In 2001, the Shepard Broad Law Center at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, launched its first online masters program: the Master in Health Law (M.H.L.) program. The M.H.L., now known as the Master of Science in Health Law (M.S.H.L.) program marked the first time the Law Center offered a master’s level degree and the first time such a degree would be offered exclusively through a distance learning platform. Since that time, the Law Center has offered two additional master’s level programs in cyber space, the Master of Science in Education Law program (M.S.Ed.L.) and the Master of Science in Employment Law program (M.S.Emp.L).

Over the course of the past decade, the Law Center has designed, implemented, and offered its online programs to hundreds of students. Our experience in online education has been shaped by not only our own perceptions, values, and goals, but also by technology and the demands of our students in the virtual classroom. After having been at it for over a decade, we’ve learned a tremendous amount about distance education but there are at least five (5) lessons worthy of discussion and publication. These lessons ultimately fall into the category of best practices which should be of particular concern for U.S. law schools as they face increased demand for distance education offerings and potential sources of new revenue.