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Newsroom

Affordable Excellence Extended to 2016-17

With notable increases in enrollment, the Affordable Excellence tuition reduction and guarantee will continue for a third incoming class at RWU Law.



BRISTOL, R.I., Nov. 16, 2015 – With the number of first-year students up 32 percent since the fall of 2013 – despite an admissions climate characterized by sharply shrinking enrollments at law schools across the country – Roger Williams University School of Law has pledged to continue its Affordable Excellence initiative to confront increasing costs, rising debt and the job-readiness of graduates, among the most pressing challenges facing legal education today.

For RWU Law students, the continuation of [Affordable Excellence](#) – first implemented for the 2014-15 academic year – means the 18-percent tuition reduction (to \$33,792) now extends through 2016-17, along with the school's three-year tuition guarantee. Together, the reduction and guarantee translate to some \$30,426 in saving over the course of three years, compared to the previous model. The ultimate outcome is lower debt loads for students – an important step forward in an environment where law school tuition at both public and private schools has been steadily increasing for years.

“We have disrupted the market on cost,” says RWU Law Dean Michael J. Yelnosky, noting that among more than 200 law schools in America, Roger Williams is one of only a half dozen to decrease tuition. “We are the best-priced, ABA-accredited private law school in the Northeast, and applicants have been responding. The increase in our first-year enrollment is a clear indication that we’re giving students what they want – a high-quality, hands-on legal education at an affordable price.”

In addition to implementing the affordability measures, the law school simultaneously expanded its commitment to offering students a rigorous, marketable legal education that enables them to graduate with a broader set of skills than graduates of other law schools. Late last year, the School of Law announced an expanded Providence campus that will significantly enlarge clinical and experiential opportunities for law students while enhancing community outreach. Designed to complement the

School's Bristol campus offerings, the Providence campus represents a redoubled commitment to RWU Law's explicit guarantee (instituted in 2014) that every qualified student will be afforded a substantial clinical experience.



The strategy brought an immediate, positive impact on enrollment. While many other law schools faced continued enrollment declines, RWU Law saw a spike: 138 first-year law students joined the school in Fall 2014, compared with 111 in Fall 2013; in Fall 2015, that number rose to 147. Moreover, the academic credentials of the incoming students at RWU Law are stronger than those at many peer schools that once outpaced Roger Williams.

“Offering a relevant, experiential legal education is in this school’s DNA,” Yelnosky says. “When we opened our doors 22 years ago, hands-on legal education was an emerging trend, and we built our curriculum around it. Now we’re leaders in the field, and others are rushing to catch up. We are giving our students the kind of education they need to thrive in a rapidly changing legal profession at a price that makes sense. It isn’t a marketing gimmick. It’s who we are at RWU Law.”

More information on RWU Law’s Affordable Excellence initiative is available via the law school’s website. Read posts from Yelnosky and others via the [Trending@RWULaw blog](#) or follow the dean’s active Twitter feed ([@MichaelYelnosky](#)), which offers real-time updates on what is happening at RWU Law.