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FEATURED ARTICLES

From the Chair:
A Farewell Thank You
Scott Bales

From the Managing Director:
Transitions and Looking Forward to a New Year
William E. Adams

From the Section Director:
Section Spotlight – Committee Opportunities
Erin Ruehrwein

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Third Party Comments Invited for Law Schools Undergoing Accreditation Site Visits in Fall 2021

ABA Announcements: Section’s Annual Business Meeting and ABA Hybrid Annual Meeting



From the Chair: A Farewell Thank You



Honorable Scott Bales
Chief Justice (Retired)
Arizona Supreme Court
2020-2021 Council Chair

In my last column as Chair, I want to thank many people for their contributions to the work of the Council and to legal education more broadly. I am grateful to have worked together over a year that presented not only unexpected challenges, but also important opportunities for improvement.

Our staff had major leadership changes, with Bill Adams completing his first year as Managing Director, Stephanie Giggetts becoming Deputy Managing Director, and Kirsten Winek becoming Accreditation Counsel. They have consistently shown great dedication, knowledge, and judgment in their work, and in so doing are reflective of the entire Section staff. The eighteen full-time staff members impressively support the Section – one of the ABA’s largest with some 14,000 members - and the Council as the accreditor for 199 ABA-approved law schools.

Several Council members will be completing their terms. Collectively, they have provided decades of invaluable volunteer service. Immediate Past Chair Diane Bosse served on the Council and as the Chair and a member of the Accreditation Committee. Council member Pamela Lysaght for many years chaired the Standards Committee and also formerly served on the Accreditation Committee. Rebecca Hanner White served on the Council after chairing and serving on the Accreditation Committee. Antonio García-Padilla, who also once served on the Accreditation Committee, will leave the Council but become one of its representatives to the ABA House of Delegates, replacing Judge Solomon Oliver, Jr. in that role. Judge Oliver not only has been a great representative for the Section but also has served on the Accreditation Committee, the Standards Committee, and many site visit teams. Also leaving the Council are Missouri Supreme Court Justice Mary Russell, whose many contributions include service on the Standards Committee, and Eduardo Peñalver, who this summer became the President of Seattle University. As I mentioned in my previous column, Anders Miller, our Law Student member, has graduated and we all wish him well in his legal career. These individuals are inspiring for their commitment to legal education and the profession, and it is an honor to know them as colleagues and friends.

The Council's work also importantly depends on volunteer efforts by hundreds of people outside the Council, many of whom are Section members. Our site evaluation teams include law school faculty, administrators, practicing lawyers, and judges in the periodic review of approved law schools. Others importantly contribute to the on-going review and revision of the Standards by, for example, participating in roundtable discussions or providing written comments. And others help with Section programs and publications. Serving as Chair has helped me better appreciate the broad support within the Section and the legal community for improving legal education.

Working with Leo Martinez, our next Section Chair, has been another highlight of my tenure. I, other Council members, and staff have benefitted from his wisdom, experience, and unflappable nature. Professor Martinez, Dean Emeritus at UC Hastings College of the Law, has served on the Council, chaired dozens of site visits, served on the ABA's Commission on the Future of Legal Education, and been president of the American Association of Law Schools. He will provide great leadership in his role as Chair.

Finally, I want to again acknowledge the efforts by law students, faculty, and law school administrators in responding to the worldwide pandemic and other upheavals over the last year. Our legal education system continues to successfully prepare new generations of lawyers for entry into the profession, at a time when our nation vitally needs to reaffirm our commitment to democracy and equal justice under law. Thanks to all who are working towards these goals.

Return to cover.

Update From the Managing Director: Transitions and Looking Forward to a New Year



William E. Adams
Managing Director of Accreditation and Legal Education

As the Section's year comes to a close, it is time to reflect upon the year and anticipate the one upcoming. Schools have spent another year dealing with the challenges posed by the pandemic. The experience from Spring 2020 helped them adjust to offering classes remotely as needed throughout the 2020-21 academic year. As they plan for fall classes, most have asked for permission to offer distance education as needed should the pandemic continue to require that flexibility.

The Nominating Committee has nominated an accomplished and well-qualified slate of officers and new members to the Council for the next year. The office has experience in working with many of the nominees and the qualifications of the other nominees inspire confidence that the Council will again have an exceptionally talented membership next year. The Council and Office both look forward to working with the incoming Chair, Dean Emeritus Leo Martinez. In addition to his experience with accreditation, those in legal education know that his experience in legal education will provide excellent leadership to the new Council. The Election will take place at the Annual Business Meeting.

The proposed amendments to the Standards sent out for Notice and Comment on professional identity, diversity, equity, and inclusion issues this summer have generated numerous comments. The new Standards Review Committee will discuss them and make recommendations to the new Council in response. The office conducted another set of roundtables focused on data collection and reporting related to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. As usual, insightful comments were provided. Summaries of those comments will be posted on our website along with an invitation to submit written comments about the issues discussed.

I am pleased to report positive progress with the Council's petition for renewal of accreditation authority over the JD program with the Department of Education. The Departmental staff has recommended that the Council's petition for renewal be granted for five years without problems

or issues. In addition, the Council Chair and staff appeared before the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity, which makes recommendations to the Department on accreditation agencies. It has unanimously recommended that the Council's petition be granted. We will report when we receive the final decision from the Department.

Before closing, I want to acknowledge and thank the Council members who will be leaving when their terms end in August. The Honorable Mary Russell, judge on the Supreme Court of Missouri, has been a valued and hard-working Council member offering exactly the type of insights valuable to the Council from the perspective of the bench. She has also served on multiple site visit teams. Pamela Lysaght, Professor (Retired) of the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, has served as Standards Review Committee Chair on the Council, in addition to service on the former Accreditation Committee, including as Vice Chair. Pam has served brilliantly in all of these roles. Diane Bosse, Esq., has served as Chair of the Council, former Chair of the Accreditation Committee, as well as member of the former Standards Review and Bar Admissions Committees. She has also chaired numerous site teams. Her leadership on both the Admissions Committee and Council has been outstanding. Rebecca Hanner White, Dean and Professor Emerita at the University of Georgia School of Law, previously chaired the Accreditation Committee and has led the Interim Monitoring Committee for the Council. We have all benefitted from her stewardship of both groups. Solomon Oliver, Judge of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, leaves as Section Delegate after long service on the Council, including as its Chair. In addition to his sterling service as Chair he has more than ably presented resolutions on behalf of the Council with the ABA House of Delegates with the wisdom that I am sure he exhibits on the bench. As should be evident from this brief description of just a few of the positions held by the departing members on various Council committees and working groups, the Council is losing a significant amount of institutional experience and knowledge next year. I will also add a personal note that they are all terrific people whose advice and friendship will be sorely missed by their colleagues and all of us in the Office. Finally, I want to again thank Scott Bales, Chief Justice (Retired) of the Arizona Supreme Court and outgoing Chair, for his calm and patient advice to me since I assumed this position at the beginning of the pandemic. He and Diane provided support to me and excellent leadership to the Council as it and the Office navigated these unprecedented times. I cannot thank all of the above people enough for their contributions.

Return to cover.

Section Spotlight: Committee Opportunities



Erin Ruehrwein
Section Director

Did you know that the Section offers valuable leadership opportunities to serve on committees that focus on program development, publishing, and resources for adjunct faculty? In addition, it has committees that take the lead in planning its Law School Development and Associate Deans Conferences. Each year, the Section appoints new members to these committees. Serving on Section committees presents a valuable opportunity to have an impact on important legal education resources, activities, and products, as well as an opportunity to network with your colleagues. Below I describe the missions of our Section committees.

If you are interested in serving on a Section committee, please contact me at: Erin.Ruehrwein@americanbar.org by **August 15, 2021**.

Adjunct Faculty Committee

This committee provides a forum for law schools to discuss ways to better recruit, train, mentor, and supervise adjunct faculty, and to provide a focus within the Section for discussion of issues that are of particular interest to adjunct faculty.

To view the current committee roster, [click here](#).

Conferences & Programming Committee

This committee leads the Section's conceptualization, planning, organization and implementation of workshops and conferences. It also serves to identify new program and webinar topics.

To view the current committee roster, [click here](#).

Publications Committee

This committee guides the Section's publishing program, working to produce new editions of current publications and new publications.

To view the current committee roster, [click here](#).

Law School Development Conference Committee

This committee focuses on planning the Law School Development Conference, which delivers programming on fundraising in the law school setting for law school deans, faculty, and development officers.

Associate Deans Conference Committee

This committee is charged with planning the Associate Deans Conference, which covers topics including work-life balance, becoming a dean, management, supporting teaching and scholarship, budgeting, crisis management, and assessment, among others.

Return to cover.

Third Party Comments Invited for Law Schools Undergoing Accreditation Site Visits in Fall 2021

The law schools listed below are scheduled for site evaluation visits in Fall 2021. Any additional visits scheduled after the date of this memo will be posted on the Section's [website](#).

Consistent with Internal Operating Practice 4(a), written comments related to current compliance with the Standards for the Approval of Law Schools may be submitted to the ABA Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar. Comments on law schools with Fall 2021 visits should be sent by **August 15, 2021**. Please click on this link to submit [third party comments](#).

Law schools undergoing accreditation site visits in Fall 2021 are:

- Boston College
- Dayton, University of
- Hofstra University
- Lincoln Memorial
- Loyola University - New Orleans
- Pace University
- Southern University
- Texas Southern University
- UNT Dallas College of Law (Seeking Full Approval Visit)

Note: Your comments must be signed. Only comments directly related to the [ABA Standards and Rules of Procedure for Approval of Law Schools](#) will be considered.

Return to cover.

ABA Announcements: Section's Annual Business Meeting and ABA Hybrid Annual Meeting

Section of Legal Education Annual Business Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar will be held virtually on Zoom on Friday, August 6 at 2:00 PM CDT. Only Section members may register to attend the meeting.

To register for the meeting and to view the meeting materials, [click here](#).

ABA Hybrid Annual Meeting

The ABA will host its first-ever Hybrid Annual Meeting, August 4-10, 2021. All events may be attended virtually while governance meetings, including the Board of Governors and House of Delegates meetings, will also take place in person at the Hyatt Regency Chicago.

The meeting will kick off on Wednesday, August 4, with the General Assembly featuring a program on the Status of Women in the Legal Profession and six of the ABA's past women presidents.

CLE Showcase Programs will be offered Wednesday, August 4 - Friday, August 6 and will feature premier speakers on cutting-edge topics such as:

- Voting Rights
- Environmental Justice for Underrepresented Communities
- Student Speech Rights
- Cryptocurrency Law
- Policing in America
- Annual Supreme Court Year in Review
- Judicial Review on Emergency Public Health Orders
- Federalism, Diversity, and Advocacy

The President's Reception being held on Sunday, August 8 offers a chance to enjoy cocktails, heavy hors d'oeuvres, and networking with your fellow ABA colleagues. The event will be held in the Crystal Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency Chicago, and it is open to all in-person registrants and guests; no ticket is required.

Advance registration is required for both live and virtual meeting attendees to participate in any meeting or event associated with the meeting. [Click here](#) to register.

To learn more, visit the [2021 ABA Annual Meeting website](#).

[Return to Cover.](#)