

COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS

OPEN SESSION AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA ITEM : March 2018 – O-404

DATE: March 13, 2018

TO: Subcommittee on Educational Standards

FROM: George Leal, Program Manager, Educational Standards

SUBJECT: **Concord Law School – Major Change Request re Conversion
from a For-Profit to a Non-Profit Entity and Change of Name**

BACKGROUND

Attachment A is a further submission from Concord Law School (CLS) that relates to the earlier approval by the Committee of Bar Examiners (Committee) of a then-planned change in ownership of CLS. Attachment B is the letter sent by staff to Dean Pritikin, dated June 28, 2017, confirming the Committee's prior approval of the proposed acquisition of CLS by another educational entity, the resulting, future conversion of CLS from a for-profit entity into a non-profit entity and for the future change of the CLS name.

By his letter dated March 5, 2018, Dean Martin Pritikin has now confirmed that, by April 2nd, the current owner of CLS, Kaplan University, will complete the process of being acquired by Purdue University, the nationally-recognized Indiana public university. As now confirmed by Dean Pritikin, Kaplan University and Purdue University have received formal approval to proceed with the transfer of ownership by the U.S. Department of Education, the Indiana Commission of Higher Learning and the Higher Learning Commission, the regional accreditor of both Kaplan and Purdue. With the acquisition now approved, CLS will officially transition from a for-profit entity to a non-profit entity and its name will change to Concord Law School at Purdue University Global.

As required by Rule 4.245 of the *Unaccredited Law School Rules* (Rules): "A registered law school contemplating a major change must notify the Committee and obtain its prior approval before making the change." The conversion of a registered law school from a for-profit into a not-for-profit entity, along with a name change are each a major change under Rule 4.246, subsections (G) and (H) requiring prior approval of the Committee.

CLS is a registered, unaccredited distance-learning law school that maintains its administrative offices in Los Angeles. The law school is currently a part of Kaplan University which is owned by a subsidiary of the Graham Holdings Company (GHC), a publically-traded company. The law school was last inspected in November 2014 and found to be operating compliantly; its next inspection is calendared for 2020. Dean Martin Pritikin was appointed to his position in July 2016.

DISCUSSION

As confirmed by Dean Pritikin, the transfer of all academic and financial assets of Kaplan University and its entities, which include CLS, by Purdue University will officially take place within a matter days. As a result, CLS will now operate as public, not-for-profit educational institution. Located in West Lafayette, Indiana, Purdue University is a large and highly-respected public research university founded in 1869. It offers undergraduate degrees in over 200 majors, along with scores of master's and doctoral programs. It is nationally and internationally recognized for its school of engineering.

With formal approval of the transaction, both its non-profit status and new name will then take effect. As further noted by Dean Pritikin, all such major changes will “in no way change the day to day operations of the law school.” As a result, Dean Pritikin has again confirmed that all of the changes affecting CLS “will have no impact on our ability to fully comply with all applicable rules and guidelines of the State Bar of California.”

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the Committee's prior approval of the then-planned change of ownership of CLS and Kaplan University by Purdue University, it is recommended that the Committee grant the current request for the approval of a major change, pursuant to Rule 4.245 and Rule 4.246 subsections (G), (H) and (I) of the *Unaccredited Law School Rules*, to allow Concord Law School, as a part of Kaplan University, to change from a for-profit into a not-for-profit entity and subsequent change of its name to Concord Law School at Purdue University Global.

PROPOSED MOTION:

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

Move that the request submitted pursuant to Rules 4.245 and Rule 4.246 subsections (G), (H) and (I) of the *Unaccredited Law School Rules* by Concord Law School (CLS) seeking approval of a major change that would allow Concord Law School, as a part of Kaplan University, to change from a for-profit into a not-for-profit entity and subsequent change of its name to Concord Law School at Purdue University Global be received and filed; and that the request be approved.