



The State Bar of California

**OPEN SESSION
AGENDA ITEM
APRIL 2020
COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS ITEM O-410**

DATE: April 24, 2020

TO: Members, Committee of Bar Examiners

FROM: Natalie Leonard, Principal Program Analyst, Office of Admissions

SUBJECT: Amended Approval of 2019-2020 Educational Standards Goals

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Below please find the goals related to educational standards.

1. Implement the rules and guidelines approved by the Committee of Bar Examiners and the Board of Trustees to create a path to accreditation for qualifying law schools offering online J.D. programs.

Complete.

2. Implement avenues of engagement with law schools by forming and coordinating the work of the Committee on State Bar Accredited and Registered Schools (CSBARS) and the Law School Council (LSC) and a new e-newsletter. Continue to host the Law School Assembly and Registrars' Meeting.

Complete. Meetings commenced on April 22, 2019 for Law School Council and April 23, 2019 for CSBARS. Newsletters have been issued quarterly, with the most recent issue sent in March, featuring new graphics and more interactive elements.

3. Review rules to: 1) create a modified "deemed accredited" status for law schools that earn accreditation from a regional accreditor and also meet specified State Bar responsibilities and disclosures; 2) ensure rules embody best practices in accreditation; 3) review major change guidelines as requested by the Committee.

CSBARS reviewed the history of Accreditation in June and met in October to discuss Guiding Principles and Values. The Committee received an update in December and CSBARS has been editing a proposed rules package since then. While previously scheduled for presentation to the Committee in June, it is now scheduled for presentation in August due to a shift in priorities related to COVID-19.

4. Review applications for registration or accreditation of law schools, as well as petitions for major changes or waivers from existing registered and accredited schools.

Applications will be presented to the Committee as they are received. Today, the Committee will review applications from Abraham Lincoln School of Law and St Francis Law School. In June, the inspection reports from the accreditation inspections of Concord Law School and Northwestern California University School of Law will be presented. In addition, both California School of Law and California Desert Trial Academy have begun the application process for presentation at a future meeting.

5. Participate in the periodic inspection of prospective and current registered and accredited law schools. Consider reports of interim and periodic inspections of accredited and registered law schools and inspections performed in response to the issuance of Notices of Noncompliance; generally monitor the compliant operation of both California-accredited and registered law schools and the overall educational requirements for applicants seeking to qualify to take and pass the California Bar Examination.

Ongoing. Today, periodic inspection reports from Taft Law School and Oak Brook College of Law are being presented. In June, the inspection reports from Peoples College of Law and San Francisco Law School will be presented. Upcoming this year, as health circumstances allow, the following additional schools will undergo periodic inspections: American Heritage University School of Law, Humphreys University, Drivon School of Law, San Francisco International University, Thomas Jefferson School of Law and University of La Verne College of Law.

6. Support the State Bar's 2019 strategic initiatives related to law school diversity, retention and performance on the Bar examination.

Ongoing. The State Bar recently finalized the new data collection categories, issued memorandum on data handling practices, and sent a survey to schools to determine how best to roll out this new data collection step in 2020. The new format will be presented to schools in Summer 2020.

7. Continue to pursue mandatory accreditation for unaccredited law schools in accordance with the Rules and Guidelines approved by the Committee of Bar Examiners and the Board of Trustees.

TBD.