

AALS Discussion Group on *Understanding Professional Identity Formation and Integrating Professional Identity Formation into the Required Curriculum*
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Using Evidence-Based Decision Making to Make Room for Professional Identity Education
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I. Premise: “I don’t have time to do this”

- Whenever law professors are faced with the need to make any changes to their courses—whether from changes in the law, changes by a school for a required curriculum, or changes driven from the ABA Standards, a familiar refrain is that there is a **“lack of room” to make any changes.**
- The inflexibility of courses is often particularly proportional to the distance of the mandate from faculty’s own inherent interests—changes in the doctrinal law will often be easier to “find room for” than will unfamiliar or unwanted topics.
- As such, for those unfamiliar with professional identity education, making room for its inclusion can be far down on many professors’ list of “needs” to add to their classrooms, despite (or perhaps because of) the mandate to do so for their program of legal education.
- Thanks to many recent events both worldwide and in legal education, there is “change burnout” and professional identity education can be a potential victim.
- Without a clear path to help faculty find HOW to think about finding room for incorporating professional identity education, many won’t get as far as these amazing opportunities to do so, or the ways to emphasize it or collaborate.

II. Solution: Curriculum Mapping

A. What is Curriculum Mapping?

- Curriculum mapping is a coordinated effort conducted by faculty members to better understand the scope and sequence of their own course or curriculum
- Curriculum mapping serves as evidenced based documentation of what/where/when regarding doctrine and or skills delivery
- Curriculum mapping creates the knowledge in faculty to make their own decisions on incorporation of new material, based on that evidence
- Not about requirements, lockstep or forced change but rather ensuring a full understanding of student learning

B. Three Core Questions

1. What doctrine and skills do you currently teach?
2. To what degree are these doctrine and skills repeated **horizontally and vertically** through the curriculum and **for what purpose?**
3. Where can I either **remove some coverage** or **integrate that coverage** with professional identity education to make it a part of my course?