

Approved by the Board of Trustees  
May 20, 2021

Board Meeting  
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ESTABLISH THE KIMBALL R. AND KAREN GATSIK ANDERSON CENTER FOR  
ADVOCACY AND PROFESSIONALISM, COLLEGE OF LAW, URBANA

**Action:** Establish the Kimball R. and Karen Gatsis Anderson Center for Advocacy and Professionalism, College of Law

**Funding:** Kimball and Karen Anderson have agreed to fund the Center with a pledge commitment of \$5,000,000 to be paid over five years or sooner.

The Chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and Vice President, University of Illinois System with the advice of the Urbana-Champaign Senate recommends approval of a proposal from the College of Law to establish The Kimball R. and Karen Gatsis Anderson Center for Advocacy and Professionalism.

The establishment of the proposed Kimball R. and Karen Gatsis Anderson Center for Advocacy and Professionalism (Anderson Center) would bolster and showcase the College of Law's current and multifaceted academic programs and co-curricular activities and, importantly, permit the College of Law to expand significantly on a strong foundation. The resulting portfolio of courses, activities, and events focused on Trial Advocacy, Pretrial Advocacy, Appellate Advocacy, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Legal Ethics and Professional Responsibility would provide students, alumni, and other legal practitioners in Illinois and around the world with the skills required to excel in all manners of legal practice. The moment is very ripe for such an initiative. Now more

than ever, our nation needs lawyers who are both well-trained and professionally responsible to uphold the rule of law and defend the basic principles of democracy itself.

Additional infrastructure made possible by the Anderson Center would provide an appropriate professional setting and dedicated space for students participating in each component of the current Trial Advocacy Program, especially when simultaneous operations are required. Infrastructure upgrades would allow each section of the Trial Advocacy Workshop and Advanced Trial Advocacy students to practice pretrial and courtroom skills while Trial Team and Moot Court students are preparing for competition. And a new ceremonial courtroom in Chicago would cement ties between Champaign and Chicago-based program activities.

The Anderson Center would offer an advocacy-focused lecture series where College of Law students could learn from prominent attorneys and judges speaking on litigation strategies, landmark cases, professional responsibility topics, emerging trends, or advocacy skills. Likewise, the Anderson Center would promote and generate scholarship in the field of advocacy, legal ethics, and professional responsibility. A symposium or colloquium would offer a forum for prominent professors and other thought leaders to present current advocacy-related scholarship. Online and in-person Continuing Legal Education (CLEs), would feature innovative programming, cutting-edge topics, and opportunities to network with fellow Illinois Law alumni and other practicing attorneys in attendance. Training, including focused skills modules (e.g., taking and defending depositions) would be provided to students and members of the

legal community dedicated to public interest work and make legal services available to those who cannot otherwise afford them.

The Anderson Center would strengthen the College of Law's advocacy curriculum's connections to Legal Ethics and Professional Responsibility. The Jerome Mirza Trial Academy (part of the College of Law's Chicago Program) currently provides a model for seamless integration of professionalism and ethics into a dynamic and challenging trial advocacy course. Likewise, the textbook materials created by Catherine Stahl, the Director of Trial Advocacy at the College of Law-C. Stahl, *Introduction to Pretrial and Trial Advocacy: An Integrated Approach* (Foundation Press, 2022)-notably includes an important section highlighting ethical considerations with companion student exercises for each pre-trial and trial skill illustrated in the text and for each accompanying case file. The inclusion in this proposal of a robust professional responsibility component, already part of the College of Law's advocacy-training culture, is an important aspect that distinguishes the proposed Anderson Center from advocacy-related entities at many other law schools.

The nationwide law school Advocacy Community has a long-standing and entrenched hierarchy that will take time, relationship-building, and marketing to ascend. Implementing a majority of the components of the Anderson Center on a five-year track would solidify its position among the nation's top Advocacy programs with a long-term goal of receiving individual recognition as one of the nation's elite Advocacy programs within ten years. Beyond external acknowledgment from law schools in the trial advocacy sphere, the Anderson Center provides a strategic opportunity for the College of

Law to differentiate itself from peer and aspirational institutions in general. Such recognition would drive admissions, placement, and institutional reputation among prospective students and members of the bench and bar in the broader legal community.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes, The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The Executive Vice President and Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further Senate jurisdiction is involved.

The President of the University recommends approval. The action is subject to further review by the Illinois Board of Higher Education but IBHE approval is not required.