

Invitation: Inaugural Roundtable on Law's Future

Friday, September 21, 2018

Claremont McKenna College, Claremont, California

Convenors:

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We write with an invitation to participate in launching an effort to imagine and implement a critical institution of law in the 21st century: legal education. We believe that the time is right to ask and begin to answer *foundational and fundamental questions* of institutional design, and that our efforts may be important complements to related investigations by the ABA, AALS, and other well-formed professional organizations.

Building on the contributions to the March 2018 Prawfsblawg symposium on *Legal Education's Futures* (links below), we hope to continue the productive conversations begun there with an in-person gathering of roughly 10-12 people. The goal is to move those conversations forward, in person, expanding and systematizing the questions and plotting the landscape of next steps.

This is, by design, an open-ended and speculative activity. Among the first tasks for the group that gathers will be to consider where we want to go, and how we'll know whether and when we've arrived.

The plan is to gather in Claremont for dinner and introductions on the evening of Thursday, September 20, and then convene for overviews and some deep dives on Friday, September 21 from 9 am to 3 pm. Hiram Chodosh, the President of Claremont McKenna College, has offered to host the group and sponsor the dinner. Each participant will be expected to pay their own travel expenses; at this time, there are no honoraria or other travel reimbursements.

Who is invited?

This invitation is going out to some law faculty, some law deans (current, former, and possibly future), some college and university administrators, and some active and interested participants in the ecologies of the legal profession. All of the invitees have identified themselves to us, via participating in the Prawfs symposium and/or otherwise, as having a strong interest in a broad, imaginative take on law and education and a willingness to step forward to share their ideas and proposed actions.

So far as we can tell, this is a pretty compelling initial group of shakers and movers and thinkers. But it is not exclusive or select other than in the sense that one of us (and in many cases, more than one of us) have explored at least some of this topic with each of you.

We're eager to expand the group, so you are welcome to share this invitation with colleagues and to have them contact us, if they're interested in being included. Or, suggest their names to us; we will follow up.

Why attend?

We know that the invitation violates a lot of norms. There is no honorarium or reimbursement. There is no speaking gig, no publication, no well-defined agenda, and no well-specified set of expected outcomes. There is no timeline. There is no assurance that our efforts will be accepted and implemented or accommodated with existing professional institutions. There is no assurance of anything, except challenging and provocative conversations that are not focused solely on the needs of the day, the month, or the year.

In other words, there is the promise of being part of an entrepreneurial cohort with the ambition of making critical and fundamental changes that will change the world. It's a startup, and this is the first meeting.

What if I can't come to Southern California in September?

We are optimistic that late September in Southern California offers an attractive time and venue for those of who can fit this into their schedule as well as for those of you who would consider adding this day to a weekend visit to LA. Perhaps some development or family opportunities for Saturday, following our roundtable on Friday?

If the idea tempts you but September doesn't suit your schedule, be assured that we intend to schedule more roundtables, and to spread them geographically across the US. Perhaps even outside the US.

What's next?

If you have questions, feel free to contact any of us.

If you are able to attend, please confirm to Mike Madison at madison@pitt.edu by July 15. Travel and hotel information will be supplied. There will be some homework and some meeting details forthcoming.

Links:

The Prawfsblawg symposium from March 2018 is most readily accessed beginning at the links below:

- <http://madisonian.net/2018/03/12/law-legal-education-and-imagining-the-future-the-project-continues/>
- <http://madisonian.net/2018/04/25/law-legal-education-and-imagining-the-future-the-project-continues-part-2/>
- <http://madisonian.net/2018/04/25/law-legal-education-and-imagining-the-future-the-project-continues-part-3/>

- <http://madisonian.net/2018/04/25/law-legal-education-and-imagining-the-future-the-project-continues-part-4/>
- <http://madisonian.net/2018/04/25/law-legal-education-and-imagining-the-future-the-project-continues-part-5/>
- <http://madisonian.net/2018/04/25/law-legal-education-and-imagining-the-future-the-project-continues-part-6-and-end/>

With our best wishes,

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