



Strategic Plan 2025-2030

Rutgers Law School, New Jersey's flagship public law school, is dedicated to providing educational experiences of exceptional quality and value to a diverse student population. We shape a more equitable legal system in our surrounding communities, across New Jersey, and beyond. We pursue justice locally, nationally, and globally through the intellectual contributions and professional leadership of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

Mission

Rutgers Law School expands access to legal education, fosters academic excellence, and empowers students to practice with integrity, lead with purpose, and champion justice in New Jersey and beyond.

Values

- Dedicated to access and excellence
- Enriched by diversity and community
- Committed to innovation and scholarship
- Centered on justice

Goals

We will fulfill our mission by accomplishing six interrelated goals:

1. Expand our capacity as a national model for student access.
2. Provide exceptional student learning through a commitment to academic excellence.
3. Deepen our connections with our communities through our clinical programs, commitment to social justice, and strategic partnerships.
4. Promote an ambitious culture of scholarly inquiry leading to high-quality and meaningful scholarship.
5. Establish a robust culture of community, collaboration, and connection.
6. Develop effective operational structures, practices, and resources to support all aspects of our mission.

Provisional strategies and tactics for accomplishing the six goals above are conveyed on the following pages, as are detailed measures of our success for each goal.

Goal 1: Expand our capacity as a national model for student access.

Rutgers Law School has a proud tradition of breaking down barriers to legal education and empowering students to build successful legal careers. We build on our long history of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in legal education and the legal profession. This history is reflected in our continuing commitment to serving first-generation students and championing our [Minority Student Program](#) (MSP). We create meaningful opportunities for our students to excel in legal education and the legal profession, and we strive to meet the needs of each learner.

Strategies:

- Expand our recruitment pipeline and our holistic approach to admissions by:
 - Expanding support for MSP and our pipeline efforts for prospective law students from disadvantaged and underserved communities;
 - Examining best practices to develop programs that build off of previous success and leverage innovative practices in the field;
 - Increasing our outreach efforts to middle school and secondary school populations;
 - Increasing the number of articulation agreements with Minority Serving Institutions, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities;
 - Conducting additional interviews in our admission process;
 - Increasing scholarship funding for students; and
 - Raising awareness of our successful access, recruitment, and admissions efforts among RLS students, across RU, and with the public at large.
- Ensure access to an educational experience that will serve and support all learners by:
 - Developing and launching a 1L course for all students that helps them transition to law school and ensure they begin their studies with the necessary skills and dispositions to support their success;
 - Implementing a robust academic support program open to all RLS students;
 - Ensuring ADA accommodations are excellent and fully accessible to all students who need them;
 - Providing opportunities for training for faculty and staff to ensure best practices and cultural competency;
 - Taking concrete steps to maintain a community in which all students feel they belong; and
 - Encouraging the adoption of universal access principles in our instructional practices.
- Support our students' transition into the profession by:
 - Creating a program to prepare students to become leaders in the profession;
 - Building stronger connections between alumni and our students;
 - Expanding our pipeline efforts into the legal profession;
 - Supporting our first-generation students in developing the professional networks that they need to thrive in the profession; and
 - Implementing robust support for bar passage and access to the profession.

Measures of success:

- Increasing the percentage of students surveyed who, when asked, would again choose to enroll in RLS;
 - Increasing employment rates during the summers after the 1L and 2L years, and upon graduation;
 - Increasing admission and graduation rates for students from communities under-represented in the legal profession;
 - Admission to the bar for any student who pursues that goal; and
 - 85%+ first-time bar passage rate.
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Goal 2: Provide exceptional student learning through a commitment to academic excellence.

We provide exceptional student learning and prepare students for professional leadership in the law. We will maximize our student success through an inclusive, student-focused learning environment with effective advising and support. Our innovative curricula and active engagement with the legal community give students a rich understanding of their career options and access to the professional networks they need to succeed.

Strategies:

- Ensure the relevance and timeliness of our curricula by:
 - Ensuring that faculty hiring is in line with curricular needs and consistent with the culture of scholarly inquiry within RLS;
 - Ensuring curricular pathways are clear to students and allow them to explore career interests and establish the knowledge areas and skillsets they need to fulfill their goals;
 - Aligning course content with career pathways to promote student success;
 - Inviting issues of the day into the classroom;
 - Integrating ethics into teaching across the curriculum;
 - Delivering bar passage preparation throughout the curriculum;
 - Creating opportunities for faculty to share curricular and pedagogical innovations; and
 - Evaluating the curriculum regularly to ensure alignment with current needs in the profession.
- Engage faculty in student-centered teaching practices and advising roles by:
 - Incentivizing our most effective instructors to teach 1L courses and bar classes;
 - Expanding engagement of faculty with students on legal writing;
 - Expanding student access to faculty (such as office hours);
 - Ensuring teaching assignments optimize coverage across the curriculum;
 - Ensuring timeliness of grading;
 - Formalizing advising to be systematic and mentor-oriented;
 - Prioritizing community building between faculty and students; and
 - Recognizing and rewarding excellent teaching.

- Ensure that students in daytime and evening programs have timely access to the support they need by:
 - Ensuring clarity for students about who they can turn to with questions or concerns;
 - Delivering effective student support and advising across all programs; and
 - Developing mechanisms to track and improve student satisfaction with advising and academic support.
- Provide professional networking and employment opportunities for all students by:
 - Utilizing events to connect students with alumni;
 - Expanding legal externship opportunities for students; and
 - Creating workshops to support students in developing their professional identity.

Measures of success:

- Increasing student satisfaction with advising and support, as measured by survey responses or focus groups;
 - Increasing bar passage rates;
 - Increasing employment rates;
 - Increasing interactions with alumni; and
 - increasing alumni activity in RLS events.
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Goal 3: Deepen our connections with our communities through our clinical programs, our commitment to social justice, and strategic partnerships.

Our faculty, students, and alumni, in both the public and private sectors, positively impact the law and the lives of people in the communities we serve. We are deeply embedded in our home communities of Camden and Newark through the work of our clinics, our centers, our pro bono work, and the scholarly work of our faculty.

Strategies:

- Strengthen our clinics and other experiential learning opportunities as marquee programs of RLS, enhancing their impact on student learning and expanding access to our clinical services in the community by:
 - Creating more clinical offerings for students by expanding opportunities in existing clinics and by developing new clinics as needed;
 - Deepening relationships with the community to ensure that the clinical offerings are informed by and responsive to community needs; and
 - Making experiential learning, including clinics, more accessible for students in the part-time program.
- Increase support for our centers, libraries, and community-facing programs to respond to community legal needs, promote law reform, and shape policy.
- Leverage our relationships with key constituencies, including the university, alumni, the Bar, the courts, law firms, and community organizations to deepen our impact on our communities by:

- Expanding faculty leadership in the discourse on critical issues facing the profession;
- Engaging our alumni network with the life of the law school and with one another; and
- Incorporating open job positions, news, events, a chat board, and an accessible directory into a digital one-stop shop for alumni and partners.
- Expand the reach of our strategic partnerships by:
 - Deepening our community partnerships, corporate partnerships, and collaborations within RU to enhance our impact;
 - Cultivating partnerships that expand career opportunities for students;
 - Expanding our global impact by broadening the scope of legal field studies and fostering collaborations with legal communities in other nations.

Measures of success:

- Increasing full-time and part-time student participation in clinics and other experiential learning opportunities;
 - Increasing the number of clients served by clinics and other RLS programs;
 - Increasing partnerships with alumni, the Bar, the university, law firms, and the courts;
 - Growing partnerships with community organizations, private firms, international peer institutions, and others.
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Goal 4: Promote an ambitious culture of scholarly inquiry leading to high quality and meaningful scholarship.

Our faculty will produce scholarship that advances our understanding of the law and impacts our communities, the nation, and the world. We encourage collaborative scholarship that leads to innovation and broadly includes traditional, doctrinal, theoretical, practice-oriented, policy, and community-engaged research and scholarship. We will support this effort by increasing research-related funding and expanding our efforts to promote our work internally and externally. We expect this work to create a culture of ambitious scholarly conversation and to build a robust intellectual community across both campuses and beyond.

Strategies:

- Increase resources that can be dedicated to scholarly production by:
 - Evaluating the balance between scholarship production and teaching load;
 - Expanding library support of faculty research and scholarship;
 - Expanding opportunities and funding for student research experiences;
 - Simplifying and improving access to scholarly publication by removing financial and procedural barriers;
 - Increasing funding for hosting speakers, conferences, and workshops;
 - Providing structural support for faculty research; and
 - Recognizing and rewarding strong scholarly output.
- Build a culture of ambitious and collaborative scholarly conversation by:

- Developing a shared definition of scholarship within RLS and sharing this broadly at the university level;
 - Taking a broad, inclusive, and generative approach to scholarship;
 - Creating and hosting symposia, workshops, conferences, lectures, and debates;
 - Harnessing our centers as a platform to promote scholarship and foster a robust intellectual community within RLS;
 - Recruiting faculty who can enhance our existing scholarly domains of expertise or who can expand areas of expertise into new and emerging domains; and
 - Ensuring that faculty recruitment and retention efforts support and enhance the RLS scholarly community
- Enhance the promotion and dissemination of faculty scholarship by:
 - Distributing relevant scholarship to the public, academics, alumni, and judges;
 - Promoting our scholarship with interest-based communities; and
 - Encouraging more faculty to write op-eds and appear in public-facing relevant media.

Measures of success:

- Increasing number of scholarly events with greater participation;
 - Increasing RLS investment in support of scholarship;
 - Increasing faculty submissions for publication;
 - Increasing number of presentations by faculty at conferences, workshops, and symposia; and
 - Increasing citation counts for our faculty.
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Goal 5: Establish a robust culture of community, collaboration, and connection.

Our faculty, staff, students, and alumni belong to a community that embodies inclusion, collaboration, and mutual respect across our Camden and Newark campuses. We promote dialogue and celebrate the unique strengths at each campus, creating a culture of understanding and shared purpose. We create pathways for growth that enhance our effectiveness and collective impact. This commitment supports our mission to provide exceptional legal education, advance justice, and strengthen our influence on students, faculty, and the broader Rutgers network.

Strategies:

- Ensure all stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, and alumni, are invited to actively participate in community-building efforts by:
 - Strengthening platforms for cross-campus communication and updates;
 - Providing more opportunities for social interactions among staff and faculty;
 - Meeting more regularly as a staff to discuss current and upcoming issues;
 - Hosting interdisciplinary seminars and collaborative work sessions to enhance team-building and knowledge-sharing;
 - Clearly conveying roles and responsibilities across RLS;
 - Developing a culture in which staff are encouraged and empowered to raise concerns;
 - Developing a consistent and robust onboarding process for new faculty and staff;

- Developing an online alumni directory with practice areas to provide value to alumni and foster connections with students;
- Creating a network of alumni advisors for student organizations using the resources of the Alumni and Development offices;
- Developing networking groups of alumni by practice area;
- Increasing faculty involvement with alumni; and
- Assigning faculty advisors to students upon their enrollment.
- Develop a culture that empowers, appreciates, and celebrates staff and their essential contributions to RLS by:
 - Creating a staff engagement committee charged with enriching interactions; and
 - Curating and supporting rich professional development opportunities for staff members.
- Celebrate each campus's unique strengths and our overall achievements by:
 - Facilitating conversations between each campus's faculty and staff to develop a unique overall RLS story that we can promote to our students, alumni, and beyond;
 - Creating programs, research projects, and/or outreach efforts that involve both campuses;
 - Aligning faculty expertise to co-develop joint curriculum offerings or research initiatives; and
 - Highlighting faculty, student, and staff accomplishments through publication(s).
- Ensure effective allocation of staffing across the campuses by:
 - Building a culture of collaboration within and across campuses;
 - Reviewing organizational charts to align resources and foster communications across RLS;
 - Evaluating alignment between operational needs and resource allocation within units and across campuses; and
 - Identifying best practices across RLS and utilizing those practices throughout the organization (where appropriate).
- Streamline the structures and connections between RLS, our campuses, and RU.

Measures of success:

- Decreasing turnover rate among members of the administration, staff, and faculty;
- Increasing alumni engagements with RLS, and particularly with students;
- Increasing staff, faculty, and student engagement and satisfaction (via survey); and
- Increasing staff and faculty participation in events.

Goal 6: Develop effective operational structures, practices, and resources to support all aspects of our mission.

Our administrative structures and practices must enhance our ability to fulfill our mission and support student success. To this end, our operations must provide exceptional service to our students, faculty, staff, and alumni. The clarity of our communications and transparency of our processes will be hallmarks of RLS and enhance the student experience. Faculty and staff success is also vital, and our administrative practices need to adapt to facilitate our work. Accomplishing this goal will require increased revenue from strong program demand and growing support from our benefactors.

Strategies:

- Review our administrative practices and structures to:
 - Enhance student access to support services;
 - Support student access to faculty and staff;
 - Improve communications and IT infrastructure;
 - Improve faculty and staff onboarding; and
 - Streamline the structures and connections among RLS, our campuses, and RU.
- Identify opportunities to expand or create programs that meet student demand and enhance our financial position, such as MLS programs, Certificates, and CLE programs.
- Increase philanthropic support for RLS by:
 - Creating class scholarships for all classes in Newark and Camden; and
 - Expanding major gift initiatives
- Develop an actively engaged alumni body to mentor students, enhance classroom learning, and serve as ambassadors for RLS by:
 - Developing an online alumni directory with practice areas to provide value to alumni in making and receiving referrals;
 - Developing networking groups of alumni by practice area;
 - Increasing faculty involvement with alumni; and
 - Starting decennial reunions.

Measures of success:

- Increasing donations from alumni and other stakeholders;
- Developing and launching new revenue-enhancing programs; and
- Implementing the recommendations from the review of operational structures and practices.