

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO COLLEGE OF LAW
DIVERSITY PLAN (ABA STANDARD 211)

A Commitment to Educational Enrichment through Diversity and to
Full Equal Opportunity for Historically Under-Represented Groups in the Legal Profession

The University of Idaho College of Law is committed to enriching its program of education by promoting diversity among the students, faculty and staff at the College of Law, **and to** providing the fullest opportunities possible for the study of law and entry into the legal profession by qualified members of groups which have been victims of discrimination in various forms. This commitment to diversity and opportunity is supported by the understanding that 1) the training of legal professionals requires that students be exposed to, and understand, the varied and diverse perspectives represented in society; 2) the needs of a civil society governed by respect for the rule of law requires that society's leaders be prepared for the realities of a changing and dynamic society; 3) demographic realities demonstrate that heterogeneity will be the norm in society and compel the training of our students in an educational environment reflective of societal diversity; 4) students trained to meet new challenges posed by the increasing diversity of society will have greater job opportunities and will be better prepared to advance economic opportunity and economic justice for their clients; and 5) diversity in higher education has been recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court as a compelling state interest. *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 306 (2003). The University of Idaho also has made a commitment to diversity through its *Comprehensive Plan for Diversity and Human Rights* (2004), which provides for academic units to develop diversity plans appropriate to their needs and circumstances.

To fulfill its commitment, the College of Law will seek to attract qualified students, faculty and staff, who are broadly representative of the diverse society from which our students come, and into which they will graduate and practice, by undertaking the following actions:

1. STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION.

- Expand recruiting efforts at Idaho and regional recruiting events attended by qualified candidates from under-represented populations.
- Engage alumni and supporters among women, Native-American and Hispanic populations to develop outreach strategies for recruitment.
- Target groups such as sororities, and women's and minority business organizations for support in recruiting efforts.
- Employ more fully University resources such as the American Indian Studies Program, CAMP Program, Women's Center, and Disability Support Services in outreach and recruitment efforts.
- Identify and develop relationships with programs in our region and nation that focus on pre-legal education and training for women and minorities, such as the Council on Legal Education Opportunity, the Law and Diversity Program at Fairhaven College of Western Washington University, and the University of Texas-El Paso pre-law program.
- Develop and expand academic support services in the College with a

recognition of the particular needs for socialization in a small community and preparation for the rigors of law school which may be required of students from non-majority backgrounds.

- Continue and expand focused education and recruiting efforts such as Law School Admissions Council Diversity Awareness events, and other College-sponsored events designed to educate women and minorities about opportunities for legally trained professionals.
- Improve the climate of the College for women and minorities upon arrival at the law school, through pre-orientation socialization and academic preparation training.
- Provide support to diverse student organizations to permit recruitment and participation by minority students.
- Address such other unique needs of under-represented students as may require attention, such as particular debt counseling, and respond to other difficulties and hardships unique to non-majority members in a small community.

2. **ADMISSIONS DECISIONS.** As part of the admissions determination, the College of Law is committed to reviewing fully each application. Although quantitative measures such as the LSAT score and undergraduate grade point average remain important criteria for admission, considering their historic predictive validity for many students, the Admissions Committee will review each application for additional indicia of ability and success through careful consideration of each individual applicant's:

- writing samples
- recommendation letters
- life experiences reflected in the application and personal statements provided by the applicant
- and other non-quantitative measures that may be reflected in the entire application.

3. **CAREER SERVICES.** Provide opportunities for women and minority students to interact and network with employers by:

- expanding the number of employers who recruit on campus.
- increasing student attendance at job fairs and employer recruitment events focused on women and minority graduates.
- actively recruiting women and minority firms and employers to consider and hire our graduates.
- developing a "customer service" oriented placement program that engages students and increases student involvement and participation.

4. **FACULTY AND STAFF RECRUITMENT.** The College will engage actively in efforts to recruit, hire, and retain qualified faculty and staff from historically under-represented populations. The goal of such efforts shall be to assure that the College's faculty and staff encompass diverse backgrounds and perspectives more representative of society as a whole, thereby establishing an inclusive and welcoming climate for all members of the law school community.