Summary of Council Actions Related to its June 2017 meeting

The ABA Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar met June 2-3, in Portland, Oregon. In open and closed sessions consistent with its Rules of Procedure, the Council considered a number of matters, including proposals related to changes to the ABA Standards for Approval of Law School and Rules of Procedure and the ABA Questionnaires.

Among matters taken up in open session, the Council took the following specific actions:

- Approved the 2017 ABA Annual Questionnaire, a new Bar Passage Questionnaire, the Employment Outcomes Questionnaire, and a new and revised form for the public reporting of Employment Outcomes. These questionnaires and reports will be posted to the Section website when the staff has completed follow-up and necessary technical work.

- Agreed that the appropriate next step regarding proposed changes to Standard 316, which relates to bar passage, would be to seek information from law schools on how the revised Standard might impact their ability to operate in compliance with the standard as revised. Consequently, the Managing Director will distribute a questionnaire in the near future, asking for data from the schools that is currently not required to be reported. The results of that survey will be reported to the Council and made public as early as this fall. The current timeline for returning the matter for further consideration by the ABA House of Delegates would be to have the matter back to the ABA House of Delegates as early at the 2018 ABA Midyear Meeting. This past February, the House declined to concur in the revised standard as adopted by the Council. The House has two opportunities to weigh in on changes to standards but cannot block them per se.

The Council also had a productive discussion about a potential restructuring of the work and process of legal education accreditation. It agreed that there were good and substantial reasons to continue studying the matter and developing a formal proposal. Staff will prepare a report, and the Council will take up the matter again, most likely either at its August or November meeting.

In closed session, the Council considered a number of school matters. The outcomes of those matters that are not subject to the confidentiality provisions of Rules of Procedure 49-55 will be publicly reported after decisions are communicated by letter to the affected schools.

Media seeking further information, please contact Bill Choyke in the ABA Division of Communications and Media Relations at bill.choyke@americanbar.org or (202) 662-1864.