

  
**ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY**  
SCHOOL OF LAW

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Association of American Law Schools' Annual Meeting 2019

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**Taming the Associate Dean's E-Mail Beast** | **Larry Cunningham**  
Associate Dean & Professor of Legal Writing

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**Problem #1**

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**Problem #2**

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### Problem #3



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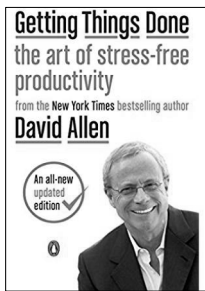
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### Recommendations



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9UicTM63Yk>

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### Strategy #1: Your Mindset

My job is not to answer e-mail.

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## Strategy #1: Your Mindset

My job is to \_\_\_\_\_.

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## Strategy #2: E-Mail Processing Time



3-4 times a day

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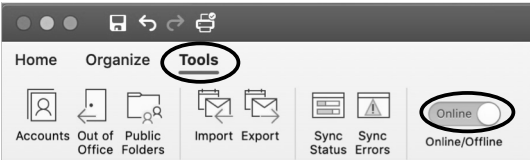
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## Strategy #2: E-Mail Processing Time

When not processing e-mail, Outlook is set to "offline" mode.



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### Strategy #3: Turn Off Notifications



Exceptions:

1. President
2. Provost
3. Dean
4. Your Spouse

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### Strategy #4: Process E-Mails

Quick Processing – Decisions

1. Delete
2. Move to Saved Folders
3. Respond or delegate, but only if < 2 minutes
4. Schedule To-Do/Action Item

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### Strategy #5: Work With To-Do's, not Inbox



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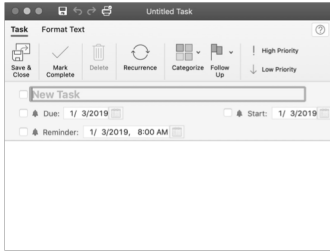
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### Strategy #5: Work With To-Do's, not Inbox



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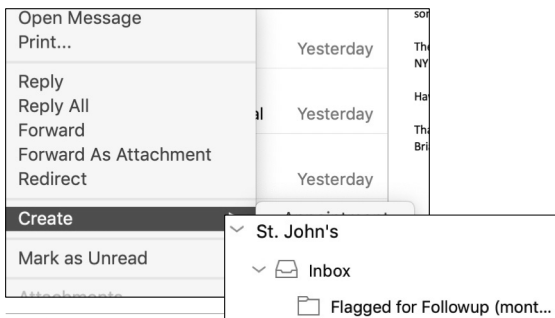
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### Strategy #5: Work With To-Do's, not Inbox



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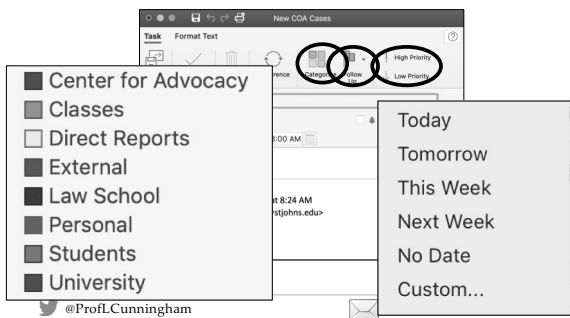
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### Strategy #5: Work With To-Do's, not Inbox



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## Product Recommendation: Things



<https://culturedcode.com/things/>

- Organize by projects, areas of responsibility
- “Snooze” to-do’s
- Link to e-mails
- Mail to Things

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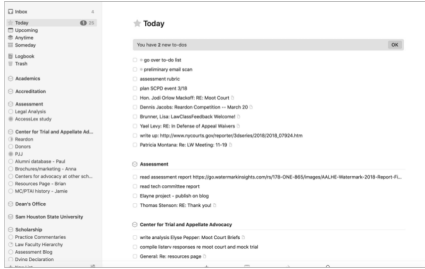
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## Product Recommendation: Things



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## Strategy #6: Use “Rules” Effectively

- ❖ Flag VIPs (President, Provost, Dean, Spouse)
- ❖ Move listserv e-mails to special folder
- ❖ Automatically categorize/color code

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### Strategy #7: Generic E-Mail Addresses

- ❖ studentservices@\_\_\_\_\_.edu
- ❖ deansoffice@\_\_\_\_\_.edu
- ❖ registrar@\_\_\_\_\_.edu
- ❖ academicadvising@\_\_\_\_\_.edu
- ❖ onestophelp@\_\_\_\_\_.edu

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### Strategy #8: When Not to Use This Process

- ❖ Student services may need a continually monitored e-mail box. But it doesn't have to be the associate dean!
- ❖ For some employees, their job is to respond to e-mail.
- ❖ When a conversation or phone call would be better ...
  - ❖ Complex topic
  - ❖ Sensitive topic
  - ❖ Will take too long to respond in e-mail
  - ❖ Emotions are high ...

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### Strategy #9: Get Tech Help



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### Strategy #10: Write Better E-Mails

- ❖ Write e-mails, not law review articles, so you have time to write law review articles.
- ❖ Keep it short.
- ❖ Use bullets.
- ❖ Use templates/autocorrect for frequently asked questions.

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### Top Tips for Getting Started

- ❑ Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9UjcTm3Yk>
- ❑ Turn off notifications
- ❑ Find online/offline button in Outlook.
- ❑ Schedule e-mail processing time in Calendar.
- ❑ Get a to-do app. Setup projects and areas of responsibility.
- ❑ Create "Followup" and "Saved" folders. Merge all others.
- ❑ Setup "Rules."
- ❑ Turn on "conversation" view.
- ❑ Learn how to create keyboard shortcuts.
- ❑ Talk to your assistant, direct reports, those you report to.
- ❑ Consider "e-mail bankruptcy."

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### Additional Reading

- ❖ <https://hackerspace.kinja.com/how-i-get-to-zero-inbox-in-outlook-1524583084>
- ❖ <https://blog.hubspot.com/service/inbox-zero>
- ❖ <https://www.fastcompany.com/40407454/how-the-most-productive-ceos-keep-email-in-check>
- ❖ <https://flow-e.com/blog/email-productivity/email-management-101/>

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