

COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS OPEN SESSION AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: February 2018 – O-403

DATE: January 17, 2018

TO: Subcommittee on Educational Standards

FROM: George Leal, Program Manager for Educational Standards

SUBJECT: American Institute of Law - Interim Inspection Report

BACKGROUND

Attachment A is the Interim Inspection Report of the American Institute of Law (AIL) conducted on December 5-6, 2017 by Educational Standards Consultant Sally Perring.

AIL was registered by the Committee of Bar Examiners (Committee) in January of 2016 as a registered, correspondence law school operating, at the time, from administrative offices located in Murrieta, California. In May of 2016 the law school sought and received Committee approval to move its administrative offices to Torrance, California.

As a correspondence law school, AIL has degree-granting authority to offer a Juris Doctor Degree using online technology. When it was registered, the Committee ordered the law school to be inspected within two years of enrolling students to confirm that it is operating compliantly with the *Unaccredited Law School Rules* and each of the relevant *Guidelines for Unaccredited Law School Rules*. To comply with that directive, a two-day inspection was conducted with the assistance and cooperation of AIL's Dean, Edward Green, its Registrar Chet Zaluga and its senior administrative staff.

The inspection confirmed that AIL is well-organized and operating compliantly. It has a current enrollment of 69 students and its first students will graduate in 2018. The law school operates with a dedicated Dean, a qualified faculty and an experienced administrative staff. AIL's tuition is very low (\$4,250/year), while its curriculum is offered through a well-supported online platform. The law school's admission and academic standards are sound and it maintains student records and transcripts in a safe and secure manner, while it compliantly supports the academic and administrative needs of its students, as they confirmed in confidential emails sent to the Consultant.

DISCUSSION

The inspection found no issue of non-compliance requiring any mandatory action by the law school, and only two issues under the *Guidelines for Unaccredited Law School*

Rules where, prior to its next inspection, the law school should take action to improve its program of legal education. The Report recommends the following:

Recommended, Suggested Actions:

1. Pursuant to Rule 4.240(D) and Guideline 4.5, AIL should consider increasing the size of its faculty to retain new members with the relevant legal expertise and practical experience to teach all classes in its third and fourth year curriculum.
2. Pursuant to newly-amended Rule 4.240(F), AIL should begin developing new courses designed to teach practice-based skills and competency training.

RECOMMENDATION:

Based upon the inspection, AIL is operating compliantly with each of the relevant requirements required by *Unaccredited Law School Rules* (Rules) and *Guidelines for Unaccredited Law School Rules* (Guidelines). It is therefore recommended that the law school's registration be continued, that each of the recommended actions noted below be adopted and that its initial periodic inspection be scheduled to take place during the summer of 2021, unless the Committee finds cause to conduct an early inspection.

PROPOSED MOTION:

If the Subcommittee agrees with this recommendation, the following motion is suggested:

Move that the Interim Inspection Report of the American Institute of Law, the inspection having been conducted on December 5-6, 2017 by Educational Standards Consultant Sally Perring, be received and filed; that each of the recommended, suggested actions contained in the Report be adopted; that the law school's registration be continued and that its initial periodic inspection take place during the summer of 2021, unless an earlier inspection is found necessary by the Committee.