TO: Kent D. Syverud, Council Chairperson,  
Section on Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar  

From: Society of American Law Teachers  

Date: May 10, 2013  

RE: Comment on Standard 210  

We write on behalf of the Society of American Law Teachers to comment briefly on the proposed revisions to the accreditation standards in Chapter 2. We have previously expressed concern about the proposed deletion of current Standard 210, which says that “[t]he resources generated by a law school that is part of a university should be made available to the law school to maintain and enhance its program of legal education.” That Standard has been an important tool for law schools to use to resist attempts by the central administration of their universities to raid law school coffers to pay for non-law-school programs and facilities. Such efforts by universities were all too common in past years, and we believe the Standard has been instrumental in addressing the problem. We also believe that the economic challenges faced by higher education in recent years may induce some universities to return to such practices, and recent news stories about disputes between some law school deans and their universities support that concern. The proposed language in Standard 203, that the “financial resources available to the law school shall be sufficient for it to operate in compliance with the Standards and to carry out its program of legal education,” is much weaker. It provides no support for a law school to argue that the school should retain funds not simply to comply with the standards but to enhance and improve its program. The ABA should be a rigorous guardian of the use of law school tuition dollars considering skyrocketing tuitions, public criticism, and consumer protection concerns. We urge a return to the language in current Standard 210.

Thank you for your consideration of these important comments.

Submitted on behalf of the Society of American Law Teachers by

Jackie Gardina       Ngai Pindell  
Co-President       Co-President