Earlier Than Early – University Legal and Mediation Services as Educational Opportunities for Conflict and Legal Competence in Workplaces and Communities

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When Does Legal and Conflict Competence Begin?

Who is preparing the people your institution will depend upon?

What is Early Dispute Resolution

EDR = Addressing disputes at the earliest practical stage through negotiation, coaching, mediation, and other processes.

But “early” may not be soon enough…



What if we focused on helping people become more capable before the dispute emerges?



A debt she did not create.



Awareness

University students encounter

- **Leases**
- **Roommates**
- **Employment**
- **Consumer issues**
- **Illness**



Engagement

Helping people understand

- Rights
- Responsibilities
- Risks
- Options
- Positions
- Interests
- Professionalism
- Preparation



Engagement

Position	Human Issue
Lease	Fear
Debt	Frustration
Consumer issue	Communication breakdown
Roommate	Relationship strain



Legal & Conflict Competence

Helping Students Develop the Ability to

- Communicate
- Negotiate
- Problem Solve
- Seek Assistance
- Have Difficult Conversations
- Professionally Advocate

through

- Consultations
- Coaching
- Mediation



Legal Knowledge + Conflict Skills = Sustainable Workplace Skills

- Communication
- Accountability
- Decision-making
- Leadership
- Perspective taking
- Ethical reasoning



Ten Years Later, She Remembered



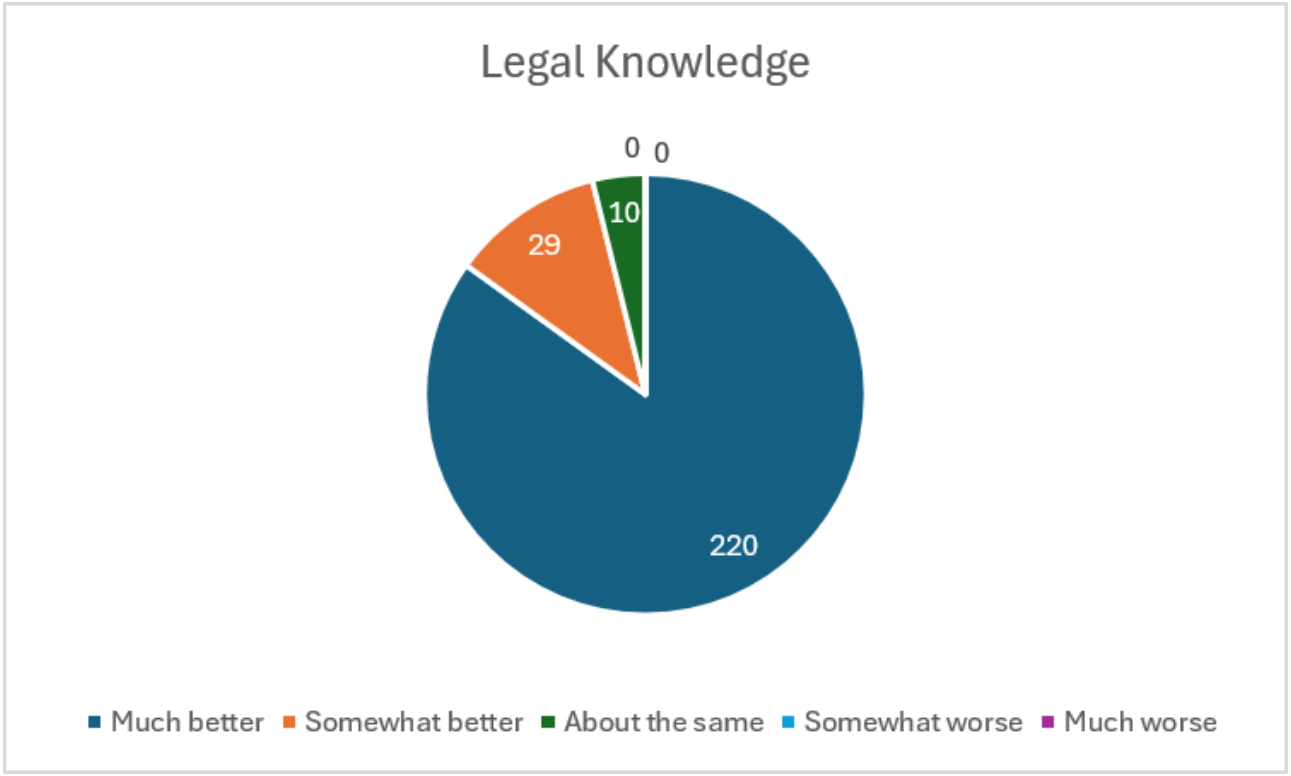
What Are We Really Growing?

Professional competence for the future.

Before the workplace negotiation/conflict exists.



What Are We Really Growing?





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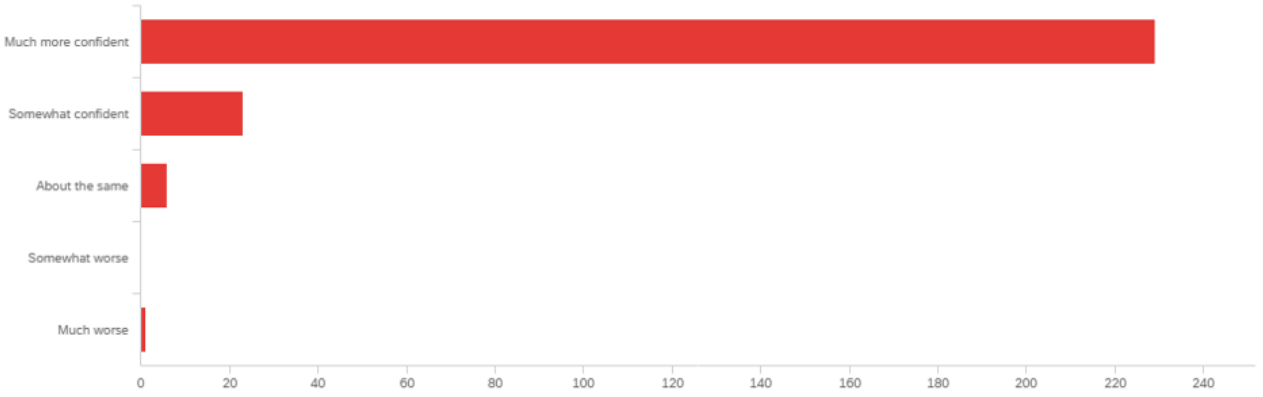



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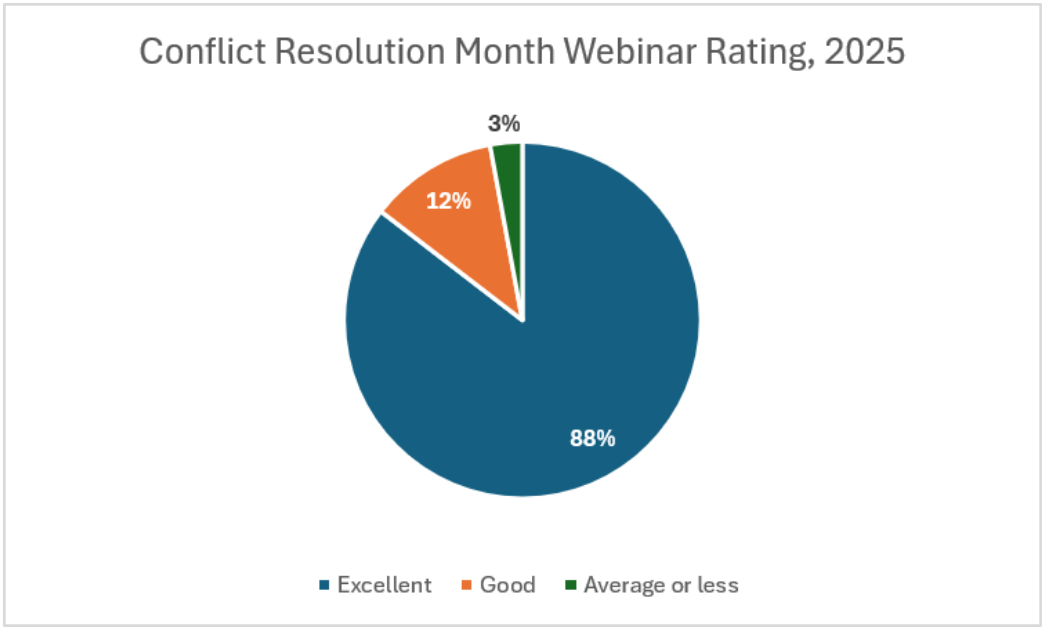



What Are We Really Growing?

“The Office of Student Legal & Mediation Services has been an invaluable partner to the Department of Residence Life, particularly during our annual Resident Advisor (RA) Training. Each year, their team joins our training to teach RAs how to handle mediations and conflict, with a focus on roommate conflict/mediations.

The impact of this collaboration is abundantly clear. First, the feedback from RAs is overwhelmingly positive. Year after year RAs specifically request the return of Gene and his team to continue developing their mediation skills.

Second, long after training ends, we see RAs actively applying what they’ve learned to effectively address and resolve roommate conflicts within our residence halls.

Lastly, this partnership has not only enhanced the practical skills of our student leaders but has also fostered a strong relationship between our departments. As a result, RAs feel confident referring residents to Student Legal & Mediation Services and utilizing their services themselves.”

-- Assistant Director for Hall Staff Recruitment, Training, and Development



Sustainable Organizations

Early Professional Engagement → Sustainable Organizations



Sustainable Organizations

Student

Workforce

Supervisor

Manager

Executive

Leader

These skills leave campus with the student.


HAPPY!
Be proud
Be yourself
Be kind
Be respectful
Be safe
Be responsible
Be honest
Be a friend
Be positive
Be a leader
Be thankful
Be helpful
Be caring
Be fair
Be trustworthy
Be a good citizen
Be courageous
Be determined
Be inspirational
Be a problem solver
Be a good sport
Be a good listener
Be a good friend
Be a good leader
Be a good citizen

Thank you, Lee Jay Berman!



for planting seeds though your training, leadership, mentorship, and example