

# LAW SCHOOLS

## Supporting 1Ls Amid Accelerated Law Firm Recruiting

### Key Insights: What Law Students Said



**55.5%** said Big Law recruiting timelines negatively affect their first-year experience.



**25%** said they knew about these timelines before starting law school.



**22.6%** received career counseling or guidance from their law school before orientation.

- **Accelerated law firm recruiting is detrimental to the 1L student experience.** More than half (55.5%) of all respondents said Big Law recruiting efforts in the first semester of their 1L year negatively affected their experience. Respondents described these efforts as distracting and anxiety-inducing. They also reported struggling with prioritizing coursework and outlining while simultaneously participating in Big Law networking events, submitting application materials, and preparing for interviews.
- **Many students are caught off guard by how early Big Law recruits.** Only a quarter (25%) said they knew about Big Law recruiting timelines before starting law school, and the majority (55.8%) said they did not know until they started law school, when the recruitment process for some firms was only weeks away.
- **Schools are beginning to adapt to this accelerated recruitment timeline.** Nearly one in four students (22.6%) reported receiving their first career counseling or guidance from their law school before orientation; until recently, this type of outreach typically occurred during the first semester of law school. Only 8.2% of students said they had not yet received any career counseling from their school within the first two months.

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### Why This Matters

- **The first year of law school is a critical period of professional formation.** As students build foundational legal skills, they also are learning how to enter and participate in the legal profession. Accelerated recruiting timelines — particularly for Big Law — intersect with this formative period, shaping students' perceptions of success, opportunity, and belonging.
- **Accelerated Big Law recruiting poses a new challenge for students.** Understanding this changing dynamic allows law schools to intervene earlier, provide equitable access to information and preparation, and support students' professional development without undermining academic transition.
- **In the 1L year, academic development and professional preparation are occurring simultaneously.** By understanding these parallel tracks (and how they sometimes conflict), you can support students more intentionally.

## Key Considerations

Schools play a critical role in ensuring students are informed, supported, and prepared.

### 1. Timing of Information

- **When do you tell students** about accelerated recruiting timelines?
- **How is information framed** to reduce anxiety and misinformation while promoting informed choice?
- How are **your career services and admission offices** working together to support law students ahead of the recruiting process?

### 2. Career Services Engagement

- **When does your career services office engage** with 1L students?
- Are engagement points **proactive, or student-initiated**?

### 3. Availability and Timing of Student Support

- **Career planning** can help students explore multiple employment sectors and clarify their short-term and long-term goals.
- Early access to **résumé and cover letter guidance** can give students clearer expectations that align with recruiting realities in their sectors of interest.
- **Interview preparation** assistance, with exposure to the interview formats used in recruiting, can give students valuable practice and coaching based on recruiting timeline realities.

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## Key Takeaway for Schools

While accelerated recruitment is now part of the 1L reality, students have always entered law school with defined career goals and intended employment outcomes. Law schools that proactively **align the academic transition with early career preparation** will be better positioned to support student well-being, promote access and fairness, and help students successfully transition into the profession.

[Download the report](#) to learn more about how accelerated recruiting timelines are affecting the first-year experience.

