

## THE LAW SCHOOL

A school of law and jurisprudence was contemplated in the original plan for the University of Chicago. It was President Harper's view that the school should be more than a training institution for admission to the bar. An education in law, he said, "implies a scientific knowledge of law and of legal and juristic methods. These are the crystallization of ages of human progress. They cannot be understood in their entirety without a clear comprehension of the historic forces of which they are the product, and of the social environment with which they are in living contact. A scientific study of law involves the related sciences of history, economics, philosophy—the whole field of man as a social being."

President Harper's plan was approved by the Trustees in 1902, and the Law School was opened in October of that year. The cornerstone for the first law building, made possible by a gift from John D. Rockefeller, was laid by President Theodore Roosevelt on April 2, 1903. The goal of the School, as stated in the first *Announcements*, was "to afford adequate preparation for the practice of law as a profession in any jurisdiction in which the common law prevails, and to cultivate and encourage the scientific study of systematic and comparative jurisprudence, legal history, and principles of legislation."

Harper's broad view of legal education and the aims of the first faculty have animated the program and spirit of the Law School down to the present day. In its professional curriculum the School seeks to impart the systematic knowledge of

traditional and modern fields of the law and the intellectual discipline that are a necessary foundation for the practice of law with distinction. At the same time it recognizes that professional education in the law must train men for diverse and unpredictable roles as lawyers, both within the practice of law itself and as public servants, civic leaders, in business life, and as teachers and scholars. Accordingly, it places a high value on intellectual breadth in legal studies, including knowledge of the history, principles, and purposes of legal institutions and the operation of these institutions in the modern world. The School has adhered to Harper's conviction that it was not to be an institution that had a merely nominal connection with the University and was not to be separated either by location or by spirit from the University at large. The conviction is reflected in diverse ways: in the variety of courses and seminars taught, in the membership on the faculty of professional economists and other social scientists, the participation of scholars from other branches of the University in the instructional program, in its research interests, and in the active interest which students in the Law School take in the life of the University as a whole. Thus, while the School has a strong professional emphasis, maintaining close ties with the practicing bar, the bench, and institutions concerned with law reform, it remains an organic part of the University, embodying the spirit and purpose of University life and, in turn, contributing to that life.

The usual, although not exclusive, form of instruction in the Law School is the case method. Emphasis is also placed on individual instruction through a tutorial program in the first year and through seminars and supervised independent study in the second and third years. The program of the first year is prescribed and provides all students with a common foundation in the basic legal subjects. The program of the second and third years is elective. The total student body numbers about 450, including approximately 25 graduate students each year, and is deliberately kept rather small to maximize the opportunities for close contact with the faculty and for individual or small-class study in the second and third years.