

**LAW SCHOOL CURRICULUM
REFORM AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR
PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE
AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN
THE LEGAL PROFESSION**

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This Article argues that reform in the legal profession should begin with fundamental changes in the law school curriculum that shifts from its disproportionate focus on a highly intellectualized and abstracted approach to teaching law towards greater emphasis on practical skills, especially skills such as Alternative Dispute Resolution (“ADR”) and client counseling and communication. All lawyers need these practical skills, which are especially effective for providing legal assistance to underserved members of society. Making the legal profession more useful for clients of all kinds is also a way to open the practice of law to more people of all kinds and to diversify the legal profession. Technological advances may also improve the efficiency and efficacy of delivering legal services to such individuals and groups who previously have not had adequate access to such services. This Article

Elias

begins this argument in Section II by examining some of the problems faced by members of the legal profession and by law schools in recent years. Section III addresses a different set of problems—those associated with the lack of diversity among lawyers, and the legal profession’s failure adequately to serve the needs of all social groups. In Section IV, this Article discusses how the traditional law school curriculum, first developed in the late nineteenth century, has contributed to the lack of diversity and social responsibility in the legal profession. In Section V, this Article concludes by recommending key reforms for the law school curriculum in order to overcome some of the problems identified in Section IV.