates in 2020*, 100 NEB. L. REV. 73 (2021).
- [Click Here](#) – Sarah Schendel, *The Pandemic Syllabus*, 98 DENVER L. REV. F. 1 (2020).
- [Click Here](#) – *Survey of Law Student Well-Being*, AM. BAR ASS'N: COMMISSION ON LAWYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (Mar. 30, 2020).

## Appendix C: Additional Resources for Wellness and Well-Being-Centered Law School Pedagogy

Other ideas for well-being-centered pedagogy might include the following:

- **Institute** a five-minute well-being check at the beginning of each class (or at least once a week).
- **Provide** weekly well-being strategies.
- **Avoid** emailing students outside of normal work hours.
- **Encourage** students to take breaks and time away from studies.
- **(Re)Consider** expectations of students - Do you take into account students who may be struggling? Do you draw a hard line on attendance or are there options for students to make up work? Do you provide opportunities for extension of deadlines when necessary?
- **Share** your own personal experiences and challenges within the legal profession.
- **Inform** students that some employers are now asking about well-being practices during job interviews.
- **Encourage** your students to ask employers about their well-being programs and initiatives during job interviews.
- **Consider** changes to grade structure (e.g., curves and ranking system) to encourage collaboration among students, instead of competition.
- **Review** whether you are preparing your students for the exams you are giving them.
- **Revisit** whether cold calling is the best practice for your classroom.

- **Revisit** exam hypotheticals to ensure a diversity of perspectives and to revise scenarios that are disparately harmful to particular student groups.
- **Remember** law students' names, name pronunciations and pronouns. It is extremely demoralizing and trust-breaking when professors misgender students or mix up students of the same race/ethnicity/identities.

## Appendix D: Sample Law School Syllabus Featuring Wellness and Well-Being Concepts

Below is a sample syllabus that demonstrates how educators might structurally prioritize well-being in the design of their courses. See also, Sarah Schendel Professional Responsibility Syllabus (available at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dGHhRHsemzzuRptdhF3aXnAPFm813EIZ/view?usp=sharing>) .

### **SAMPLE SYLLABUS: Technology and Law Practice**

Spring 2021, 2 Credits

Thursdays: 9-10:50a, Remote Only

Office Hours: By Appointment

Professor Heidi Alexander (she/her/hers)

### **Course Description**

This course will introduce you to the technological tools of law practice. Together we will explore real world-applications of technology to improve efficiencies in practice, provide better client service, and help improve access to justice. We will also discover how these technologies are envisioned and developed. In addition to hands-on learning and sampling specific tools, we will also explore how technology has and will continue to transform law practice, including evolving technological concepts such as automation, artificial intelligence, blockchain, and big data; and how lawyers play an important role in the evolution and implementation of technology in law. Integrated into all topics will be discussions around issues arising from the use of technology, including ethics, privacy and security, distraction management, as well as connections between diversity, equity, and inclusion and technology.

### **Course Materials**

You do not need to purchase a textbook for this course. All course materials can be found on TWEN. I will post readings and assignments to TWEN on a regular basis.

### **Your Well-Being**

I value your well-being as a law student and human being. Law school can be a very stressful experience, so can lawyering. You can start now to build your toolkit now to help you manage stress, build resilience, take care of yourself, and ultimately thrive as you become a lawyer. I will encourage you to practice routine self-care and to reach out if and when you need help, are feeling anxious, stressed, or discouraged, or are worried about a fellow classmate. Furthermore, to learn effectively you must have basic security: a roof over your head, a safe place to sleep, enough food to eat. I am always available to chat about course-related and non-course related topics (you can email me at [heidi.alexander@wne.edu](mailto:heidi.alexander@wne.edu) or book a meeting with me via <https://calendly.com/heidialexander/meeting>. If you need additional help, you should reach out to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs, the [WNEU Counseling Center](#) or [Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers](#), a free and confidential service for law students and lawyers. There is NO shame in seeking out help. You will be better off, more prepared, and resilient as a result.

### **Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. We will incorporate discussions on race, ethnicity, and gender as it touches technology throughout our course. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

### **Class Expectations and Evaluation**

As a general rule, I will require the use of your camera for class. We will all understand onscreen visitors and other unexpected interruptions (particularly from my home with three kids under the age of seven). If, for whatever reason, you don't feel comfortable on video, please let me know. Due to the nature of this class and the likelihood of a small group, I hope we will engage with one another during the class period. However, I will not cold call (since I don't believe that is an effective method in this course, plus I despised it the most during my law school experience). I will provide you with instructions for

how and what to prepare for each session so that you can come prepared to speak or use the chat accordingly.

Your grade will be based equally on class preparation, various projects, and in-class presentations.

### **Learning Outcomes**

My pedagogical goal is to help you develop the competencies and skills that will help you to build a meaningful, effective, and satisfying career. To that end, upon completion of the course, I will assess your achievement of the Learning Outcomes listed below. The Learning Outcomes for this course are selected from a list of seven determined by the faculty to be desirable for every student to master before completion of his or her legal study. A full list of WNEU approved Learning Outcomes can be found, [here](#), on the Law School website.

1. Demonstrate competence in problem-solving skills in the legal context. Assessed through assignments - readings, presentations, projects. In particular, a project on solving access to justice issues with technology.
2. Demonstrate competence in legal research and written and oral communication in the legal context/regarding legal matters. Assessed through a 2 presentations and multiple written products.
3. Demonstrate the exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system. Assessed through responses to readings and integration of professional and ethical responsibilities into presentations and papers.
4. Demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professionalism necessary for effective, ethical, and responsible participation as members of the legal profession in order to serve the public, the profession, and society/the community. These additional skills may include interviewing, counseling, negotiation, trial practice, document drafting, conflict resolution, organization and management of legal work, collaboration, cultural competency, and self-evaluation. Assessed through multiple presentations, written papers, team projects, consideration of community needs, and conversations and readings on cultural competency and awareness.
5. Be prepared to continue to develop professional skills and attributes. Assessed through verbal and written products, including questions, comments, and feedback by professors and students on student work.

## **Schedule of Meeting Times and Credit Hour Compliance**

We will meet Thursdays from 9 to 10:50am. In the event of an unexpected cancellation, I will either re-schedule the session with input from the class or require a make-up assignment to complete outside of scheduled class time before the last day of the semester.

This is a two-credit course, thus requiring 85 hours of work, including class time. You should expect to work 4-5 hours per week outside of class. Some weeks may be lighter than others and some weeks may be heavier when you are working on a project or preparing to give a presentation.

## **Attendance Policy**

This course will meet once a week. Attendance is expected at every class session. Consistent with law school and ABA policy, students must attend at least 80% of class sessions in order to be eligible for credit. In this course, that means that a student is subject to withdrawal after missing 2 classes.

I understand that you may need to miss a class or two during the semester. Please reach out to me to determine how to make up the class time. If you must miss more than 2 classes, please be in touch with me so that, if feasible, we can work out a solution to avoid withdrawal from the course.

## **WNEU Honor Code**

Plagiarism, which includes copying and pasting text from unattributed sources, is a violation of the Honor Code and will be penalized. A student who includes plagiarized text in either the draft or final assignment will fail the assignment and may be reported to the Honor Committee.

## **WEEKLY SYLLABUS**

**Class 1 (1/27): Introduction to Technology and Law Practice**

**Class 2 (2/3): Tech Competence**

**Class 3 (2/10): Trends**

**Class 4 (2/17): The Essentials - Core Competencies**

**Class 5 (2/24): Law Practice Management Technology**

**Class 6 (3/3): ABA TECHSHOW Week**

**Class 7 (3/10): Tech Show and Tell**

**NO CLASS 3/17: Spring Break**

**Class 8 (3/24): Transactional Technology**  
**Class 10 (3/31): eDiscovery and Trial Technology**  
**Class 11 (4/7): Automation and AI**  
**Class 12 (4/14): A2J and Technology**  
**Class 13 (4/21): Security**  
**Class 13 (4/28): A2J Presentations**

## Appendix E: Sample Email to Students Regarding Wellness

Below is a sample email that demonstrates how educators might prioritize well-being in the intention-setting and community expectations of their courses.

**Dear L&E Seminar Students:**

It's a new week, so a new wellness posting is up in the BB Wellness folder! This week's topic is the scientific benefits of practicing self-compassion. This is a really important one for folks in the legal profession. I've found that there is a fine line between self-criticism and self-care, especially in my current line of work where self-motivation is crucial. It's easy to get in the habit of tearing ourselves down. Take time to notice how often you do this. Then, see if you can change your perspective to be a little (or a LOT) more gentle in how you navigate feedback.

I posted two readings. The first offers some steps to follow to help with the perspective change. The second is an article that reviews the scientifically demonstrated benefits of engaging in self-compassion (I highlighted what I think are the main messages so you can zip through it). I'm making my way through Carol Dweck's book on growth mindset now – I highly recommend it.

Wishing you all a healthy and happy week, Prof Zeiler