Message from the Dean

Dear Friends,

The academic year is in full swing. Our Visiting Committee was here this weekend and met many of our eight (!) new faculty members. The talk was of globalization and our grading system. Perhaps you can guess which attracted more passionate observations and advice. The remarkable thing about our newcomers is how quickly these new faculty and students pick up our culture. The biggest difference between this year and the last four, or perhaps I should say the last twenty, is that our building's revitalization is, essentially, complete. The library has become a lovely place where students gather and work; student services are on the third floor in nice quarters, befitting a place that is determined to put students at the center of the enterprise; a new ethics course is to be field tested; a new clinical program is well underway; and we have already started our series of lunch programs and other "extras" that keep students in the building for most of the day. Even our front yard is complete. The zero-depth water element lends a kind of serenity that makes the intensity of the human activity all the more obvious. The energy is palpable.

I write this as Congress fiddles with financial distress and as the Election looms. It is fitting that this Record focuses on graduates who have served as political appointees, because we are surely on the verge of thanking many for their service and wishing new Chicago grads well as they enter a new administration in Washington. We wish them success and insight. At our first Coffee Mess of the year, some students arranged for faculty to spread around the Green Lounge in order to lead groups of students in discussion on the bailout proposals (voted on in Congress that week). The intensity and ideas reminded me that today's 1L students will in fact be tomorrow's leaders and policymakers — and, if not that, their leading critics. We will do our best to educate them, and train them for the issues they will face.

By the time you have this publication in your hands, I hope some of the financial markets will have settled, and I know the Presidential debates and contest will settle in the usual way. It would be corny to say that things here will — and should — never settle down. We work at unsettling conventional wisdoms. The pieces in this Record testify to that.

Yours,

Saul Levmore