

Foreword

Welcome to the Autumn 2011 edition of the journal, soon to be followed by a Spring 2012 edition. My thanks to Kevin Kerrigan who has now passed editing on to me. Kevin has been promoted to Dean at Northumbria Law School but will remain heavily involved in our clinical programmes and in our clinical conference.

The GAJE/IJCLE Conference, Valencia, July 2011

IJCLE partnered with the Global Alliance for Justice Education (GAJE) to organise their 6th worldwide conference and our 9th conference. The conference was hosted by the Institute of Human Rights, Faculty of Law, University of Valencia. There were several other local partners including the Legal Clinic at the University of Valencia; the Human Rights Institute Bartolomé de las Casas at University Carlos III in Madrid, the Legal Clinic “Dret al Dret” at the University of Barcelona, and CEDAT (Centre d’Estudis de Dret Ambiental de Tarragona) at the University Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona.

More than 300 delegates from more than 40 countries attended the conference which explored the GAJE theme: “Combatting Social Injustice Through Justice Education” and the IJCLE theme “Life, the Universe and Clinic: What questions does Clinic answer?”.

Conference delegates were therefore able to explore a fascinating and broad spectrum of experience and opinion on both social justice and educational issues. Our heartfelt thanks go to both our colleagues in GAJE and the conference hosts and local partners. More detail about the conference and papers presented can be found at <http://www.gaje.org/conferences/6th-worldwide-conference>.

Next year’s IJCLE conference, Durham, England, 11-13th July 2012

Next year’s IJCLE conference will be in Durham, a city founded in AD 995 with a World Heritage listed cathedral and castle.

The theme of the conference will be: Entering the Mainstream: Clinic for All? We will be exploring this question from many perspectives including pedagogic, professional and social justice. As ever, we welcome papers on a wide diversity of matters related to clinical legal education as well as the specific conference theme.

Highlights of the conference include: a keynote paper from Professors Blaustone, Klein and Galowitz (other keynote speakers to be announced shortly); interactive workshops on clinical teaching; conference dinner and Ceidilh at Durham Castle and optional visits to evensong at Durham Cathedral and Beamish Open Air Museum. For more information please visit www.ijcle.com. I look forward to renewing old friendships and making new ones amongst our ever growing global community of clinicians.

In this edition

Ben Waters reports on a mediation clinic within an English undergraduate law degree. He rightly points out the need to move beyond a traditional approach to dispute resolution which focuses

upon litigation. Despite more than a 15 years having passed since Lord Woolf's plan for litigation in England and Wales to be seen as a last resort, the teaching of alternative dispute resolution in England and Wales is patchy at best. The initiative at Canterbury Christ Church University in Kent is an example of how students on a substantive law course can benefit from a clinical experience within the curriculum and how the next generation of lawyers can experience at first hand the benefits and challenges of mediation.

Professor William Patton's article reminds us that clinical education can sometimes proceed on a model that is based upon group activity directed at social justice goals identified by the professor. In following this model we may be making assumptions about student learning that rests upon a generalisation that firstly our students will benefit most from group activity and secondly that exposure to social justice work as identified by the professor will necessarily lead to increased pro bono activity by students in their later professional life.

Professor Patton describes his different approach at Whittier Law School. This self directed policy clinic is based upon student choice of the area in which they wish to work in a "client-less" clinic. Students then complete tasks such as: preparing letters to the editor of a newspaper; legislative analysis of a pending bill; an appellate brief or working on a community lawyering project.

The clinic allows students to self direct, thus giving them ownership and the ability to select projects in accordance with their own ethical and political views rather than those of the teacher's. In doing this, Professor Patton postulates, the clinic lays the foreground for deeper engagement in lifelong pro bono activity .

The article is a persuasive call for a different kind of clinical experience. It might be argued that both this and the live client clinic ought to form part of the learner's experience. Undoubtedly a self directed policy clinic affords the student more autonomy and the opportunity to follow an individual learning path. It is less likely to offer the learning that can take place in more team oriented clinics or the motivation and learning that can occur when working for a real client when a real person's experiences and problems are immediate for the student. In the last edition of this journal Kevin Kerrigan and I argued that clinical experience should pervade the law curriculum. We would argue that Professor Patton's model of clinic should form part of the law degree alongside the live client clinic.

Professor Richard Wilson explores the stages of the clinical year in law school drawing parallels between the cyclical stages of clinical experience, which can be strongly linked to the seasons, and functional education as practised at his church in Washington D.C. Many clinicians, of different faiths or none, may well recognise the stages which Professor Wilson describes. The paper particularly helps one to remember the emotional highs and lows which both students and supervisors almost invariably experience through their time together.

Dr Michal Urban's paper gives a fascinating insight into a Street Law project explicitly aimed at those law students with the motivation and talent for teaching. This project at Prague Law School, Charles University in the Czech Republic is interesting because the focus is so clearly on learning teaching skills. This has led to both standard and upgraded programmes which clearly scaffold the students' experience and give them a real opportunity to develop their teaching ability. Most

1 Lord Woolf, M.R., *Access to Justice Final Report*, July 1996.

Street Law programmes, be they involving community groups or school children, require an element of pedagogic skill. There may well be elements of Prague Law School's programme which could be explored to see if our own Street Law programmes, which do not have the same emphasis on law teaching, can adopt some of the methods used. We will certainly be reviewing our own Street Law programme in the light of Dr Urban's paper here at Northumbria.

Jonny Hall

Editor

