Four Stages of Legal Education Specialization

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Stage 1: General JD

- “You can do anything with a JD”

- “You teach yourselves the law, but I train your minds. You come in here with a skull full of mush; you leave thinking like a lawyer.”

- Employment based on school/class rank + license
Stage 1 Competencies

- Research
- Writing
- Legal Knowledge
- Legal Analysis
- Professional Responsibility
- Creative Problem Solving
- Interpersonal Skills
- Initiative
- Conscience and Compassion
Stage 2: General JD With Certificate

- “Like a college major”
- High Tech Law Certificate
  - 1/6 of JD units allocated topically
  - Writing requirement
- Students love it. Employers…?
Stage 2 Competencies

- Research
- Writing
- Legal Knowledge
- Legal Analysis
- Professional Responsibility
- Creative Problem Solving
- Interpersonal Skills
- Initiative
- Conscience and Compassion
Stage 3: General JD With Specialization

- “Two roads diverged in a yellow wood/And sorry I could not travel both”

- Privacy Law Certificate
  - Coursework
  - External certification
  - Work experience
  - Published paper in publication read by privacy professionals
  - Can’t earn other certificates
Stage 3 Competencies

- Research
- Writing
- Legal Knowledge
- Legal Analysis
- Professional Responsibility
- Creative Problem Solving
- Interpersonal Skills
- Initiative
- Conscience and Compassion
Stage 4: Specialized JD

- Market wants “practice-ready” “specialists”... but...
  - Bar passage as output metric
  - Third party curriculum regulation
  - JD is “too long or too short”

- Possible levers
  - Pre-matriculation goal-setting
  - More training as Silicon Valley “professional”
    - Ex: decision-making, negotiations, drafting, spreadsheets, PPTs, financial statement review, startup financing and lifecycles, project management, working with interdisciplinary teams, etc.
  - Integrate students into professional community
Stage 4 Competencies

- Research
- Writing
- Legal Knowledge
- Legal Analysis

- Professional Responsibility
- Creative Problem Solving
- Interpersonal Skills
- Initiative
- Conscience and Compassion
Open Questions