Welcome from the Deans

Inspired by the venerable tradition of North American law schools in developing and maintaining strong and enduring links with their graduating students, the Deans of The University of Notre Dame Australia’s Fremantle and Sydney Schools of Law are keen to maintain close links with their recent Law graduates. We welcome their ongoing interest in, and support of, our Law program and activities whether through attendance at alumni events like our 10-year reunion, participation in student mentoring programs, service on the School of Law Advisory Board or Alumni Advisory Committee, or through financial donations to our Indigenous Law Student Scholarship Fund set up in 2013. A School of Law is only as good as its alumni support base so do join with us in building a great Notre Dame Law alumni tradition of our own.

Professor Doug Hodgson
Dean, School of Law (Fremantle)

Professor Michael Quinlan
Dean, School of Law (Sydney)

Meet School of Law staff members

Father Mark Podesta has recently commenced his academic life at the School of Law, Sydney. He graduated from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome and was ordained a priest in 2007. Father Mark is a priest of the Archdiocese of Sydney and also has a licence in Canon Law. Father Mark is the Director of the Archdiocese of the Sydney Tribunal Office and is also an Ecclesiastical Judge for the Regional Tribunal of Sydney (NSW and ACT). Father Mark looks forward to providing excellent pastoral care to law students and the wider University community.

Jim Riley graduated from the School of Law, Fremantle, and has practised since 2008, initially as a corporate lawyer (transactional and litigation) and then, in 2010, he founded Riley’s Solicitors - a specialist family law firm in Perth. Jim has lectured and tutored at Notre Dame, Murdoch University and the University of Western Australia. He understands that law students shoulder a substantial academic load and that they have lives outside of their studies. Jim looks forward to providing the highest quality of teaching and academic services to his students and is always mindful of each student’s pastoral care needs.

Recent Staff Publications

Tomas Fitzgerald
‘Sure it Works in Practice, but does it Work in Theory? Epistemological Challenges for the New Haven School; a Comparative Approach’ (Paper presented at the 5th International Conference on New Haven Jurisprudence, City University, Hong Kong, 17 - 18 September 2013).

Professor Doug Hodgson
‘Intervening Causation Law in a Medical Context’ (2013) 15 The University of Notre Dame Australia Law Review

Marilyn Krawitz
‘ Summoned by Social Media: Why Australian Courts Should Have Social Media Accounts’ (2014) 23(3) Journal of Judicial Administration

in this edition

2 School of Law News in Brief
3 Alumni Events
4 Articles by Alumni
5 Alumni News
6 Mentoring Programs
Survive Law, an Australian legal website, recently announced that the Notre Dame Schools of Law were voted the best in the country for teaching excellence in its Law Student Satisfaction Survey. Approximately 2,200 law students from 36 law schools Australia-wide voted in the survey.

Professor Doug Hodgson has been appointed as Chair of the Notre Dame National Research Degrees and Scholarships Committee. In September 2013, Professor Hodgson attended the Global Law Deans’ Forum hosted by the International Association of Law Schools and the National University of Singapore. The conference was attended by more than 80 law deans from around the world and concluded with the adoption of the Singapore Declaration containing best practice on legal education standards and law graduate attributes.

Professor Barry Cushman, the John P. Murphy Foundation Professor of Law at the University of Notre Dame in the United States, visited Notre Dame’s Schools of Law at Sydney and Fremantle in February 2014. Professor Cushman spoke to staff about the similarities and differences between the University of Notre Dame Law Schools in the United States and in Australia. He also spoke about his experiences of teaching law and provided advice for early career researchers on progressing their research and scholarship endeavours and their careers.

In November 2013, Professor Michael Quinlan, Dean of the School of Law, Sydney, spoke at an international congress hosted by the College of Social and Media Culture in Torun, Poland, in collaboration with the Department of Philosophy of Culture at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin. The title of the 2013 Congress was ‘Catholics and the Law: Opportunities and Risks’. He was one of 10 academics who spoke at the Congress. Hundreds of people from around the world attended the event.

The AAT Moot Team comprising Nathan Fawkes, Rod Worth and Jarrad Goold, from the Fremantle School of Law, won the AAT Moot in late 2013. Over the course of the second semester they won the State rounds, then competed by video-link against interstate universities, before triumphing at the Grand Final in Brisbane.

On 26 February 2014, The Honourable Chief Justice Wayne Martin AC spoke on the topic ‘Access to Justice in Western Australia’ at Notre Dame’s Fremantle Campus. His Honour was the inaugural speaker of the Eminent Speaker Series. School of Law staff, alumni, advisory board members and the general public attended the event. The next Eminent Speaker Series event took place on 9 April 2014. The School of Law was thrilled that Liberal Senator for WA, Mathias Cormann, spoke at the event, giving his personal reflection on his career as a lawyer in politics.

Marilyn Krawitz, a lecturer at the School of Law, Fremantle, was interviewed on the ABC Radio program ‘The Law Report’ in January 2014, about her research on body image and the law. To listen to the interview, visit: www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/lawreport/body-image-and-the-law/5198942
• **Karess Dias**, a student at the School of Law, Fremantle, was selected as Western Australia’s representative at the W. Comm Youth Forum. The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians organisation hosts the W. Comm Youth Forum. The Forum tries to encourage young women to become politicians.

• **Anne-Marie O’Neil**, a student at the School of Law, Fremantle, won The Magistrates’ Society of Western Australia’s Geoff Ajduk Memorial Prize. The Prize is “awarded to a law student who has demonstrated a commitment to social justice and/or community service by providing assistance to a disadvantaged group in the community, and whose legal education would be enhanced and assisted by the receipt of the prize money”.

### Alumni events

The 25th Anniversary National Alumni Events were held across the three campuses during late March to early April. All alumni who attended had a great time.

**Fremantle**

On 16 November 2013, a reunion for the School of Law, Fremantle, class of 2003 took place at the Michael Keating Room in the old Fremantle Hotel. Approximately 40 alumni with their partners attended, in addition to School of Law staff. There was considerable positive feedback from the event and the School of Law looks forward to organising similar alumni events in the future.
Lyndsay O’Brien  
(LLB/BA, 2011, Fremantle)  
Lawyer, Shadgett Legal

When I sat in my first criminal law lecture and heard my rather dowdy lecturer describe it as the ‘sexy’ area of law, I almost laughed out loud. Nothing new happened in criminal law, it was all codified in one piece of legislation from 1901. All I could think of was old men in robes with wigs on, boring a jury.

With that in mind, it may surprise you to know that I am a criminal defence lawyer at a small firm in Perth called Shadgett Legal. There is no area of law I would rather work in. Why the change of heart? Quite simply, practice. The University of Notre Dame Australia’s Schools of Law encourage their students to engage in competitions, to complete practical work and to be involved in community legal centres. This changed my whole world.

As a student, I thought that I was going to be a mining lawyer. My very passionate lecturer described 4WDs, racing around a huge paddock at midnight, dredging out their land in order to mark it first, and round table discussions between all interested parties as to the best use for the land, as well as protecting Native Title rights. However, practice was nothing like that.

When I clerked at a medium sized law firm and worked in their energy and resources section, I was subjected to four straight days of researching one minute area of the Supreme Court Rules. Similarly, when I clerked at a Native Title body, that round table discussion that had sounded so fascinating in the classroom turned out to be a 20 minute circular argument where no one wanted to reveal their hand, nor contribute to the conversation. Nothing was achieved.

When I clerked at the DPP, I suddenly realised what was meant by the sexy area of law. There were no old men in wigs (at the bar table at least). Instead, there were young, vibrant people passionately arguing their point. There were witnesses, exhibits and juries. The legal arguments about...

Gary Mack  
(LLB, 2006, Fremantle)  
Solicitor, Fremantle Community Legal Centre

Obtaining a law degree from Notre Dame’s School of Law is about more than obtaining the knowledge and skill set to practice law. The School of Law has a culture that encourages the examination of one’s self and one’s actions from an ethical perspective. I learned about ethics at the School of Law as a guide to living, as well as a philosophical discipline. I also learned about ethics from a legal perspective and the importance of acting ethically, notwithstanding an individual’s background or social standing. I found this to be a strong point of difference between Notre Dame’s School of Law and other law schools. Notre Dame’s School of Law also aligns with the values that I hold dear, in particular trying to assist others and achieve social justice.

These values were originally taught to me by my late mother who left school at 15 years of age and subsequently immigrated from a very disadvantaged background to Australia. Eventually she became the only person from her family to obtain a degree and subsequently enjoyed a very successful teaching career while being a single mother. Throughout her life, and as an example to my brother and myself, she toiled to help the “underdog” and achieve social justice through educating those who the education system left behind.

My career at the Fremantle Community Legal Centre (FCLC) has allowed me to put this ethical guide into practice. At the FCLC, we advise, represent and provide community legal education to a diverse client base and a range of community groups. We advise on a broad range of legal disciplines, including family law, criminal law, tenancy, Centrelink, employment, financial matters (contract, debt, and bankruptcy), elder law and compensation matters. Many of our clients have (1) limited financial resources; (2) mental health challenges; or (3) drug and alcohol problems. Some have none of these problems but are less experienced than others and naively got themselves into a legal challenge or could not see the consequences of taking a certain course of action.
a minute evidentiary issue could go on for an hour, before a Judge would make a ruling. It was exciting.

My practice now doesn’t seem as exciting as criminal law seemed when I was clerking at the DPP. I can now see the work that went into that hour long evidentiary argument, and it does require some rather heavy research. But the fundamentals I learnt come back regularly. Whilst my moot court experience was terrifying at the time, I appreciate the foundation that it gave me for attending court and developing my argument with a Magistrate or Judge. Similarly, having experienced barristers as lecturers demonstrate trial techniques and criticise my questioning of witnesses still assists me when I’m in court.

The solid legal education that I received at Notre Dame’s School of Law has greatly assisted me in my practice. But more than anything, I’m grateful for the support and encouragement that I received whilst undertaking practical work there. Without it, I doubt I would be practicing.

In addition to legal services, we provide emergency financial relief for those desperately in need, in the form of food and clothing vouchers.

My legal career to date at the FCLC has been very rewarding. I feel very honoured to have won the Law Society of WA’s Lawyer of the Year Award in the less than five years experience category in 2013.

I note that in addition to the above, I have been a volunteer for the last eight years with a Cambodian aid agency, the Tabitha Foundation. The Tabitha Foundation works to alleviate poverty through a micro-savings program that ultimately leads to a house for the client. With a team of others I help to construct a basic dwelling. It’s not legal work, but there’s an opportunity for those who wish to volunteer their legal skills in Cambodia. There’s an NGO legal aid organisation in Phnom Pehn that offers this opportunity.
Mentoring programs

Sydney

Notre Dame’s School of Law, Sydney, runs several mentoring programs for its law students. These include two highly selective commercial firm specific mentoring programs for four of their highest achieving students each year (in partnership with two of the most prestigious law firms in the nation – Allens and King & Wood Mallesons) as well as a broader mentoring program for other interested law students each semester in partnership with the St Thomas More Society.

The mentoring programs are flexible by their nature. The main mentoring program offered in partnership with the St Thomas More Society does not prescribe the number of times that mentors meet with their mentees or the extent to which mentors are able to include students in some of the workings of their practice. Generally, mentors and mentees may seek to meet three to four times during the course of the semester long program and activities may involve:

- Discussions on the realities of the legal profession and other related matters;
- Half-day of work shadowing;
- Attending court and work meetings with their mentor;
- Having a coffee or informal meeting;
- Attending public lectures or professional development sessions together;
- Seeking their mentor’s assistance with goal setting and career advice, for example: job applications and interview skills;
- Enlisting their mentor’s support in building professional networks, e.g. introducing their mentee to colleagues; and
- Engaging in email exchanges or telephone discussions.

If you’re interested in being a mentor to students at the Sydney Campus, please contact Darren Fitzpatrick, the Manager of the Internship Program in Sydney, at darren.fitzpatrick@nd.edu.au for more information.

Fremantle

The Notre Dame Fremantle Law School is pleased to have joined the Young Lawyers Committee of the Law Society of WA (YLC) and Edith Cowan University (ECU) in a mentoring program aimed at helping law students transition from Law School into the profession. The program is in its third year of operation and Notre Dame Fremantle Law School is excited to become a partner in this growing initiative.

The Notre Dame Fremantle Law School has run informal mentoring programs in the past, drawing on our excellent cohort of alumni. However, with the growth in cohort numbers leading to a disparity between current student numbers relative to the number of alumni, in 2014 the Notre Dame Fremantle Law School decided to participate in the successful programme being run by the YLC in conjunction with ECU. The program is in its third year of operation and Notre Dame Fremantle Law School is excited to become a partner in this growing initiative.

The mentors in the program are part of the ‘Young Lawyers’ cohort, defined as having been admitted to
practice within the last five years. These ‘Young Lawyers’ are paired with students in their penultimate and final years of study. Many law students have little personal experience with ‘the legal profession’ beyond the experiences provided within their university studies. Towards the end of their degree, law students are faced with many decisions regarding their studies, choice of professional qualification provider, types of work experience within the profession and, ultimately, applying for graduate positions within the profession. These decisions can seem overwhelming, particularly when students lack family or friends within the profession who they can turn to for guidance.

The Mentoring Program is intended to provide soon-to-be law graduates with a personal contact within the legal profession, who has been through the transition from student to graduate to lawyer relatively recently. Students and mentors are encouraged to meet regularly throughout the year and to discuss some of the challenges associated with transitional decisions including the choice of electives, the importance of clerkships and internships as well as career path options both within and beyond the big firms. The Law Society has taken a range of professional and personal considerations into account to provide students with a mentor who can provide not merely general guidance, but whose personal experiences are relevant to the student’s own career goals.

The Mentoring Program officially began with an event at the Law Society of WA attended by mentors and students as well as members of the Young Lawyers Committee and the staff facilitators Dr Lara Pratt from Notre Dame and Mr Rupert Johnson from ECU.

Stay in touch!

Make sure to provide Notre Dame with your most recent contact details by sending an email to alumni@nd.edu.au. This way you will be emailed In Principio, the magazine that contains the latest Notre Dame news and events. You can also register to access the University’s libraries as an alumni member.

Do you have information about your current job, a recent engagement or marriage, or other achievements that you would like to share in the next Ex Post Facto newsletter? Please email your information to Marilyn Krawitz, marilyn.krawitz@nd.edu.au. Also, please tell fellow alumni to do the same!
The Objects of The University of Notre Dame Australia are:

a) the provision of university education within a context of Catholic faith and values; and

b) the provision of an excellent standard of –
   i) teaching, scholarship and research;
   ii) training for the professions; and
   iii) pastoral care for its students.