

From the Dean



(L-R) Alumni Sean Desmond ('00), Lolia Fernandez ('17) and Anthony Miller ('00) talk to students about being mentees at a Raising the Bar session in March.

Last semester, we rolled out the first phase of our new Raising the Bar Professionalism Program, which is designed to support our students through a variety of programming that will prepare them for success as professionals in an evolving legal landscape. Through the program, spearheaded by our Student Affairs Office, students have various opportunities to attend a wide range of interactive sessions on topics including mentorship, financial responsibility, mental health and wellness, pro bono service, technology, and trial and transactional skills. In addition, all 3Ls may elect to have a professionalism mentor assigned to them – someone who can help them as they develop and hone their professional identities, and transition from law student to new lawyer. Thank you to the many alumni who are supporting this program – from mentoring to serving as Raising the Bar speakers to providing financial support to volunteering on the program's alumni advisory board – your help is critical to the professional success of our students!

- Dean Erin O'Connor

Faculty Profile: Mark Spottswood

Professor Mark Spottswood joined the FSU Law faculty in 2010. He teaches Evidence, Civil Procedure, Scientific Evidence and Advanced Civil Procedure. Spottswood focuses his research on the design of the trial process, investigating how we might make civil and criminal litigation more accurate, more acceptable and more cost-effective through reforms to the rules of procedure and evidence. His recent work has explored the proper interpretation of the Confrontation Clause, some challenges involved in communicating probabilistic concepts to jurors, and the ways in which the order of proof at trial can influence jury decision making. Spottswood received a University Graduate Teaching Award from FSU for 2016-2017, and is a regular coach for our Moot Court Team. He clerked for both the Honorable Jeffrey S. Sutton, United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, and the Honorable Rebecca R. Pallmeyer, United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. He earned his bachelor's and law degrees from Northwestern University.



“Throughout my career, I have been fascinated by trials. The trial process embodies our highest aspirations regarding the courts’ ability to unravel deception and discover the truth, but in recent years we have seen disturbing evidence suggesting that the results of jury trials may be wrong far more often than we would wish. In my research, I draw on psychological research to search for ways that we can reduce the frequency of wrongful verdicts. In the classroom, I do my best to strike a balance between showing students the best ways to achieve positive results for their clients under the rules as they exist now, while also preparing them to take an active role in improving our justice system for the benefit of future generations. I am constantly impressed by our students’ enthusiasm for both kinds of understanding.”

Alum Profile: Tracey L. Ellerson ('97)

Tracey Ellerson serves as vice president, chief compliance officer, for Brambles Limited, an international supply-chain logistics company. She helps Brambles and its group companies comply with all applicable laws and regulations in the approximately 60 countries in which they do business. Ellerson develops global programs—policies, procedures, trainings, and other resource guides—in areas including anti-bribery and anti-corruption; competition; import, export and sanctions controls; data privacy; and information security incident response. She is based in Atlanta, but frequently travels to Brambles offices worldwide to meet with local business teams. Prior to joining Brambles in 2015, Ellerson was a partner at BakerHostetler LLP in Orlando, where she served as a co-leader of the firm’s Employment and Labor Class Action Team. She also practiced at Akerman Senterfitt, P.A. after graduating from law school. While in Orlando, she served on the Coalition for the Homeless of Central Florida’s Board of Directors, volunteered as a guardian ad litem, and was a member of the United Way’s Central Florida Women’s Leadership Steering Committee.



“I am so grateful to FSU Law and its amazing faculty and staff, without whom I would not be where I am today. FSU Law gave me the skills, the education and, most importantly, the confidence to start my legal journey as a litigator and to then jump into global compliance. I now get to travel and speak to people all over the world about some challenging and, at times, controversial topics. There is no doubt in my mind that, without FSU Law, I would not have had this wonderful opportunity or the courage to take it!”

Student Profile: 2018 Grad Cole Masterson

Desired Practice Location: Tallahassee
Field of Law Sought: Personal injury plaintiffs’ representation

May 2018 FSU Law graduate Cole Masterson holds a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Florida State University, where he was a member of the FSU Rugby Team and FSU Marching Chiefs. Originally from Bradenton, Masterson was a staff editor for the *Florida State University Law Review*. He also worked as a pro bono research assistant for the FSU Institute for Family Violence Studies, where he co-drafted an amicus curiae brief regarding transgender representation in modern culture and media to be filed in an upcoming case. He also won a book award for Legal Writing and Research I. The summer after his 1L year, Masterson clerked for Matthew Erjavec, P.A. In this role, he engaged in all aspects of personal injury cases, including negotiating with insurance adjusters and medical professionals to obtain optimal damages for clients. During that summer, Masterson also provided per-project services for Soler & Slack, P.A. He researched various areas of criminal law and drafted a motion to suppress evidence, which was filed in a criminal case and was instrumental in reducing the client’s sentence. Masterson clerked for the Law Office of Fred Pearson, P.A. during the fall semester of his 3L year. He researched issues, prepared memoranda, drafted legal complaints, composed demands and corresponded with insurance agents, health providers and parties working toward the resolution of personal injury cases. If you are interested in hiring Masterson, contact him at ccm10f@my.fsu.edu.



“My course of study and extracurricular experiences at FSU Law have provided me with the legal knowledge, practical skills and confidence to succeed in the practice of law, and I am excited to begin my career as an attorney.”



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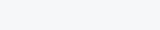
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