

Trinity Law School
Narrative Re: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan
& Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan

Pursuant to Accredited Law School Rules Rule 4.160(C), Trinity Law School (“TLS”) has adopted a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan (“DEI Plan”). The DEI Plan endeavors to cultivate an institutional climate that supports student success and guarantees the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all students, faculty, and staff.

TLS has a religious mission: to provide an exceptional legal education in the historic, Judeo-Christian tradition. A part of that tradition is to affirm that, in the words of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, God has “made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent [his] blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near.” While this mission has a deep historic tradition that transcends all races, it is undeniable that the most disadvantaged races in America embrace this ideal more than the population at large. As a result, TLS’s religious mission has led to the inclusion of underrepresented communities in a manner that exceeds that of most law schools.

TLS has a commitment to the three enumerated policies identified in Rule 4.160(c).

Antidiscrimination Policy

From its founding, TLS has been open to student applicants from any background or belief, without discriminating against any applicant, provided that the applicant demonstrates an ability to complete a rigorous program that leads to passing the Bar Exam.

As part of Trinity International University (“TIU”), TLS is subject to a Non Discrimination Policy that prohibits discrimination consistent with federal, state, and local laws. Specifically, TLS “does not discriminate, or tolerate discrimination, in matters of admissions, employment, housing, or in any area of the TIU’s activity based on race, color, national origin, sex, parental status, disability, age, veteran status, genetic information or other ‘protected status’ under local, state, or federal law.” The Non Discrimination Policy was first adopted in February 2010 and updated in August 2015.

As TIU is based in Illinois and requires all of its employees to meet the rigorous training requirements for deterring sexual harassment and sexual assault, TLS employees are annually trained in these subjects and meet the standards of both California and Illinois in this training. Chiefly among this is an annual hour-long training program, including an assessment, which is required of all staff and full-time faculty.

TIU first approved a Sexual Assault Policy in January 2014 and later updated this policy in August 2023. TIU is committed to maintaining a Christ-centered community, free of discrimination, including all forms of sexual intimidation and exploitation. Accordingly, [TIU] will not tolerate any acts of sexual assault or sexual violence by or on its students, faculty, or staff. [TIU] will also attempt to protect the [TIU] community from sexual assault or sexual violence by its vendors, consultants, and other third parties who interact with members of

[TIU].

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Prohibit all forms of sexual assault or sexual violence;
- Create [an] environment that is free from sexual assault and sexual violence;
- Encourage good faith complaints when sexual assault or sexual violence has occurred;
- Provide options for addressing and resolving complaints of sexual assault or sexual violence.

The Sexual Assault Policy is designed to encourage persons who believe that they have experienced sexual assault or sexual violence, or have witnessed sexual assault or sexual violence, of another community member to bring the conduct to the attention of appropriate individuals so that [TIU] can take prompt corrective action, as appropriate, against any of its students, faculty, or staff. This applies on the [TIU] campus, any non-campus buildings or property, public property adjacent to the campus, and [TIU-]sponsored events. All [TIU] community members are directed to implement and abide by the procedures outlined in this policy.

All complaints will be taken seriously and no one who reports in good faith, including third parties (e.g., vendors), will suffer retaliation or reprisal from [TIU]. Complaints of sexual assault or sexual violence will be treated in confidence to the extent feasible, given the need to conduct a thorough investigation and take corrective action. If it is determined through an appropriate and prompt investigation that sexual assault or sexual violence has occurred, effective corrective action will be taken to eliminate the threat of sexual assault or sexual violence, attempt to ensure that it does not recur, and appropriately care for those who may have been harmed. Depending on circumstances and the severity of the conduct, corrective action may range from an oral or written warning to dismissal or expulsion.

The full Sexual Assault Policy can be provided upon request.

Inclusive and Diverse Law School Environment and Experience

As part of its religious mission, TLS has a passion for the flourishing of all human beings, which necessarily includes respectful discourse among individuals who often disagree on basic principles. TLS has succeeded in having a more diverse community than most law schools; it seeks to continue that which is working effectively while doing all that it can to raise its Bar Exam passage rate while not diminishing its highly diverse student body.

Starting with Fall 2024, in support of Rule 4.160(C)(2), all TLS syllabi with synchronous class sessions have the following required language that demonstrate TLS's commitment to having an inclusive law school environment and experience for its students:

The right to free speech of everyone in our community of scholars and learners is strictly respected. That right is sacrosanct in this course and is possessed by faculty and students alike. With the aim of advancing and deepening everyone's understanding of the issues addressed in the course, students are urged to speak their minds, explore ideas and arguments, play devil's advocate, and engage in civil but robust discussions. There is no thought or language policing. Students are expected to do business in the proper currency of intellectual discourse—a currency consisting of reasons, evidence, and arguments—but no ideas or

positions are out of bounds.

TLS's OnCourse program endeavors to support student success from Orientation through the passing of the California Bar Exam. [Please see the TLS responses regarding Rules 4.160(B)(17) Academic Support and 4.160(B)(19) Statement of Student Services.]

TLS encourages students to participate in student groups such as the Black Law Students Association, Delta Theta Phi, and the Women's Legal Society and introduces students to these opportunities starting at Orientation.

Trinity also encourages students to engage in research and outreach through its international programs in Cambodia and Europe. Additionally, students are invited to participate in TLS clinical opportunities that allow students to practice cultural competency while serving underrepresented communities. These clinical opportunities include:

- Trinity Law Clinic (takes place at the Orange County Rescue Mission)
- Trinity Mobile Legal Clinic (assists low-income and homeless residents of Orange County)
- Trinity Immigration Clinic (works with non-profit, non-governmental organizations to provide legal services in areas such as asylum, Temporary Protected Status, Adjustment of Status, removal, and other immigration-related issues)
- Trinity Religious Liberty Clinic (provides pro bono legal services to churches and individuals primarily in cases involving the defense of religious freedom, parental rights, and other civil liberties)

The required Professional Responsibility & Ethics course includes instruction in the ABA and California rules pertaining to bias and discrimination. In particular, the course covers ABA Model Rule 8.4(g) and the more extensive prohibitions and requirements of California Rule of Professional Conduct 8.4.1.

TLS requires its students to take two courses which take a deeply philosophical analysis of the meaning of justice. A critical part of these courses involves studying the meaning of justice, what it means to be denied justice through embedded cultural discrimination, the discipline of discussing controversial issues with grace and respect, and the analysis of the critical issues that divide society.

Finally, TLS has a passion for human rights, demonstrated through its Center for Human Rights, which advances understanding and the building of legal institutions to combat systemic legal systems that oppress human beings.

Access/Diversity Programs and Partnerships

TLS has adopted the following DEI Plan in order to encourage the participation of historically underrepresented communities within the student body and faculty. In order to ensure an environment of continuous evaluation and improvement, the DEI Plan includes a description of the metrics that will be used to track the progress and allow for modifications on an annual basis.

TRINITY LAW SCHOOL
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION PLAN

Dated: September 15, 2024

Pursuant to Accredited Law School Rules Rule 4.160(C), Trinity Law School (“TLS”) has adopted this Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan (“DEI Plan”). The DEI Plan endeavors to cultivate an institutional climate that supports student success and guarantees the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all students, faculty, and staff.

To demonstrate its commitment to the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the TLS community, TLS has formed a DEI Committee that will meet at least semi-annually in order to evaluate the results of its efforts and recommend changes. The DEI Committee will include the Dean, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Chief Operations Officer, Associate Vice President of Enrollment, and a Full-Time Faculty Member.

The DEI Plan focuses on: (1) student recruitment and retention, and (2) faculty recruitment.

TLS has used the State Bar of California’s *2023 Report Card on the Diversity of California’s Legal Profession* in order to prepare its DEI Plan; importantly, TLS relied on Figure 1 Race/Ethnicity, which compares California’s 2023 attorney population with California’s adult population.

Student Recruitment & Retention

According to the *2023 Report Card on the Diversity of California’s Legal Profession*, California’s adult population is 37% Hispanic/Latino, 6% Black/African American, and 25% identify as having a disability. However, within California’s attorney population, only 6% identify as Hispanic/Latino, 3% as Black/African American, and 6% as having a disability. This stark difference underscores the need for increased representation within the legal profession.

To assess our efforts, we examined data on our students actively enrolled between September 16, 2023, and September 15, 2024, as well as graduates from the past three academic years: 2021/2022, 2022/2023, and 2023/2024, totaling 121 graduates. Here’s how TLS compares:

Hispanic/Latino Representation

- Enrolled Students: 30% of our enrolled student body are Hispanic/Latino, close to the statewide adult population of 37% and significantly exceeding the 6% of California attorneys.
- Graduates: Hispanic/Latino students make up 27% of our graduates, showing a slight drop from the enrolled percentage but still an improvement over the legal profession’s 6%.

DEI Plan

- Goal: Maintain or increase Hispanic/Latino enrollment and improve the graduation rate of Hispanic/Latino students to align with California’s adult demographics and boost representation in the California legal profession.

Action Plan (12/31/2024 to 12/31/2026)

- Advertising in Spanish: Utilize current vendors to target new Spanish-speaking segments. Additionally, assign a dedicated resource in the call center to assist Spanish-speaking inquiries.
 - Measurables: Track effectiveness through quarterly reports on inquiries, contact rate, and application rate from these specific campaigns.
- Reporting: A 12-month rolling average enrollment report will be provided to the DEI Committee within 20 days of each semester census. This report will help monitor trends, enabling timely adjustments to recruitment and retention strategies, while smoothing out seasonal fluctuations and highlighting longer-term patterns in student demographics. Data will align with the State Bar enrollment report, specifically tracking Hispanic/Latino representation.

Retention Support

- Professional Networking: TLS will sponsor a table at the annual Hispanic Bar Association of Orange County event, inviting alumni and current students to foster mentorship and support opportunities. The next event is scheduled for March 2025, with free tickets provided to encourage participation.

Black/African American Representation

- Enrolled Students: Black/African American students represent 27% of our student body, far exceeding both the 6% in the California adult population and the 3% in the attorney population.
- Graduates: Among our graduates, 16% identify as Black/African American. While this is a drop from enrollment, it remains significantly higher than the representation in the California legal profession.

DEI Plan

- Goal: Maintain Black/African American enrollment and improve graduation rates at TLS.

Action Plan (12/31/2024 to 12/31/2026)

- Reporting: A 12-month rolling average enrollment report will be provided to the DEI Committee within 20 days of each semester census to monitor trends and make timely adjustments. Data will align with the State Bar enrollment report, specifically tracking Black/African American representation.

Retention Support

- Events: TLS will host two annual events, either in-person or webinars, featuring African American speakers on academic success and Bar Exam preparation. TLS will cover costs for the speaker's honorarium, travel, accommodations, and food, with attendance tracked in the Student Information System.
- Professional Networking: TLS will fund student memberships in the Thurgood Marshall Bar Association (TMBA), supporting Black law students through community engagement and legal practice excellence. Membership invitations will be sent via drip campaigns during the second week of each semester, with an active membership directory reported to the DEI Committee

during the 10th week of the Fall and Spring semesters.

Disability Representation

Currently, we lack detailed data on the percentage of students or graduates with disabilities. However, TLS offers the endowed Mephibosheth Scholarship, which provides special assistance for individuals with long-term physical or sensory impairments.

Goal: Target applicants with disabilities.

Action Plan (12/31/2024 to 12/31/2026)

- Digital Advertising: Allocate \$6,000 annually to digital advertising specifically targeting prospective law students with disabilities, recognizing the need to counteract biases in standard algorithms that often favor traditionally represented groups.
 - Measurables: A quarterly report on spending, inquiries, and application effectiveness will be submitted to the DEI Committee to assess this targeted initiative's impact.
 - Outreach: Identify disability support programs in Orange and Los Angeles counties that aid adult students with disabilities in accessing postsecondary education. Our goal is to be listed in at least 10 resources as a provider of the Mephibosheth Scholarship, with KPIs reported quarterly to the DEI Committee.
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Gender Representation

The *2023 Report Card on the Diversity of California's Legal Profession* notes that only 44% of California attorneys are female, while 65% of our enrolled students are female. This suggests TLS may be better positioned to contribute to gender balance in the legal profession. Among our graduates, 58% are female, indicating strong retention and graduation rates.

Goal: Maintain female enrollment and graduation rates at TLS.

Action Plan (12/31/2024 to 12/31/2026)

- Reporting: A 12-month rolling average enrollment report will be provided to the DEI Committee within 20 days of each semester census. This report will offer an ongoing view of trends and allow for timely adjustments. Data will align with the State Bar enrollment report, specifically tracking female representation as a percentage of the total student population.
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Scheduled Compliance Deliverables: Auditable and Measurable Reporting

Recruitment Quarterly Reports Due Dates: March 31, June 30, September 30, December 31

Responsible Party: Doug Eaton to submit to the DEI Committee

1. Spanish-speaking Audience Advertising Campaign Report: Tracking inquiries, contact rates, and application rates from targeted campaigns.
 2. Disability-targeted Advertising Campaign Report: Tracking spending, inquiry rates, and application effectiveness.
 3. Disability Support Resources KPI Report: Progress on the goal to be listed in at least 10 resources offering the Mephibosheth Scholarship.
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Retention Quarterly Report Due Dates: March 31, June 30, September 30, December 31

Responsible Party: Michael Peterson, COO, to submit to the DEI Committee

1. Thurgood Marshall Bar Association (TMBA) Membership Invitations and Membership Numbers: Reporting on membership invitation counts and active memberships.
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Retention: Rolling 12-Month Enrollment Report

Due Date: No later than 20 days after each semester census (Fall, Spring, and Summer)

Responsible Party: Michael Peterson, COO, to submit to the DEI Committee

1. Rolling 12-Month Enrollment Report: Tracking Hispanic/Latino, Black/African American, female, and other demographic representations as a percentage of the total student population, in alignment with the State Bar enrollment report.

Faculty Recruitment

TLS is committed to having a diverse faculty while requiring that its faculty assent to the religious doctrines and conduct standards of its historic Christian tradition. Thus, while the standards for ethnic, racial, and gender diversity lead to a continuous quest for diverse faculty, faculty candidates must pledge a personal affirmation to TLS's doctrinal statement. Diversity among faculty members will be enhanced by outreach via LinkedIn; this enables TLS to reach a nationwide pool of potential candidates capable of teaching in the online environment and able to sign the TLS doctrinal statement. Additionally, TLS will continue to network with those friends, family members, colleagues, and classmates of current faculty members in order to increase the ethnic, racial, and gender diversity of its faculty. Notably, few law schools in the nation have a distinctly religious perspective. As a result, TLS's core distinction itself leads to diversity within legal academia.

The DEI Committee will semi-annually review its ongoing efforts to increase the ethnic, racial, and gender diversity of its faculty.