I urge the Council of the Section on Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar to reject the proposals to change Accreditation Standard 405(c) and its interpretations and thereby retain Current Standard 405.

I favor keeping Accreditation Standard 405(c) as written for the following reasons.

I have been a clinician at Saint Louis University School of Law for 27 years. In that time I have signed 27 one-year contracts. During at least a portion of this time, it was not clear that the University’s faculty manual applied to me. Our program has expanded dramatically over these 27 years, and, while we have hired many exceptional people to fill our clinical positions, we have not been able to attract applicants on a national level until our very recent hire of a clinical director who will join us in July in a tenure track position. The rest of us, 7 in total, remain without even long-term contracts. As a result, there is no time structured for research and writing; anyone who wants to publish must do this work in additional to the full-time clinical load. It has also been difficult not to worry about whether a new contract will be forthcoming. While we now have a faculty manual that does apply to us so that there would have to be adequate notice, this does not mean we have security of position. We do have freedom of expression to the extent that anyone does who is worried about not having a one-year contract renewed. And, the law school faculty adopted a resolution of presumptive renewability for our contracts, but that is not binding on the University.

I oppose not giving clinical teachers full and complete equality in governance to all tenured faculty in appointments and promotions of all faculty, curricular issues and law school and University faculty committee activities for the following reasons.

Currently, all clinical faculty are included in faculty meetings and vote on everything except appointments and promotions of tenure/tenure track faculty. This has not always been true. For many years, I was excluded from faculty meetings, committees, and strategic planning events. Without 405(c), what we have now could be lost. Not being a part of governance is an extremely difficult position and further divides the faculty. It is even more important now as law schools increase the level and amount of skills training in their curriculum for clinicians to be an integral part of decision making.

I oppose not improving the conditions for legal writing faculty including requiring schools to have more legal writing instructors to be eligible for long-term contracts for the following reasons.

Legal research and writing faculty are being integrated into our curriculum in ways that make it more and more difficult to distinguish them from tenure/tenure track faculty. The disparity in security of position is intolerable and unsupportable.