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Two's Company

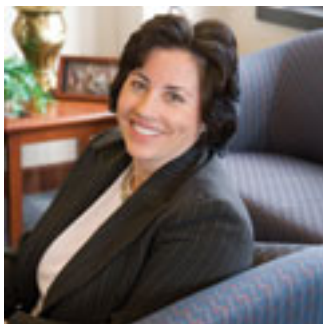
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Two's Company

06.20.2008 | Students, Law Until now, the University of Dayton School of Law stood alone among U.S. law schools in offering students an option of graduating in five semesters during two years. It will have good company in May 2009 when the Northwestern University School of Law begins its accelerated option.

"This is an exciting time for Northwestern Law. I congratulate Dean David Van Zandt and wish him the best of luck as Northwestern enters a new chapter in legal education," UD School of Law Dean Lisa Kloppenberg said. "This is a great fit with Northwestern's emphasis on attracting students with work experience and preparing them well for today's workforce. I think Northwestern

will be pleased by the quality of students attracted by the accelerated pace."

The UD School of Law revamped its curriculum — Lawyer as Problem Solver — in 2005 with an emphasis on developing lawyers who could hit the ground running in their first jobs. The award-winning program incorporated an accelerated option so students could graduate in five semesters during two or two-and-a-half years, instead of six semesters during three years.

The University of Dayton School of Law moved quickly to offer the program once the American Bar Association adjusted its six-semester residency requirement.

The course requirements are the same for all UD law students.

The program's first five-semester class graduated in January. Those students completed their degrees in two-and-a-half years. UD's first five-semester class to finish in two years graduated in May.

Kloppenberg said Northwestern's announcement is another big step in validating the accelerated option as an important innovation.

Lawyer as Problem Solver also has received attention from national media, including *U.S. News & World Report*, *The New York Times* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching chose the University of Dayton School of Law to participate in its next examination of how American law schools educate their students. The International Institute for Conflict Prevention and Resolution honored the program with an award for excellence in 2006.

Students also have had mostly positive reviews of their accelerated law school experiences.

"I saved a lot," said David Treadway, a May 2008 graduate. "I'll be earning income a year earlier, plus I won't have a year's worth of living expenses while not working full-time. If your living expenses are \$20,000 and the average first-year salary is \$60,000-\$80,000, give or take, you are right around \$100,000."

December 2007 graduate Tommie Culpepper felt taking law school at a quicker pace helped him avoid more competition while searching for jobs in May. His perception was that employers would view an accelerated graduate as more competent and motivated.

The time it takes to reach graduation is about the only difference between UD's two-year and the traditional three-year students.

"We haven't seen any real differences in academic performance. We have great students in both groups," said Lori Shaw, dean of students. "It's a question of preference and priorities."

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