

Santa Clara University

Four Stages of Legal Education Specialization

Prof. Eric Goldman, JD/MBA

<http://www.ericgoldman.org>

egoldman@gmail.com

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

