

## **Call for Participation in a Discussion Group on**

### ***BRIDGES AND BARRIERS TO EDUCATIONAL EQUITY: SHOULD LAW SCHOOLS CONTINUE TO USE REMOTE LEARNING TECHNOLOGY AND PEDAGOGY FOR IN-PERSON CLASSES?***

**Abstracts due: August 31, 2021**

#### **Introduction**

The following is a Call for Participation in a Discussion Group on *Bridges and Barriers to Educational Equity: Should Law Schools Continue to Use Remote Learning Technology and Pedagogy for In-person Classes?* to be held at the AALS virtual Annual Meeting from January 5-9, 2022.

#### **Description**

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in substantial and profound disruptions to personal and professional lives around the globe. As with educational and legal environments more broadly, among the more significant of these disruptions for law schools was the need to rapidly transition from in-person instruction to remote synchronous learning. In doing so, nearly all law schools and most individual faculty members adopted a range of technologies (e.g., Zoom, Panopto) and pedagogical practices (e.g., regular checkpoint assessments, recording classes and making these available to all students) that they were unaware of, were unfamiliar with, or had even rejected on policy grounds prior to the pandemic. Experiences of students and faculty with the technologies and practices have varied, with remote learning working well for some and not as well for others. For faculty as with students, there is some evidence that these impacts have been systematic, reinforcing or magnifying broader structural inequities in legal education. For others, however, the changes have been liberating or represented the type of educational supports that have been missing from legal education.

As law schools return to in-person instruction, many are wrestling with questions about whether and which of these technologies and practices should or may be retained to enhance educational equity. The goal of this session is to bring together experts in legal pedagogy and educational equity, along with interested members of the legal academy, to discuss what we have learned from the experiences with remote learning about how we might make use of technology and pedagogical innovation to improve education of our students who may have struggled with traditional approaches and the potential drawbacks for student and faculty of requiring or making those innovations available.

The session will involve a roundtable discussion of up to 10 discussants who are engaged in substantive research or practice related to legal pedagogy, equity in education, or the intersection of the two topics. Interested AALS attendees who are not invited as discussants will be welcome to attend and to participate in the discussion. Each invited discussant will prepare a brief (1-page) description of a barrier or barriers to achieving equity in legal education and a constructive suggestion for the role remote teaching technology or pedagogy might play in helping to overcome it or an equity-focused critique of the remote learning technology and pedagogy. These descriptions will be circulated among the discussants in advance to inform the discussion and will be made available to others who attend. The program organizers will moderate the discussion and ensure balanced participation.

### **Call for Abstracts**

The Annual Meeting Program Committee invites faculty and administrators who would like to join this Discussion Group to submit a 1-3 page abstract description of a barrier or barriers to achieving equity in legal education and a constructive suggestion for the role remote teaching technology or pedagogy might play in helping to overcome it, or an equity-focused critique of the remote learning technology and pedagogy, **by August 31**. Current organizers and confirmed discussion participants include:

#### Organizers:

Meera E. Deo, J.D., Ph.D.

Professor of Law

Director, Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE), Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research

Thomas Jefferson School of Law

Erik J. Girvan, J.D., Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Law

Faculty Director, Conflict & Dispute Resolution Master's Degree Program

University of Oregon School of Law

#### Discussion Participants:

Chad Christensen, PhD

Project Manager, Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE), Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research

DeShun Harris, JD, LLM

Assistant Clinical Professor of Law

Director of Bar Preparation  
University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law

Rosa Kim, JD, MA

Professor of Legal Writing  
Suffolk University Law School

Shaun Ossei-Owusu, JD, PhD

Presidential Assistant Professor of Law  
University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School

Suzanne Rowe, JD  
James L. and Ilene R. Hershner Professor  
Director, Legal Research and Writing  
Program, University of Oregon School  
University of Oregon School of Law

Space in this Discussion Group is limited; the Committee, along with the faculty who proposed this discussion, will select the remaining discussion participants from the abstracts submitted. During the session, selected participants will make a short (2-3 minute) presentation during the Discussion Group. The remaining time will be devoted to a moderated, roundtable group discussion.

Each submission for this Discussion Group should include:

- The title of the submitted presentation/paper;
- The name, school, and email of the applying participant;
- A 1-3 page, double-spaced abstract that addresses describing of a critical barrier to achieving equity in education and a constructive suggestion for the role law might play in helping to overcome it; and
- The curriculum vitae of the applying participant.

In reviewing the submitted abstracts, the Discussion Group organizer and selection committee will consider the following:

- The fit and overall quality of the abstract for the Discussion Group;
- The diversity that the applying participant may bring in terms of a variety of factors including viewpoint diversity, institutional affiliation and status (tenure-track, non-tenure track, tenured); and if applicable
- The applying participant's willingness to publish his or her paper along with other Discussion Group papers.

Abstracts are due by **August 31, 2021** and should be submitted using the online submission form <https://aalsweb.wufoo.com/forms/r7szvob1pac94u/>.