CALL FOR PROPOSALS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF LAW SCHOOLS – 2011 Conference
A Joint Program of the Sections on Balance in Legal Education and Academic Support
Co-Sponsored by the Section on Student Services

Theme: “Beyond Humanizing: Can – and Should – Law Schools Strive to Graduate Happy Students?”

Students often enter law school with goals of helping others, improving peoples’ lives, and making the world a better place. By the time they graduate, however, other considerations have supplanted students’ pro-social inclinations. Their aspirations succumb to more extrinsic values, such as prestige and money, and are often faced with the realities of time pressure and the dehumanizing effects of legal education. Despite the prestige associated with being an attorney, the profession is not ranked in the top ten for job satisfaction or happiness. In fact, one recent study revealed that a majority of practitioners would not recommend law to a young person.

Three AALS Sections, Balance in Legal Education, Academic Support, and Student Services will be hosting a program in which we explore the causes of lawyer distress, the role legal education plays in producing unhappy law students and lawyers, and the concrete steps law schools are currently taking or could take to combat those causes. The Program Committees invite proposals that provide concrete demonstrations of ways doctrinal, clinical, legal writing, and academic support professors and student services professionals are addressing these concerns.

The Program Committees will give preference to presentations designed to actively engage the workshop audience, so proposals should contain a detailed explanation of both the substance of the presentation and the interactive methods to be employed. In addition, we would like to highlight talent across a spectrum of law schools and will look for variety in presentations and presenters. Based on participant numbers for the last several years, we anticipate over 150 people will be attending the program. To assist the presenters in the interactive piece, the program committee members and other volunteers will be on hand to act as facilitators with audience members.

Proposals must be one page and include the following information:
1. A title for your presentation.
2. A brief description of the objectives or outcomes of your presentation.
3. A brief description of how your presentation will support your stated objectives or outcomes.
4. The amount of time allocated for your presentation and for the interactive exercise. No single presenter should exceed 45 minutes in total time allowed. Presentations as short as 15 minutes will be welcomed.
5. If warranted, a detailed description of how the presentation will be interactive.
6. Whether you plan to distribute handouts, use PowerPoint, or employ other technology.
7. Your school affiliation, title, courses taught and contact information (include email address and telephone number).

Optional and on a separate page: A list of the conferences at which you have presented within the last three years, such as AALS, national or regional conferences, or other academic conferences. (The committees are interested in this information because we wish to select and showcase seasoned, as well as fresh, talent.) Any articles or books that you have published describing the technique(s) you will be demonstrating.

Send proposals by March 15, 2010 via email (preferably in a Word Document) to Prof. Emily Randon, University of California, Davis School of Law, at elrandon@ucdavis.edu. Phone number is 530-752-3434.

Questions?: If you have questions, feel free to contact Emily Randon, Program Chair for the Academic Support Section, Andrew Faltin, Program Chair for the Balance Section, at andrew.faltin@marquette.edu or Catherine Glaze, Student Services Section at cglaze@law.stanford.edu.