

*“Substantially Similar”?
Building Educational
Equity Into Evening,
Weekend, and Part-Time
J.D. Programs*

Presented by AALS Section on Part-
Time Division Programs

Co-Sponsored by the AALS Academic
Support and Teaching Methods
Sections

January 4th, 2023 | 10:00 AM PT – 11:40 AM PT



Agenda

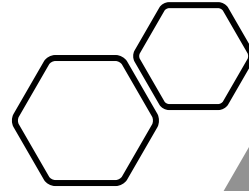
- **10 AM - 10:10 AM:** Welcome & Panelist Intros
- **10:10 AM - 11:15 AM:** Panel Discussion
- **11:15 AM - 11:30 AM:** Audience Q&A
- **11:30 AM - 11:40 AM:** Section Business Meeting

“Part-Time” – A
Misnomer?

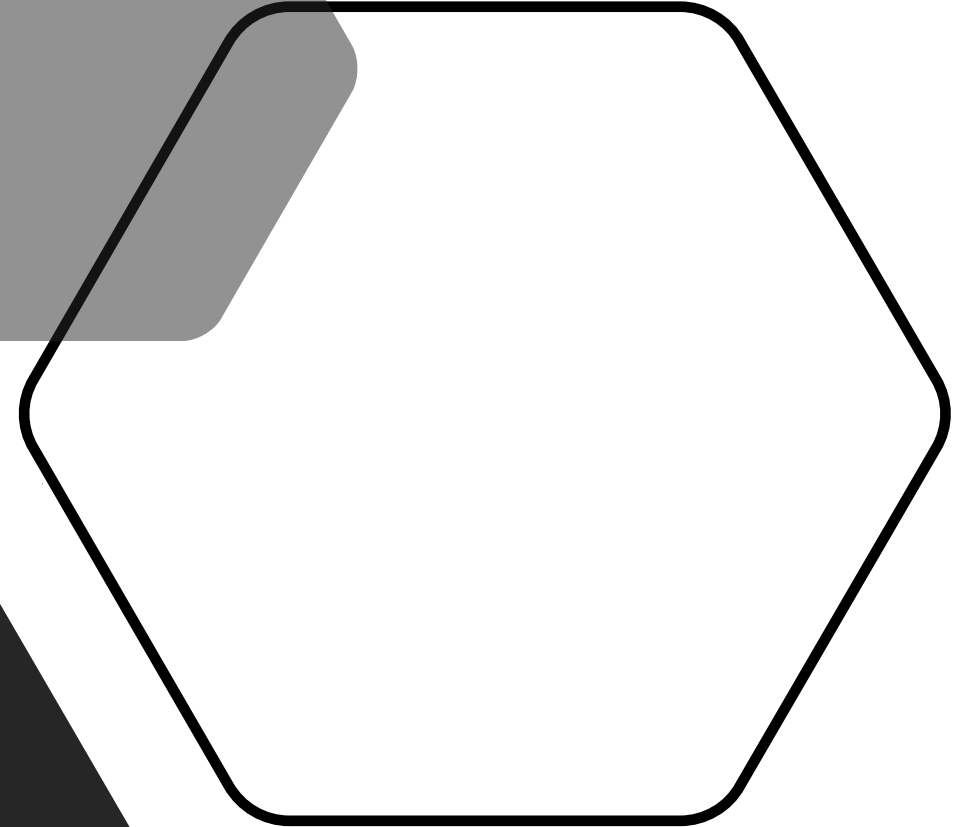
‘Part-time’ students
have full-time lives
and demands on
their time



Data from 2021-2022 Part-Time Section Survey of U.S. Part-Time Programs:



- 44 Schools replied with a program type and/or comments to the survey questions
- 171 administrators, staff, and/or professors listed as program contacts (some schools listed multiple people)



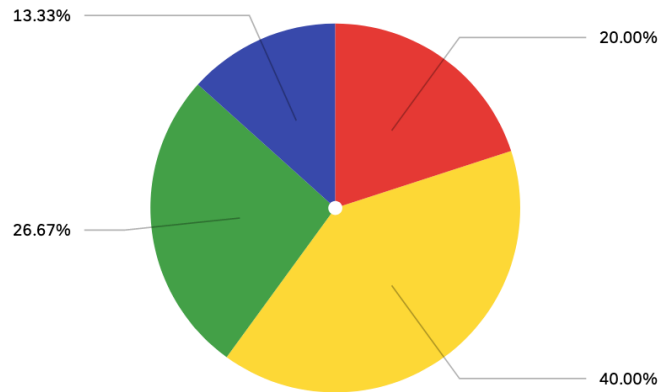
Data from 2021-2022 Section Survey of U.S. Part-Time Programs

	Part-Time Evening Program	Part-Time Day Program	Weekend-Based	Other (macro-type)	(micro-type)
Number of Programs	35	4	2	Fully online: 2	Transitioning to fully online: 1
					With required on-campus residencies 1
				Hybrid online: 2	With in-person immersion periods: 2
				Asynchronous online with mandatory in-person immersion periods: 1	

Data from 2021-22 AALS Part-Time Division Programs Section survey of U.S. law schools

Question 1

Approximately how many students, on average, enter this institution's part-time JD program each year?



1	Under 20	20.00%	9
2	Between 20 and 40	40.00%	18
3	Between 40 and 60	26.67%	12
4	More than 60	13.33%	6

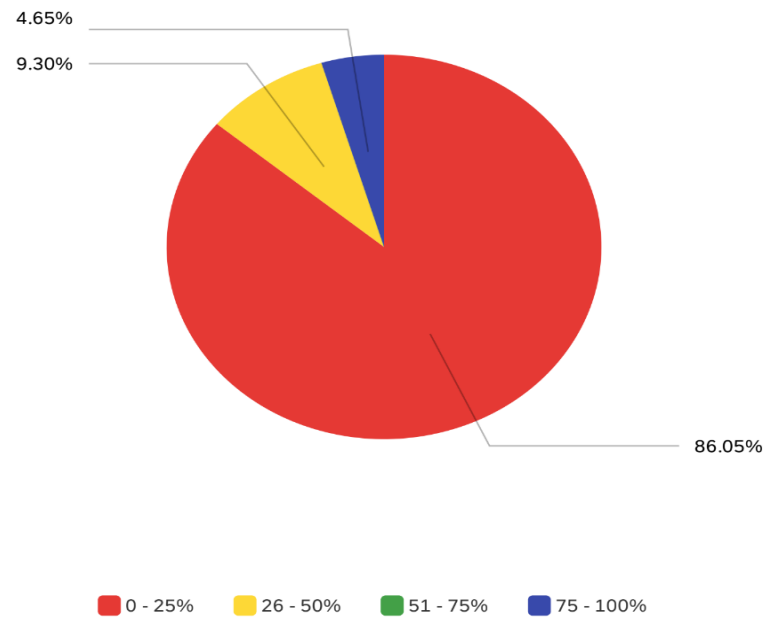
45

■ Under 20 ■ Between 20 and 40 ■ Between 40 and 60 ■ More than 60

Data from 2021-22 AALS Part-Time Division Programs Section survey of U.S. law schools

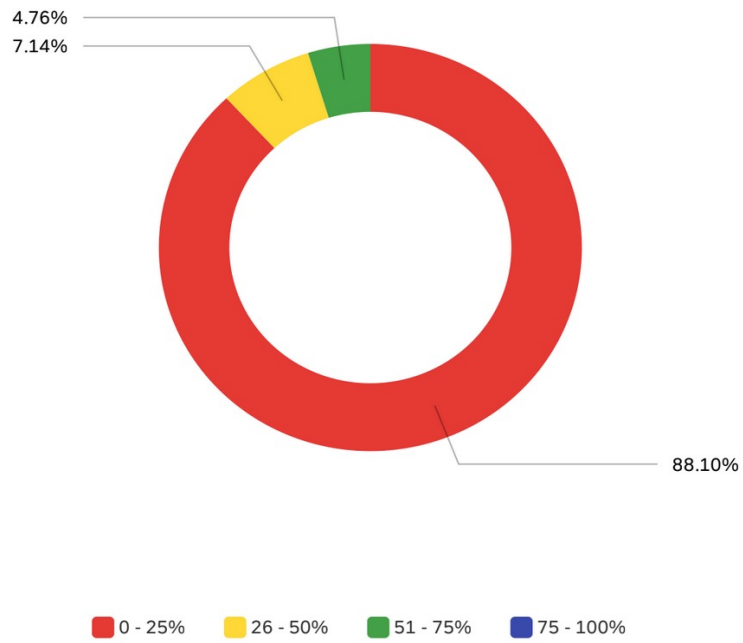
Approximately what percentage of the total number of JD students at this institution are part-time students?

Question 2



#	Field	Choice Count
1	0 - 25%	86.05% 37
2	26 - 50%	9.30% 4
3	51 - 75%	0.00% 0
4	75 - 100%	4.65% 2

Approximately what percent of part-time students transfer to the full-time program at some point in their law school career?



Question
3

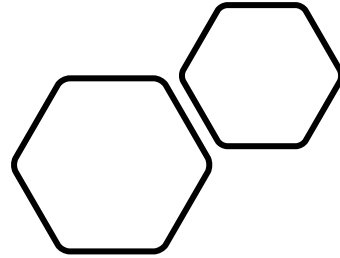
#	Field	Choice Count
1	0 - 25%	88.10% 37
2	26 - 50%	7.14% 3
3	51 - 75%	4.76% 2
4	75 - 100%	0.00% 0

Data from 2021-22 AALS Part-Time Division Programs Section survey of U.S. law schools

Question 4

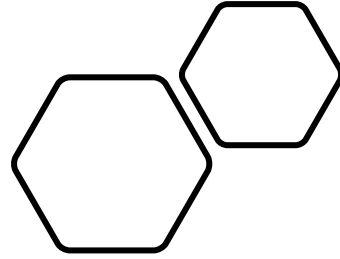
Has your Evening, Part Time, or weekend program experienced significant structural changes, increases or decreases in enrollment, instructional modality shifts, or other big changes in the last few years?

...instructional modality shifts?



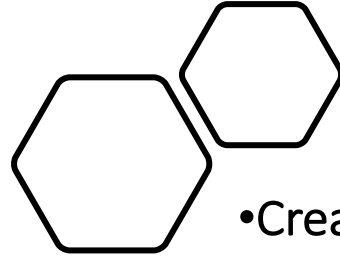
- Many evening courses gradually all moving to hybrid format (some due to pandemic, others naturally)
- Implementing a more flexible schedule (hybrid online)
- Incremental changes:
 - 2017: 1/3 courses online
 - 2019: 2 nights in person, 2 nights remotely (synchronous or asynchronous)

...significant
structural
changes?



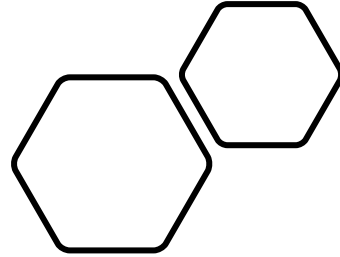
- Some programs have stopped; others have started.
- One evening part-time program paused in 2017; since then, only admitted students into part-time day and extended day programs

...significant structural changes?



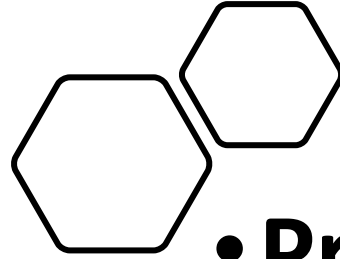
- **Creation of separate administrative positions:**
 - Director of the Evening Program
 - Co-Directors of Evening Program
- **Reasons for new administrative positions:**
 - ensure that interests and concerns of part-time students are always well-represented
 - institutionalize and enhance support for Evening students
- **Various duties of administrative positions:**
 - Recruitment/admissions, teaching in evening, academic counseling, promoting professional development, connecting students with resources

...significant
structural
changes?



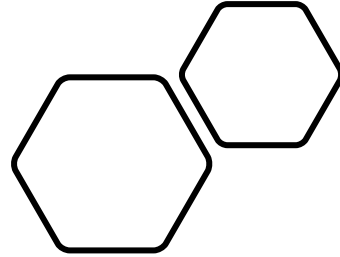
- With decreased enrollment, moved to incorporating the PT 1L students' doctrinal classes with the FT students.
- Thus, offer one evening (5:30 pm) course for each 1L doctrinal section. PT and FT students are combined for those courses.

... increases or
decreases in
enrollment?



- **Programs across the board saw both growth and drops in enrollment**
 - Raised admissions standards

...significant
structural
changes?



- One school reported a ‘hybrid’ program: operating under an approved ABA variance in 2019, this program provides ***an alternative program that is not well-defined by the normal conventions*** applied to a ‘full-time’ or ‘part-time’ program.

What Topics should AALS Section on Part-Time Divisions explore?

- Successful structures/formats of Part-Time programs
- Appropriate credit loads
- Hybrid programs and using remote learning to increase access
- Differing nature of pedagogies
- Maximize student engagement with student orgs and other co-curriculars
- How law schools can lobby employers to consider nontraditional summer clerk positions for evening students who need to remain in full-time jobs

What Topics
should AALS
Section on
Part-Time
Divisions
explore?

- Consider the ***definitions surrounding such programs*** and whether ***current paradigms accurately and appropriately cover*** emerging programs such as hybrid programs.
- Further, ***whether the distinction between full-time and part-time programs remains a useful distinction*** or whether a more flexible definitional framework would be useful as law school education continues to evolve ...



Nontraditional
J.D. Tracks: One
Size Fits...*Some!*



The Section Exec. Committee hopes to be able to continue to collect this data each year, with the aim of observing trends in nontraditional J.D. programs.

What are you most proud of?

- “Providing access to a legal education for those with work, family, and other commitments, and contributes to the diversity of our academic community and the profession.”
- “The development of new clinical programs specifically designed to be accessible by evening students with full-time daytime obligations.”
- “Our full-time faculty regularly teach in the part-time evening program.”
- “The diversity and strength of students is a real point of pride.”
- “We offer multiple part-time programs.”
- “Great students becoming great lawyers who otherwise might not have been able to.”
- Meeting our school's mission statement by providing access to more students -- particularly working students, first generation students, older students, students returning to school, parents, those changing careers -- and so much more.”
- “Our part-time students are so strong, interesting and engaged that most of the faculty who teach in the program have become permanent.”