

Strategic Planning in a Law School

The importance of Institutional interaction

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There are two key elements regarding interaction when we discuss the importance of strategic planning. The first one is the interaction and communication between different areas, departments or offices within a given institution. The second one is the ability to communicate, interact and generate different types of consensus with external actors.

A law school, as part of a given society, has to understand and take into account the realities and complexities of related institutions that would definitely help to organize and carry its strategic planning endeavors.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the importance of institutional interaction towards an effective and efficient strategic planning. I will discuss which institutions are important in this regard and why is crucial to seat them in the table in order to have their input and their views about legal education.

Such interaction has to be accomplished between the Law School and Public and Private institutions. It is also important to communicate with the third sector.

Other Law schools (National and International) and schools within the University.

One of the most important relationships in order to plan effectively is to be in touch with what is going on in other Law Schools. Most of the prestigious Law Schools around the globe are working on their strategic plans. Some of them have been working for several years.

Although legal education has been evolving towards common methods and curriculum it is obvious that such education is based on different environments and, of course, different legal systems. Moreover, political and social situations are always important regarding this matter. In relation to this, it is important to analyze how other schools in the same country are approaching strategic planning, but also how other law schools in the region are working this issue.

Involvement of other schools within the same university would also be important in order to gain a multidisciplinary perspective. In this sense, it would be helpful to collaborate with schools of Social Science, Economy, Business, psychology etc.

Public Sector

Judicial Systems at the local and federal levels

As one of the most important missions of a law school is to shape future judges and other members of the judicial system, it is crucial to interact with members of the judicial branch. Having a close connection with the courts is key to any strategic plan involving a law school.

Most judicial branches have their own educational facilities for their judges, future judges or employees. It is crucial to work together with them to complement with the law school curricula.

Law enforcement agencies, Correctional and Prison systems

As part of the whole system that supports the judicial system it is important to involve law enforcement agencies and the correctional and prison systems in the planning process. A significant number of students end up working in these kinds of jobs and their input could be of great help. In the end, they are key to the legal system and implement crucial guarantees such as Miranda rules.

Some universities, like the University of Buenos Aires, have study programs for people deprived from their liberty. In those cases, connecting with the Correctional and Prison systems is indispensable.

Legislative Branch

As law makers, members of legislative branches, both at the local, state and federal levels are crucial when discussing legal education. They should definitely have a seat at the planning table in order to share their experiences and collaborate in the process of curriculum reforms by sharing their perspectives.

Moreover, legislative branches are extremely important especially when it comes to Public Law Schools, as budgets are decided and discussed by them.

Executive Branch

The direction in which the whole educational system is going is normally set by ministries of education. In that intelligence, it is important for a planning process to invite members of the educational areas of the executive branch to discuss the strategic direction of a Law School.

Furthermore, ministries of justice and security agencies would also be important in the process as they set the direction in which several programs related to the legal system are carried.

Private Sector

Bar Associations and Law Firms

As most of the graduates from Law Schools end up working in the private sector it is important to analyze how the job market is behaving and where it is going. In order to achieve this goal it would be relevant to have representatives from law firms and bar associations at any strategic planning committee in order to be able to adjust contents and courses towards some of their needs.

Third Sector

NGO's

The Nonprofit sector can provide a unique perspective to strategic planning. They see and analyze the situation from innovative point of views. Selecting and convening Nonprofit organizations related to law, justice and education would be necessary in order to obtain their exclusive perspective on the future of Law schools.