



University of Richmond

School of Law

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1. What do you enjoy most about your job?

I have the world's best job! What I enjoy most about my job is the opportunity, nearly every day, to actually make a difference in someone's life. Dealing daily with students and prospective students, I am so fortunate to be able to problem-solve, counsel or otherwise just enjoy life from a young person's perspective. My magic wand is often in the shop for repair (or for magic reinforcement), however sometimes I am able to open the door for someone whose objective credentials might not have made their admission to the law school obvious but for a myriad of other reasons they excite me. I am often able, through candid conversations, to relieve the extreme anxiety prospective students have about themselves, the admission process, financial aid or other issues. Being in a position to have an impact on someone's life (even if you don't realize it at the time) spurs me to get out of bed every morning. What could be a better job?

2. What do you like most about your law school?

I have made the deliberate decision to remain at my law school because I've never seen any school that is more student-focused than mine. Whatever decision is at hand, that decision is made based on what is best for the student not what may be the most expedient decision to ultimately impact our ranking. The cohesiveness of purpose amongst the faculty, staff and students to help students position themselves to have choices in their future is amazing. The teacher-scholar model is alive and well at my law school and while I am hugely proud of our faculty in terms of their productivity, I'm even prouder that the faculty is fully committed to going the extra mile(s) to benefit our students. I can promise lots of things to prospective students but what really matters is that our students get what I promised throughout their three years with us.

3. Is there any advice you would give to pre-law advisors as they are working with students in the application process for your law school?

I prefer that students be the best applicants they can be not necessarily the earliest thus I'd like pre-law advisors to counsel students about taking the LSAT when they have the time to be most prepared rather than just at the earliest possible test date. I'd like prelaw advisors to talk to students a bit more about the cost and financing their legal education, filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in a timely fashion and asking the law school to explain, if necessary, how to structure their loans so that they may go to law school feeling optimistic about their future. I find prospective students know about *how* to get into law

school but are poorly informed about how to *pay* for it. I also wish prelaw advisors would advise their students not to get too hung up on “private” versus “public” law schools in terms of cost of attendance as often private schools like ours have generous scholarship assistance.

4. *What are some of the unique opportunities students will find at your law school?*

Law schools are, frankly, more the same than they are different thus finding a “unique” opportunity may not be so obvious. We enjoy an advantage in our location which offers more types of courts than any city other than Washington, DC only 100 miles away or Boston which is a much more expensive city in which to live. We have every court in Richmond but THE Supreme Court – great networking and employment opportunities for our students. We have, like many schools, a gorgeous campus, specialties, clinics and clinical placements, summer stipends to support our students who want to do public interest work during the 1L summer, dual degrees, more international programs than most schools (we have partnerships with law schools in nine countries), four active law journals, a myriad of opportunities to compete in competitions including moot court, extra-curricular activities from every political and philosophic perspective, a robust legal community with whom to network, be mentored and be employed while in school or thereafter, etc. Perhaps what is truly most unique about my law school is the very personal approach to our students, our uniquely collegial atmosphere and the opportunities we offer to each student to be a star in *something*. So much, in choosing a law school, comes down to “fit”.

5. *Is there anything you would like to leave with pre-law advisors as a final comment?*

Encourage your students, as they travel, to visit law schools even those they are not considering seriously. Advise them to do this even as a sophomore or junior. This gives them a really good idea of what they like or don’t like in a law school. It will better inform them of what they are really looking for in a school as they watch and learn. Encourage them to be thinking broadly about their choices. Often their second or third choice school will rise to the top of their list after they visit. Please urge your students to call me or my colleagues to ask questions rather than making decisions based on what they think they know. It makes me crazy when a student makes a poor or unnecessary decision about law school admission based on advice gained from the internet chats, their parent’s lawyer-friends (who don’t have a clue how they got into law school), or their friends who don’t have the answers either. We are here to help you and to advise you – please ask us!