

Action Plans for Student Legal Services (SLS)

The action plan items that follow are products of the SLS self-assessment process. These action items are recommendations from both the Educational Services Assessment Team and the Legal Services Assessment Team. SLS Staff members should consider the feasibility and merit of each of these action items and implement those that will improve the office's delivery of legal and educational services to the student body at Illinois State University.

Ultimately, these action items are designed to improve the following areas: assessment, career advisement, facilities, inter-office relations, paralegal internships, performance appraisals, planning, policies and procedures, promotional efforts, reporting, service deliveries, staffing, staff development, student development, student feedback, and webpage development.

The SLS self-assessment yielded an alternative way of identifying future action items. It should be noted that the assessment teams agreed to follow the SLS Director and other SLS staff members to establish timeframes and point persons for each of these action items after reviewing all of the action items as a staff and determining the feasibility of pursuing each item. The structure in which action plan item is presented-namely, in the form of a goal statement-provides SLS staff members with an appropriate context within which to set action plan implementation goal statements and timeframes. The following notations prior to each action item identify the priority placed upon each action plan item by the assessors: low, medium, high, and top priority.

Assessment

HIGH	Initiate a dialogue with the National Legal Aid and Defenders' Association about working with the Council for the Advancement of standards to establish specific CAS Standards for legal services offices.
MEDIUM	Involve the SLS Advisory Board in all assessment processes to ensure objectivity and support of student leaders for programmatic changes
LOW	Request that superiors in the Division of Student Affairs provide more regular feedback about the effectiveness of SLS operations.
MEDIUM	Review how SLS staff members can make better use of data that is already collected from students.

Career Advisement

- LOW Implement a system for tracking the number and types of instances in which SLS staff provide career advisement opportunities for students.
- HIGH Initiate a campus-wide dialogue about the importance of a coordinated effort for pre-law advisement.

Facilities

- MEDIUM Work with the pertinent University offices to improve the signage on the Student Services Building and intra-building directional aids for helping students locate the SLS office.
- LOW Schedule annual review of SLS facilities needs

Inter-Office Relations

- MEDIUM Establish or maintain solid relationships with pertinent University offices and programs whose mission and goals are consistent with those of SLS.
- LOW Provide material to equivalent legal services at other institutions about the SLS Educational Services program so that other institution's can establish a similar program.

Paralegal Internships

- LOW Implement a requirement that paralegal interns record the percentage of time spent on various tasks each day.

LOW	Implement a requirement that paralegal interns sign an agreement acknowledging the ethical standards and confidentiality requirements of the position.
MEDIUM	Implement a systematic method for positively recognizing paralegal interns
LOW	Integrate a values clarification component to the paralegal internships experience
LOW	Incorporate an independent project into the paralegal internship experience
LOW	Incorporate additional opportunities for collaboration with other staff members into the paralegal internship experience.
HIGH	Update and supplement the intern handbook

Performance Appraisals

MEDIUM	Integrate into the performance appraisal system a mechanism for tallying constituent feedback-both positive and negative-for all SLS staff members.
LOW	Increase the number of evaluators involved in the appraisal of each employee's performance.
MEDIUM	Integrate a goal-setting component into the performance appraisal system for all SLS staff members.

Planning

MEDIUM Develop program mission statements for each of the Educational Services and Legal Services programs that are separate from the overarching SLS office mission statement.

MEDIUM Incorporate a student development component to the strategic plan goal statements of the Educational Services program.

MEDIUM Review SLS office mission statement

LOW Separate written strategic plan goal statements by associated program when submitting reports to superiors in the Division of Student Affairs and disseminating reports to the SLS staff members and other constituencies.

Policies and Procedures

LOW Draft an office policy statement adopting the Administrative/Professional and Civil Services hiring procedures as those that will be used by SLS.

LOW Draft an office policy statement adopting the University's Affirmative Action policy as the prevailing policy of its kind for the SLS office.

LOW Draft an office policy statement adopting the University's harassment policy as the prevailing policy of its kind for the SLS office.

LOW Establish a written SLS policies and procedures manual.

LOW Request information from the pertinent University offices about institutional policies regarding SLS staff members' professional liability and insurance coverage options.

MEDIUM	Schedule an annual formal review of the administrative policies and procedures governing SLS operations.
MEDIUM	Schedule an annual formal review of the ethical standards governing SLS staff.
MEDIUM	Schedule an annual formal review of trends in qualitative data collected by both the Educational Services and Legal Services programs.
MEDIUM	Schedule an annual formal review of trends in quantitative data collected by both the Educational Services and Legal Services programs.
LOW	Schedule an annual formal review cycle for technology and equipment needs.
MEDIUM	Schedule an annual formal review of assessment and evaluation data with the Advisory Board in order to inform student leaders about SLS operations and provide for student feedback into SLS decision-making processes.

Promotional Efforts

MEDIUM	Achieve better penetration of promotional efforts in the residence halls.
MEDIUM	Achieve better penetration of promotional efforts during Preview.
HIGH	Target underrepresented student groups with promotional efforts about educational presentations and SLS services.

HIGH Target international students with promotional efforts about educational presentations and SLS services.

Reporting:

LOW Add employees' functional work responsibilities to SLS organizational chart.

MEDIUM Incorporate student feedback into reports submitted to superiors in the Division of Student Affairs.

Service Deliveries

MEDIUM Conduct a comprehensive review of the substantive areas of law currently practiced by SLS and consider what additional areas, if any, should be practiced to better meet the changing needs of the University student population.

LOW Determine if the changing needs of the University's student population warrant modification of SLS office hours.

MEDIUM Determine the feasibility of offering credit card payment options to clients and, if feasible, implement credit card payment options.

MEDIUM Develop and disseminate written materials to help students with conducting their own trials, representing themselves at informal hearings, recruiting sub lessees.

MEDIUM Develop written materials and/or educational presentations targeted to international students about how the law works in the United States.

Staffing:

TOP PRIORITY Recruit, select, and train a full-time professional staff member to assist students with apartment issues, advocate student interests in the landlord-tenant disputes, and educate students about legal responsibilities in off-campus housing.

HIGH Work with institutional authorities to raise the salary of the SLS paralegal to an appropriately comparable level to the salaries of other paralegals in the local geographic area.

Staff Development

MEDIUM Raise the web development proficiencies of SLS staff members.

HIGH Raise the proficiencies of SLS staff members for utilizing the office's new computer-aided research technology.

Student Development

MEDIUM Incorporate available information about student development into decision making about SLS service deliveries.

LOW Secure National Association of Student Personnel Administrators membership for paralegal.

Student Feedback

MEDIUM Expand the amount of student feedback collected regarding the effectiveness of educational presentations.

MEDIUM Gather student feedback about the effectiveness of educational articles and guest columns.

LOW Increase use of e-mail in soliciting student feedback about satisfaction with Educational Services program deliveries.

MEDIUM Revamp the student feedback survey

Webpage Development

MEDIUM Increase the accessibility of the SLS webpage to those interested in browsing the site.

MEDIUM Publish an online feedback form on the SLS webpage.

HIGH Revamp the SLS webpage.