

NATALIE RODRIGUEZ

Southwestern Law School
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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Online and hybrid legal education • Online J.D. program design and quality assurance • Asynchronous teaching and course design • ABA distance-education standards • AI and assessment integrity • Academic success and bar exam reform • Law school admissions

EMPLOYMENT

SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL, Los Angeles, California

Vice Dean for Academics & Online Education and Professor of Law, January 2025–Present

Advise the President and Dean on the law school's strategic direction and on programmatic, curricular, faculty, accreditation, and operational matters. Lead academic policy and planning across Southwestern's J.D. programs and oversee faculty, adjunct faculty, the Registrar's Office, Academic Administration, and the Online J.D. Program, the first ABA-approved J.D. program delivered primarily asynchronously. Guide the program's continued development and quality assurance, including faculty support, curriculum design, student engagement, and compliance with ABA distance-education standards. Collaborate with the Dean, co-Vice Deans, and Student Services to implement policy, address student concerns, and support the school community.

SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL, Los Angeles, California

Associate Dean for Academic Innovation and Administration and Associate Professor of Law, January 2022–January 2025, and Interim Registrar, 2024

Collaborated with the Vice Deans and academic departments on course scheduling, academic calendars, faculty assignments, new faculty orientation, and faculty governance. Co-chaired the planning committee that designed Southwestern's Online J.D. Program and led its application for ABA approval. Managed faculty-development and adjunct budgets; reported bar results and completed the annual ABA Bar Passage Questionnaire; led research on nontraditional predictors of law school and bar success; trained faculty in distance education through workshops, recorded modules, and manuals; and managed grant-funded projects.

SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL, Los Angeles, California

Assistant Dean of Academic Success and Associate Professor of Law, July 2017–January 2022

Developed, enhanced, and administered a comprehensive academic support program for law students, which included bridge programs and first-year programs that assisted students in the transition to law school, and second-year courses designed for students who had been identified as at-risk based on academic performance; taught in bar support courses and mentored students during their bar studies; collaborated with other departments and faculty who were involved in providing academic support; participated on various faculty committees; coordinated and enhanced the institution's data collection and analysis; processed and reported all bar results information, including the annual ABA Bar Passage Questionnaire; managed a research project aimed at identifying nontraditional factors for predicting law school and bar success; provided training for faculty in distance education methods via live workshops,

prerecorded videos, and training manuals; drafted grant applications that provided additional funding to support programming and intervention.

SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL, Los Angeles, California

Director of Academic Success and Bar-Related Programs and Associate Professor of Law, August 2013– July 2017

Developed, enhanced, and administered a comprehensive academic support and bar program for law students, which included bridge programs and first-year programs that assisted students in the transition to law school, courses designed for students who have been identified as at-risk based on academic performance, early bar workshops and a customized bar preparation program; collaborated with other departments and faculty who are involved in providing academic support; participated in various faculty committees; coordinated and enhanced the institution's data collecting and analyses; processed and reported all bar results information, including the Annual ABA Bar Passage Questionnaire.

SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL, Los Angeles, California

Academic Success and Bar-Related Programs Fellow and Adjunct Professor of Law, August 2012– July 2013

Worked closely with the Director of Academic Success and Bar-Related Programs to research, design, implement and manage academic support programs, including pre-matriculation programs, first-year programs and Bar examination preparation programs; taught a first-year course for at-risk students; supervised the Dean's Fellow program; met individually with students who were struggling academically.

SELECTED COURSES TAUGHT

Academic Skills Lab; Foundations of Law and Practice; MBE: Skills and Strategies; Contracts II; Legal Methods; Principles of Legal Analysis; Remedies

SELECTED INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

- Accreditation & Institutional Effectiveness (2026 to present)
- Crisis Response Team (2025 to present)
- Data Culture Task Force (2025 to present)
- Educational Technology Committee (2025 to present)
- Dean's Advisory Committee (2022 to present)
- Faculty Recruitment Committee (2022 to present)
- Lateral Appointments with Tenure Committee (2022 to present)
- Online J.D. Program Committee (2022 to present; Committee Chair, 2025 to present, and 2022 to 2023)
- Sabbatical Committee (2022 to present)
- Tenure Committee (2022 to present)
- Curriculum Committee (2022 to present; 2013 to 2015)
- WSCUC Core Drafting Committee and WSCUC Steering Committee (2025 to 2026)
- Class Continuity Committee (Committee Chair, 2025 to 2026)
- SMaRT (Southwestern's Managing Risk Team)/Enterprise Risk Management Task Force (2022 to present)
- Student Experience Working Group (2024 to 2026)

- Innovating and Developing Educational Alternatives Ad Hoc Committee (2019 to 2026; Committee Chair, 2020 to 2022)
- Faculty Development Committee (2022 to 2025)
- WASC Accreditation Working Group (2022 to 2025)
- Assessment Committee (2022 to 2024)
- Admissions Committee (2021 to 2024)
- Faculty Advisor, Christian Legal Society (2020 to 2024)
- Bar Success Grant Funding Opportunity Ad Hoc Committee (2021 to 2023)
- Student Support & Emergency Team Ad Hoc Committee (2021 to 2022)
- Pandemic Response Team Sub-Committee on Course Scheduling (spring 2020)
- Admissions Sub-Committee on Non-Traditional Factors (2018 to present)
- Bar Passage Task Force (2016 to 2022)
- Hybrid Online Ad Hoc Committee (2017 to 2018)
- Outcomes Ad Hoc Committee (2015 to 2017)
- Data Collection Ad Hoc Committee (2014 to 2015)
- Student Enhancement Ad Hoc Committee (2013 to 2015)

21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania
Site Director, October 2004-May 2007

PROJECT GRAD LOS ANGELES, North Hollywood, California
Case Manager, September 2002-September 2004

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- Presentation, *From Compliance to Continuous Improvement: Building the Quality Infrastructure for a New Online Program*, 2026 Online and Hybrid Learning Conference: Innovating Quality, University of Dayton School of Law (September 2026)
- Panelist, *Deans on Starting and Growing Online and Hybrid Programs*, 2026 Online and Hybrid Learning Conference: Innovating Quality, University of Dayton School of Law (September 2026)
- Article, *Breaking the Admissions Mold: Graduates' Personal Stories and the Admission Tool That Made It Possible*, 54 Sw. L. Rev. 499 (2025)
- Presentation, *Empowering Applicants through Innovative Admissions Approach*, Pacific Coast Association of Pre-Law Advisors, Don't Stop Believin': *Advising for Transitions in a Changing Landscape* (June 8, 2023)
- Article, Anahid Gharakhanian, Natalie Rodriguez & Elizabeth A. Anderson, *More than the Numbers: Empirical Evidence of an Innovative Approach to Admissions*, 107 MINN. L. REV. 2431 (2023)
- Presentation, *Innovative Approach to Admissions: A Collaborative Effort*, RISE Alliance and USC Gould School of Law Symposium, Intersectionality and Social Movements: A DEI Tool for Coalition (January 13, 2023)
- Micro-essay, *Collected Wisdom Continued: What We Learned About Teaching During COVID*, AALS Section on Teaching Methods Newsletter, December 2022
- Presentation, *"More than the Numbers": Empirical Evidence of an Innovative Approach to Admissions*, Minnesota Law Review Symposium, Leaving Langdell Behind: Reimagining Legal Education for a New Era (October 7, 2022)

- Blog, *Using Meaningful Admissions Data to Improve Legal Education and the Profession*, LSSSE (June 23, 2022)
- Panel Moderator, *Leveraging Technology to Increase Student Engagement in Online Courses*, AALS Conference (January 7, 2022)
- Panel Moderator, *Who Should Own the Course Content Created for Online Delivery?*, AALS Conference (January 7, 2022)
- Podcast, *Why Can't We Have One Bar Exam for All Jurisdictions? (Ep.3)*, UnCommon Law (December 2, 2021)
- Organizer and Host, *2021 West Coast Consortium of Academic Support Professionals Conference* (November 5, 2021)
- Presentation, *Accentuate the Positive – Eliminate the Negative: Pandemic Pedagogy Wins*, AALS Teaching Methods Webinar (October 6, 2021)
- Presentation, *Breaking Things Down to Build Students Up*, AASE Conference (May 26, 2021)
- Panel Participant, *California Bar Exam Success Panel*, The Los Angeles County Bar Association (May 24, 2021)
- Micro-essay, *Collected Wisdom: Teaching During the Time of COVID*, AALS Section on Teaching Methods Newsletter, December 2020
- Article, *Forging Relationships with New Students and Encouraging a Sense of Community*, AALS Section on New Law Professors Newsletter, Summer 2020
- Presentation, *Intersections Between Deliberate Online Pedagogy and Emergency Remote Learning*, CALIcon2020 Conference hosted by The Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction (June 3, 2020)
- Presentation, *Lessons Learned from Pre-COVID Online Teaching*, Online Teaching Conference hosted by the Association of Academic Support Educators (May 1, 2020)
- Blog, *Online Learning Tips*, Law School Academic Support Blog (March 13, 2020)
- Podcast, *Simplicity and Flexibility*, The Productive Woman (October 30, 2019)
- Note, *Give Us Your Weary But Not Your Battered: The DHS, Politics and Asylum for Victims of Domestic Violence*, 18 SW. J. INT'L L. 317 (2012)

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- California Supreme Court and State Bar, Blue Ribbon Commission on the Future of the Bar Exam (2021 to 2023)
- AASE, Executive Board, Secretary (2021 to 2022)
- AALS, Technology, Law and Legal Education Section, Co-Chair, Programming Committee (2021 to 2022)
- AALS, Academic Support Section, Programming Committee Member (2021 to 2022)
- AASE, Online Presence Committee Member (2020 to 2021)
- AASE, Bar Advocacy Committee Member (2019 to 2020)
- AASE, ABA 316 Sub-Committee, Chair (2019 to 2020)
- IAALS, Focus Groups Observer for "Building A Better Bar" Research Study (2019 to 2020)
- AASE, Scholarship Group Committee Member (2019 to 2020)
- California State Bar, Advisory Board Member for Law School Performance Study (2017 to 2019)
- AALS, Academic Support Section, Programming Committee Member (2017 to 2018)

EDUCATION

SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL, Los Angeles, California

Juris Doctor, May 2012

Selected honors and activities: CALI and Witkin Awards; Public Service Award; Dean's Merit Award; Lead Article Editor, Southwestern Journal of International Law

LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY, Los Angeles, California

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science; *Minor*, Philosophy, May 2002

Selected honors and activities: Dean's List; Oxford Scholars Program, University of Oxford, England

MEMBERSHIPS AND BAR ADMISSION

California State Bar (2012 to present)

Member, Association of American Law Schools, Legal Master's Programs Section, 2026 to present

Member, Association of American Law Schools, Technology, Law and Legal Education Section, 2020 to present

Member, Association of American Law Schools, Teaching Methods Section, 2020 to present

Member, Association of American Law Schools, Academic Support Section, 2013 to present

Member, Association of Academic Support Educators, 2013 to present

LANGUAGES

Fluent in Spanish