



The State Bar *of California*

OPEN SESSION

AGENDA ITEM O-402

JUNE 2020

COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS

DATE: June 19, 2020

TO: Members, Committee of Bar Examiners

FROM: Natalie Leonard, Principal Program Analyst

SUBJECT: Action on Notice of Termination of Accreditation – Pacific Coast University School of Law

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On April 24, 2020, the Committee of Bar Examiners (Committee) voted to issue a Notice of Intent to Terminate Accreditation to Pacific Coast University School of Law (PCU). After that meeting, the school requested a hearing pursuant to Rule 4.173. The hearing was conducted in open session on May 29, 2020 by a panel of three members of the Committee. Today, taking the records as a whole, the Committee will decide whether to proceed with its stated intent to terminate the accreditation of Pacific Coast University School of Law effective at the end of the current semester on August 20, 2020.

BACKGROUND

Accredited law schools must maintain a Minimum, Cumulative Five-Year Bar Passage Rate (MPR) of forty percent or more under Accredited Law School Rule 4.160(N) and Guideline 12.1. Pacific Coast University School of Law (PCU) has not been in compliance since the MPR requirement was first implemented in 2015. In 2015, the school's MPR was 28.2 percent; in 2016 and 2017 the requirement was suspended, but the school was advised that the requirement would be reinstated and the school should take note because State Bar internal estimates suggested that the school's MPR remained below forty percent; in 2018, the school's MPR was 26.4 percent; in 2019, it was 26.6 percent.

The process for acting on noncompliance with the Committee's Accredited Rules and guidelines is set forth in Rule 4.170 et seq. The Committee followed that process by issuing a Notice of Noncompliance, receiving the school's responses describing the initiatives that the school planned to implement to improve its MPR, discussing the response at a public meeting of the Committee, and receiving public comment. This process was repeated in 2015, 2018, and 2019. In October 2019, at Committee request, a three-member panel attended an inspection at which the school discussed its noncompliance and plan to address it.

The Committee considered the full record at its meetings in January and April 2020, including further verbal public comment received in January, and written public comment received from January through April, and voted to issue a Notice of Intent to Terminate the Accreditation of PCU based on the school's long-term, sustained, significant noncompliance, and projected future noncompliance.

After a notice is issued, the following process is used.

Prior to the Committee taking final action, a school may request a hearing under Rule 4.173 before a panel of three Committee members. At the hearing, "[t]he law school has the burden of establishing its compliance, if an accredited law school ... with these rules." (Rule 4.174(C))

Then, "[f]ollowing a hearing, the Committee will determine whether the accredited law school is in compliance ... with these rules. Its decision will be based on the entire record, including materials presented at the hearing. The Committee may take any action affecting the law school's ... accreditation that it considers appropriate, including termination of ... accreditation." (Rule 4.175 (A-B))

When the Committee finds noncompliance, termination of accreditation is generally appropriate. Probation may only be selected "[i]f the Committee decides that an accredited law school ... has not complied with these rules, but has made progress toward compliance." (Rule 4.172(B))

Should the Committee plan to proceed with its previously expressed intent to terminate the school's accreditation, "[t]he Committee will terminate accreditation ... on a specific date, at which time it will also terminate a law school's degree-granting authority." (Rule 4.176) The rule further provides that "[u]ntil that date, students attending the law school are deemed enrolled at an accredited ... law school."

DISCUSSION

In May, PCU exercised its right under Rule 4.173 to request a hearing before a three-member panel of Committee members. At the hearing, the school had the burden of establishing that it was in compliance with Rule 4.160(N).

The State Bar held the hearing on May 29, 2020 via Zoom before a three-member panel of the following Committee members: Alex Lawrence, Alex Chan, and Paul Kramer. (A transcript of the hearing is included as Attachment A) The hearing was open to the public and approximately

two dozen members of the public attended. The State Bar allotted three hours for the school's presentation in order to assure a full and fair opportunity to make its presentation to the panel. The school was easily able to complete its presentation in the allotted time. The school also distributed a packet of exhibits to the panel prior to the hearing that were reviewed by the panel members. (Attachment B)

In April, the Committee issued a Notice of Intent to Terminate Accreditation after observing that the school's MPR had not been compliant since 2015, and the school reported MPR values in 2018 and 2019 that were lower than the value reported in 2015. A number of graduates and faculty spoke out in support of the school at Committee meeting in January and submitted written public comments in both January and April. Through the school's responses, inspection and public comment, it explained that it had identified and implemented a series of initiatives to improve the pass rate. The Committee noted, however, that these initiatives proved unable to overcome the school's noncompliance.

At the hearing, the school conceded that the school has been out of compliance, was out of compliance during the most recent reporting cycle, previewed that its 2020 MPR would be at or around 28.2 percent, and projected that the school would be out of compliance until the 2022 or 2023 MPR reporting cycles.

The school also announced a number of program changes introduced since the Committee last met in April. These changes included the appointment of new law school Dean F. Miguel Valenti, who will be hiring a number of new staff members. Dean Valenti has experience as a law professor and film professor, and he has started or refreshed a number of academic programs over the years. He will continue the initiatives that PCU launched in January, as well as a range of new initiatives such as consolidating the school's two track system into one track, adding writing opportunities to each year of the curriculum, focusing on faculty development, and adding a mentorship program, including offsite tutoring for bar exam repeaters who prefer not to study at the law school.

At the hearing, Dean Valenti acknowledged the school's history of noncompliance since 2015, when the school reported an MPR of 28.2. The school's MPR dipped to 24.4 in 2018 and 26.6 in 2019, but will, according to the dean, return to 28.2 when the school reports its 2020 MPR by the July 1, 2020 deadline. Dean Valenti projected that the school's 2021 MPR would also be noncompliant, but projected it would increase to thirty-seven percent when the school reports on July 1, 2021 and reach full compliance by the July 1, 2022 reporting date or July 1, 2023 reporting date.

The school's projection that its MPR will rise to thirty-seven percent in 2021 assumes that seventeen of the school's graduates will need to pass one of the next two bar examinations. State Bar internal data show that this has not happened at the school since the MPR was first reported in 2015. During the most recent two examinations, for example, a total of five PCU graduates passed one of those two bar examinations.

In lieu of termination of accreditation, the Dean asked the Committee to impose a probationary period through Spring 2021, despite the expectation that the school would still be out of

compliance at the end of such probationary period. The Dean explained that he chose that date because after the school's last periodic inspection in 2016, the school's next compliance inspection was set for Spring 2021; such recommendations, however, are always subject to the possibility that the Committee may request an inspection prior to that date. He further indicated that if the school did not show major improvement by the time it reported its 2021 MPR, he would "pull the plug," suggesting that the school would apply for registered, unaccredited status upon such occurrence.

After the hearing concluded, a transcript was prepared, and staff spoke with the panel members individually, incorporating their input individually when preparing this memorandum and recommending termination of accreditation.

The Committee monitors schools' compliance with the Rules for Accredited Law Schools, including the MPR. Any school that earns accreditation must continue to demonstrate compliance in order to maintain accreditation. Termination of accreditation is the appropriate remedy for noncompliance when a school has not shown progress toward compliance. (Rule 4.172) Here, the school's 2015 MPR was 28.2 percent, dropped further to 24.4 percent in 2018, and remained low, at 26.6 percent, in 2019. It is projected to return to the 2015 level of 28.2 percent in the upcoming 2020 report, despite the implementation of a wide range of bar preparation initiatives and ongoing faculty, student, and alumni support. While the new Dean has not had the opportunity to implement his plan, and it is hoped that the plan greatly increases the bar passage rate for the school's graduates, the record is viewed as a whole over time. The school's pattern of noncompliance over an extended period of years and into future years suggests that probation is not an appropriate option, since meaningful improvement has not been shown.

If the Committee decides to act on its previously expressed intent to terminate accreditation and degree-granting authority, PCU may apply to register as an unaccredited law school and operate subject to those rules. The rules for unaccredited law schools are more relaxed and do not include an MPR requirement. If the school demonstrates compliance with the Unaccredited Law School Rules and Guidelines and earns registration from the Committee at a future meeting, the school will then be able to operate as an unaccredited law school, so long as it maintains that compliance. Prior to its accreditation, the school operated as a registered, unaccredited law school for many years.

FISCAL/PERSONNEL IMPACT

None

AMENDMENTS TO RULES OF THE STATE BAR

None

AMENDMENTS TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES POLICY MANUAL

None

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal: None - core business operations

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee of Bar Examiners proceed with its previously stated intent to terminate the accreditation of Pacific Coast University School of Law based on the school's long-term noncompliance with Rule 4.160(N) and Guidelines 12.1. The school has been out of compliance since 2015, and that compliance is projected to extend for at least two to three years into the future. It is recommended that the school's accreditation and degree granting authority be terminated effective August 20, 2020, at the conclusion of the current semester.

It is hoped that the school would take all reasonable steps to allow its students to fully complete the semester, and that the school would respond promptly to requests for documents such as transcripts.

PROPOSED MOTION

Should the Committee of Bar Examiners agree with the staff recommendation, the following motion should be made:

MOVE, that the Committee of Bar Examiners finds that Pacific Coast University School of Law has not demonstrated compliance with Rule 4.160(N) and Guideline 12.1, and its long-term noncompliance continuing into the future warrants termination of accreditation; that the Committee terminates the accreditation and degree granting authority of Pacific Coast University School effective August 20, 2020, pursuant to Rule 4.176; and that a Notice of Termination of Accreditation be transmitted to the school.

ATTACHMENT(S) LIST

- A. Transcript of Hearing on Pacific Coast University School of Law's Noncompliance – May 29, 2020
- B. Pacific Coast University School of Law's Hearing Exhibits

THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA

OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS

REMOTE HEARING

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In Re:

Pacific Coast University School of Law

CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT

OF PROCEEDINGS

Friday, May 29, 2020

REPORTED BY RICK GALTEN, CSR NO. 13202
464158



(310) 207-8000 Los Angeles
(310) 207-8000 Century City
(916) 922-5777 Sacramento
(951) 686-0606 Riverside
(212) 808-8500 New York City
(312) 379-5566 Chicago

(415) 433-5777 San Francisco
(408) 885-0550 San Jose
(800) 222-1231 Martinez
(818) 702-0202 Woodland Hills
(347) 821-4611 Brooklyn
00+1+800 222 1231 Paris

(949) 955-0400 Irvine
(760) 322-2240 Palm Springs
(702) 366-0500 Las Vegas
(702) 366-0500 Henderson
(518) 490-1910 Albany
00+1+800 222 1231 Dubai

(858) 455-5444 San Diego
(800) 222-1231 Carlsbad
(800) 222-1231 Monterey
(516) 277-9494 Garden City
(914) 510-9110 White Plains
001+1+800 222 1231 Hong Kong

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THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA
OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS
REMOTE HEARING

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In Re:

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Friday, May 29, 2020

REPORTED BY RICK GALTEN, CSR NO. 13202

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A P P E A R A N C E S

THE PANEL:

Alex Lawrence, Committee Member & Educational Standards
Chair

Alex Chan, Committee Member

Paul Kramer, Committee Member

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Miguel Valenti, Dean of Pacific Coast University
School of Law

Sonia Gonzales, Executive Director Pacific Coast
University School of Law

1 REMOTE VIA ZOOM; FRIDAY, MAY 29, 2020

2 1:14 P.M.

3 --o0o--

4 MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you, Natalie.

5 Good afternoon, everyone. Today's hearing has
6 been requested by Pacific Coast University School of Law
7 pursuant to Accredited Law School Rule 4.173. This
8 hearing is being recorded by a court reporter. So
9 please be sure to speak slowly and clearly and be
10 prepared to repeat a statement if asked to do so.

11 Please note that public comment is not being
12 taken, because this is a hearing and is being conducted
13 on the topic of a prior agenda item for which extensive
14 oral and written public comment was taken at a prior
15 Committee Bar Examiners meeting.

16 This hearing is nevertheless open to the public.
17 And I would like to welcome any members of the public
18 who are on the line as observers.

19 The members of the panel and the school's
20 representatives can make themselves visible on camera
21 and can make comments during their presentation. All
22 others have been muted, and camera view is not available
23 whether you called in via telephone or accessed the Web
24 link.

25 This hearing was requested in response to the

1 Committee's issuance of a Notice of Intent to Terminate
2 the accreditation of Pacific Coast University School of
3 Law on the basis of noncompliance with Accredited Law
4 School Rule 4.160 and Guideline 12.1, which require all
5 accredited law schools to maintain a minimum cumulative
6 bar pass rate of at least 40 percent.

7 The purpose of this hearing is to allow other
8 evidence that will be used by the full Committee of Bar
9 Examiners to make a determination as to whether the
10 school is in compliance with the Accredited Law School
11 Rules along with the other material and discussion that
12 has already been provided.

13 Because that is the sole question that will be
14 presented to the full committee based on this hearing
15 and because the only alleged noncompliance identified in
16 the Notice of Intent is with Rule 4.160 and Guideline
17 12.1, the only relevant evidence at this hearing will be
18 evidence that speaks to the question of whether Pacific
19 Coast University is or is not in compliance with the
20 minimum cumulative bar pass rate.

21 Under Accredited Law School Rule 4.174(C), the
22 school has the burden of demonstrating compliance and
23 may represent any relevant evidence they choose,
24 including --

25 The school is provided electronic copies of

1 exhibits in advance. And all of those exhibits will be
2 received by the panel and will be considered part of the
3 record whether or not they are displayed or referenced
4 directly during the hearing.

5 If the school requests, staff will share any
6 exhibit on the screen in the manner that the school
7 directs. The hearing will continue until 4:00 p.m.
8 unless the school completes its presentation sooner.

9 The panel is here to listen and receive
10 evidence, but it will not be taking any questions at the
11 hearing and will not be making a decision or formal
12 recommendation today.

13 Instead, at the next scheduled committee
14 meeting, the panel will share its observations and
15 submit exhibits. Under Accredited Law School Rule
16 40.17(A), it will be the full committee who will then
17 make a determination as to whether or not the school is
18 in compliance.

19 Once that determination is made, the full
20 committee will make its final determination regarding
21 any potential action affecting the school's
22 accreditation. I will introduce the panel and ask the
23 representatives of the school to introduce themselves.

24 Would each panel member please identify or panel
25 chair member, committee bar examiners, and chair of the

1 educational standards.

2 Paul? Paul, can you introduce yourself.

3 MR. CHAN: Paul, you're muted.

4 MR. KRAMER: Yeah, Paul Kramer, chairman of the
5 examination subcommittee of the bar examiners.

6 THE COURT: Alex?

7 MR. CHAN: Sure, this is Alex Chan, chair of the
8 operation and management subcommittee. Also a member of
9 the Committee of Bar Examiners.

10 MR. LAWRENCE: I believe the staff members
11 present are Donna Hershowitz, the intermittent executor;
12 Amy Nunez, director of admissions; Audrey Ching,
13 assistant director of admissions and educational
14 standards; Amber Aldridge, program analyst of
15 educational standards; Ken Holloway, assistant general
16 counsel representing the panel.

17 At this point I will ask state bar staff to
18 unmute the PCU representative and allow them to turn on
19 their cameras.

20 Would each representative of the school please
21 introduce themselves and state who will be the lead from
22 Pacific Coast University.

23 MR. VALENTI: Sure. My name is Miguel Valenti.
24 I'm the new dean of PCU. I'm on the call myself.
25 There's no one else on the call from our end.

1 And I wanted to first say thank you for taking
2 the time to do this. And it's nice to meet you all,
3 with this terrible technology.

4 You -- Mr. Chairperson, you phased out on me
5 there three or four times. But I got the gist of what
6 you had to say. But the call keeps freezing up.

7 So if anybody has any trouble hearing me, please
8 let me know.

9 MR. LAWRENCE: I apologize for that. And yes,
10 if I or anybody else needs to repeat, please don't
11 hesitate to ask.

12 So talking about -- I'd like to take a moment to
13 describe the procedure for today as well as next steps.
14 Pacific Coast University School of Law has provided
15 written responses and public comment in response to the
16 notices of noncompliance on this issue that the school
17 received in 2015, 2018, and 2019, as well as a
18 supplemental statement in advance of the school's
19 inspection that took place on the topic in October 2020
20 (sic).

21 The school participated in a one-hour inspection
22 in October. Then in January 2020, the school provided
23 additional written and verbal public comment.

24 After that, additional written public comment
25 was received prior to the committee's meeting in April

1 2020. PCU also provided exhibits in connection with
2 this hearing today and those have been distributed to us
3 on the panel.

4 The School requested today's hearing under the
5 Accredited Law School Rules after the committee made a
6 finding of noncompliance and issued a Notice of Intent
7 to Terminate Accreditation to PCU to present to the
8 panel.

9 Due to the length of the hearing, we will take
10 five-minute breaks at approximately -- a little bit
11 after 2:00 p.m., since we started a little bit later,
12 and then again at 3:00 p.m. You can stay logged in
13 during the break and just mute your microphone and turn
14 off your camera.

15 At this point I will turn the hearing over to
16 the school via Dean Valenti. So please, again, state
17 your name and you may begin.

18 Thank you, Dean.

19 MR. VALENTI: As I said, my name is Miguel
20 Valenti. I'm the new dean here. A word or two about
21 me, since I'm the new face. I was a Yale undergrad and
22 Yale law student in mergers and acquisitions at Sherman
23 & Sterling and then at Skadden, Arps, which is really
24 one of the crazier places on the face of the Earth.

25 And then I ended up going into film producing in

1 a solo practice. Following a couple of years of doing
2 that, I wrote a book on ethics in entertainment, which
3 is used in several film schools around the country. And
4 I was asked to come in and create a film school in
5 Arizona that -- that followed the book.

6 Arizona is not California. We can't compete --
7 the school could not compete with California schools, so
8 we needed a niche. And the niche was ethics. So I've
9 been teaching ethics for quite some time.

10 From there, I went on to found -- I also, by the
11 way, taught intellectual property and copyright at
12 Arizona Law School.

13 And then I went from there to Quinnipiac
14 University, where I founded their West Coast campus.
15 And I went from there to Otis College of Art and Design
16 and created their entrepreneurship program.

17 I'm -- for lack of a less clumsy way of putting
18 it, I'm an academically turnaround expert. I take
19 either programs that don't exist and make them exist or
20 programs that are faltering and need some kind of a fix.
21 And of course, the latter is why I've come to PCU, to --
22 to turn it around.

23 The -- the board here has realized the problems.
24 And basically, everything is changing at this point.
25 Entire top management has changed over. And so I'm kind

1 of at the -- at the spearhead right now, which is why
2 you're only talking to me.

3 By the way, I'm sorry that I look so red in the
4 camera. I look like I've had a bottle of whiskey. I
5 decided to turn off the air-conditioning in my office
6 and on the whole floor, because it's summertime. So
7 anyway, I'm a little overheated. I apologize.

8 You know, this -- this is not our first dance
9 with the Bar, obviously. So I don't really want to take
10 three hours and retread all of the past. It seems like
11 it's a giant waste of your time.

12 Are we technically in noncompliance at this
13 moment? Yes, we are. That -- that is not a point for
14 debate; it's an admission. We are below the number we
15 need to be at.

16 What I wanted to talk about, though, is that
17 when the last actual site inspection was done -- not the
18 phone call in October, but the last actual site
19 inspection -- the recommendation to the committee was
20 that we have our next site inspection in five years.
21 That would have been next year, 2021.

22 Now, that -- by then we probably would have been
23 in compliance. It's because it's coming early -- to
24 explain briefly. We had two large classes come into
25 this law school in 2015 and 2016. They were brought in

1 by a dean who had special plans for these students, had
2 a way that he wanted to do things, made lots of
3 exceptions to the admissions rules. And then sadly, he
4 passed away.

5 There were these two large classes. And for
6 whatever reason -- I wasn't here at the time. I have no
7 idea -- for whatever reason, those two classes were, I
8 would say -- everyone tells me they were the two worst
9 classes we've had ever.

10 Now, the problem is, they were both large
11 classes. So that meant we had a denominator problem in
12 figuring out our MPR. We have a lot of students who did
13 one of a couple things. They either took the bar once
14 or twice, failed it, and then never took it again, or
15 they're continuing to try to take it, with the same
16 results.

17 If the timetable had run another year, we would
18 have dropped the class of '15 from your five-year
19 tentative administration calculation. And we figured --
20 we've done some internals, based on who we have and
21 playing with the numbers -- we would have been very
22 close to 37 percent or maybe even a little more. I
23 realize that's still under the 40, but from where we are
24 now, that would be a big jump for us.

25 As you know, PCU, first of all, is very old.

1 It's been around since 1927, before the Bar, actually.
2 And we cater to a very different kind of student than,
3 for example, where I went to law school. It isn't a
4 bunch of -- of eager beavers who put their heart and
5 soul into getting through law school, passing the bar,
6 and starting a career.

7 Most of our students are in very different life
8 positions: Single parents, senior citizens, poorer folk
9 who can't afford standard tuition rates. We are very
10 inexpensive. And, in fact, we're going to become less
11 expensive, rather than more, in the next admission
12 cycle.

13 We are a school that tries to give people a home
14 whom otherwise might not be able to find a way into the
15 law. There are a number of students with -- we have
16 students with visual acuity problems, with all kinds of
17 issues that might either keep them out of a more
18 traditional law school or make them -- make that road
19 much harder for them, let alone the costs.

20 All right? Our classes meet at night. So
21 people who have full-time jobs can still go to law
22 school. Several of them have other careers. Not just
23 jobs, but careers. And they are, you know, able to do
24 both and to better their lives and to move on.

25 Now, some of them don't have any intention of

1 practicing law. They are peace officers who want a
2 promotion to detective at work. Or they are working for
3 a company where they deal with legal issues all the
4 time. For example, real estate. We have doctors,
5 believe it or not, who are not interested in going into
6 medical malpractice. They just want to know more about
7 it.

8 What that boils down to is that every semester a
9 percentage of our students don't really prioritize the
10 bar the way, for example, I did. It isn't the be-all
11 and end-all. The be-all and end-all is the education.
12 And for those using it for work purposes, it's the JD.
13 That's what they need to move on to the next phase of
14 their chosen career. As I say, policemen. We have some
15 engineers.

16 And then we have people who are English as a
17 second language. In one case, English as a third
18 language. We offer these people a home. We offer them
19 a way into the law.

20 Now, the problem is that people at these stages
21 of their lives, when they have families, jobs, other
22 issues to deal with, they're not the same eager beavers,
23 again, that I was 35 years ago. The -- the okay, I'm
24 going to study until my eyes bleed every single day
25 between now and the bar exam, that doesn't happen for

1 them, because they have two kids or they have a career
2 or whatever it might be.

3 Also, in '15 and '16, when we had these large
4 classes, we were coming out of a pretty awful economic
5 time. And a lot of our students decided that it would
6 be safer for them to keep the jobs they had and use the
7 degree to get a promotion and to make some more money
8 rather than to look to change to become practicing
9 lawyers at that time.

10 So my -- my strong feeling is that we're turning
11 this place around and we're turning it around pretty
12 quickly.

13 But there's no way -- with those two classes of
14 '15 and '16, there's no way that we can get to
15 40 percent this year. We've gone up. And, in fact, we
16 haven't gone up a lot, but we've gone up two full
17 percentage points during the pandemic, which I think
18 really is a testament. I wasn't here, so I can't take
19 any credit. But I think it's a testament to the
20 people -- to the staff and the faculty who run this
21 place.

22 The transition to this technology and teaching
23 our classes online and moving material online was done
24 relatively seamlessly. I was finishing up at Otis at
25 the time. And I have to tell you it was not nearly as

1 seamless. They did it here very, very well.

2 And what we've done is, we've pulled apart all
3 the best practices from moving online and we're going to
4 use it to inform our teaching moving forward, whether or
5 not we continue to use Zoom as a delivery method. If
6 the pandemic ends, we've still learned a lot of very
7 valuable lessons about how to best communicate content
8 to students and how to reinforce what they're learning.

9 We're going to be putting a lot of things
10 online. And we're going to make sure that students have
11 access to more material than they've had in the past.

12 We're basically in existence from the very
13 earliest days to provide equal opportunity. That's --
14 that was the purpose that the founders had in mind, to
15 give a law school education and a way into the legal
16 world to people who wouldn't have otherwise had it.
17 Okay? And we followed that all the way along.

18 Our tuition is extremely low. And as I say,
19 it's going to go down, actually, rather than up. And
20 all of our classes are at night. I mentioned that.

21 Now, I came here both because they had a problem
22 to solve, which is the MPR, and they -- I liked their
23 approach. It's sort of a -- if I were in an art school,
24 it would be for me, the equivalent of a conservatory
25 approach.

1 And I really -- I do like that. I like the fact
2 that there's a tremendous amount of faculty-student
3 contact. I like the fact that there are personal
4 touches everywhere. The students are made to feel like
5 family.

6 Now, I know this all seems like background that
7 you don't need or already have. But I just want to put
8 it on the record so that -- so that I've done so. We're
9 a different kind of school.

10 Now, obviously, we have to follow the rules that
11 you all set. I'm not suggesting for a minute that we
12 don't. And if that's the only issue, then okay. You
13 know, we're not -- we're not special in the sense that
14 we don't have to live by the Bar Association's
15 decisions. Of course we do.

16 The thing that I'm saying is that I think the
17 school is being responsive to the concerns. After the
18 last physical inspection, real inspection, not the
19 telephone call in October, there were a number of
20 physical premises issues that needed to be fixed. You
21 all recommended a number of things. They were terrific
22 ideas. They've all been done. The physical plant is
23 different now than -- than when you were here.

24 We're trying to do the same thing with
25 academics. We've got all-new administrators coming in.

1 And we're going to make some structural changes. One of
2 the things that's happened here is, decisions had been
3 made a little bit like this, right? (Indicating.) And
4 what it's done is, it's taken away from our ability to
5 focus on the academics and focus on the Bar. So we're
6 making some changes.

7 The first is, we right now have a two-track
8 system, two separate enrollments. One group enrolls in
9 September, one group enrolls in December. From my audit
10 of the files, notes, statistics, paperwork, everything
11 else, that is a confusing nightmare.

12 So what we're going to do, we're going to honor
13 our promise to the incoming classes, assuming we have
14 them, and we are going to change over to a single-track
15 system on a normal schedule of September start. That's
16 one thing. That will allow us much greater
17 concentration on the students rather than trying to
18 juggle the logistics of a rolling process twice a year.
19 It also gives us the summer months to better our
20 programs, institute new programs, try new things.

21 The other thing is, everybody's going in for
22 more training, faculty and administration alike. We are
23 going to be starting that very soon. As I said, we
24 are -- also, we learned a lot from coronavirus. We're
25 going to do some things differently and provide a much

1 richer online world for our students. They won't take
2 classes online once this crazy thing ends, but they'll
3 have resources online that dwarf what they have
4 available to them now.

5 We have our partnership with Barbary. That
6 begins basically the minute a student walks in our door
7 as a 1L. We have Barbary at our initial orientations.
8 And they -- the students work with Barbary M. And they
9 work with Barbary all the way through. And a portion of
10 their tuition goes toward paying Barbary so that when a
11 student has graduated and is going to take the bar, they
12 don't have to pay for the Barbary review course. It's
13 already been paid for.

14 And in the meantime, they've had use of all of
15 the multistate materials, all of the essay materials and
16 direct access to Barbary tools. So that's something
17 that the prior dean started a year ago. And we're far
18 enough into it now that I know exactly what we need to
19 do to make it work really, really well.

20 And the students are loving it. They think
21 that's a great way for them to not just study for law
22 school, graduate, and then think, oh, now I have to
23 study for the bar. This is a way for them to combine
24 their studies and be more on target in what they're
25 doing.

1 We're instituting several new peer-to-peer
2 learning programs. We are going to use the old
3 hackneyed concept of the study group, and we're going to
4 turn it around a little bit. We're going to provide
5 teasers and contests and challenges for study groups.
6 And we're going to create an -- sort of an air of
7 everybody working together to solve these problems. And
8 the professors are going to supervise this. And it's
9 going to allow students to work through far more in the
10 way of essays and MB questions and all of that.

11 The other thing that we're doing is, as far as
12 teaching goes -- I -- I come from a background where
13 teaching is everything. Teaching is the Number 1
14 priority at this school from now until I'm forced to
15 leave or whatever happens, happens. But as long as I'm
16 here, teaching is the Number 1 priority.

17 I'm going through every word that has ever been
18 said about any of our professors. And we're going to
19 make sure that additional training is provided,
20 additional resources are provided. Faculty will be
21 meeting with me probably every two to three weeks while
22 we get started.

23 Their responsibilities to keep up with what's
24 going on in their particular fields are spelled out
25 very, very clearly in contracts and handbooks and

1 faculty guides and all of that. So that's -- we're
2 going to put a real emphasis on that.

3 We're also going to institute a mentorship
4 program. All of our current students are going to have
5 a faculty mentor, and they're going to have an alumni
6 mentor.

7 Now, what I want to do as far as -- excuse me.
8 Very hot in here -- what I want to do as far as the
9 students who've already graduated, who have not been as
10 successful with taking the bar exam, is I'm going to
11 assign each of them a mentor as well. And they're going
12 to work with somebody to prep and to really focus on
13 passing the bar.

14 And if they choose not to pass the bar, then --
15 then we'll have that discussion -- I mean, not to take
16 the bar, we'll have that discussion too.

17 I'm also instituting a speaker series. And
18 we're expanding our number of alumni events. Because we
19 find that our best referrals for admissions come from
20 alums. And the best guidance given to our students
21 sometimes comes from alums as well. So we're going to
22 increase the presence of alums on campus.

23 But anybody still in the CBX pipeline will
24 receive a mentor. We have an event here every year for
25 alumni who did not pass the bar to come in and get a

1 refresher course. But what we've discovered in the
2 comments is that some of them are embarrassed, for lack
3 of a better way to put it. They don't really want to
4 walk into a room where all of the current students and
5 faculty who are around the school say, ah, they're in
6 that room. That means they didn't pass the bar.

7 So rather than relying solely on that -- we're
8 going to do that for the students who aren't
9 embarrassed, but I'm going to send a tutor out to them
10 for all the ones that are. And they never have to admit
11 anything. They just get help with passing the exam.

12 The -- we're tightening up the professor
13 evaluation process. First of all, we're going to
14 make -- we're going to redo the student evaluation form
15 and make sure that it is taken seriously, which I'm not
16 convinced it always was in the past.

17 Every professor will be peer-reviewed during the
18 term at least once and also reviewed by me. I will sit
19 in on their class at least once. They will do a midterm
20 checkup, which will be an online checkup. It'll be in
21 writing. It'll go into the file, but it will be a
22 little bit more -- this is what I think, you know, I
23 could use more of or less of. It's more of sort of a
24 gut check in the middle of the semester. And then
25 they'll do their written -- final written evaluations at

1 the end.

2 All evaluations will be audited for every
3 professor every year at the end of whatever course it is
4 that they're teaching.

5 And now, I'm sure you know this already from the
6 prior dean, but we're now using the same ExamSoft
7 program that the Bar uses, Exemplify and ExamSoft, so
8 that we can better correlate the questions that we're
9 asking and the answers that we're getting.

10 We can get the exams back faster, and we can get
11 the exams back with additional data that allows us to
12 actually not simply say to a student, eh, you didn't do
13 very well. This will give us a chance to break it down
14 and explain why and suggest remedial measures when
15 they're necessary. And all of this is being put in
16 place for the coming academic year.

17 Just a couple more things, and then I will shut
18 up. The -- we're going to revamp -- they have a
19 one-credit course now on legal analysis and law school.
20 We're going to revamp that and turn it into a writing
21 seminar for first year, and it's going to be required.

22 And we are going to put elements of it into
23 second and third year as well so that they're going --
24 the students are going to get writing classes required
25 of them all of the first three years.

1 And in 4L, we're going to try to change the
2 scheduling of the curriculum to create a hole where we
3 do the final writing class. And what that will be is a
4 summary of the kinds of things they've learned in the
5 first three classes. And then they will do exercises in
6 issue-spotting and in how to write a really persuasive
7 legal document.

8 So writing is going to become our big new
9 academic thing here. My contention, having talked to a
10 number of students, is, it isn't -- it isn't usually how
11 much law you know that gets you through the bar exam,
12 it's how well can you spot the issues and how well can
13 you write your answer. And we want to make sure that we
14 give them every minute of training in those skills as we
15 possibly can.

16 We're also going to institute a -- sort of a --
17 I hate to use the word track again, because it's
18 confusing, but a two-track system. When students know
19 that they have no interest in going into practice, yes,
20 they have the right to take the bar exam, certainly.
21 But some of them don't even want to do that. They feel
22 pressured into doing it.

23 Those students, as far as I'm concerned,
24 assuming that it doesn't violate one of your rules --
25 and I've read through. And if it does -- I'm not aware

1 of it yet -- what we'd like to do is, the students who
2 are not interested in practice and not interested in
3 taking the bar, we won't devote the review resources to
4 them. We'll concentrate on the other students, which
5 will give us more of a targeted audience.

6 The -- the students in question would get the
7 entire -- the exact same education. The only thing they
8 wouldn't get are the review sessions. And it would be a
9 decision that they could reverse. If they see all of
10 their friends in their class are going to take the bar
11 exam and they suddenly decide they want to take the bar
12 exam, we'll arrange it. We'll give them the review
13 training, and we'll let them do that.

14 But we know that three to four students every
15 incoming class have no intention of practicing and
16 they're only taking the bar exam because they think they
17 have to. So I'd like to give them a choice.

18 Now, if that does violate something from you
19 all -- I haven't had enough time to go through
20 absolutely every rule and reg -- we won't do it,
21 obviously. But if we can, we will.

22 We instituted -- about a year and a half ago the
23 school instituted a required Saturday lab for which they
24 charged an additional tuition. What we discovered after
25 running it a couple of times is that it is not an

1 efficient way to do this.

2 So the new plan -- what we're going to do is,
3 we're going to take the same lab content, which is both
4 multistate questions and essays, and we're going to have
5 the students do these right before their class. We have
6 proctors lined up so the professors don't have to come
7 in early to do it. The professors will work with me to
8 come up with the questions. And the students will come
9 in for a drill prior to every class. I explain that in
10 the -- in the documents that I submitted to the
11 committee.

12 My thought is -- well, I have a number of
13 thoughts. But anybody who works full-time, the last
14 thing -- if they're coming in Monday, Wednesday, and
15 Friday nights, the last thing they want to hear from you
16 is, you have to come in Saturday afternoon as well. If
17 you work, it's hard to get that time off. If you have a
18 family, you don't want to give up a Saturday. None of
19 that is as important as becoming a good lawyer, but what
20 it does is, it weakens their concentration.

21 I want to do it on a night that they know
22 they're coming in anyway. They're geared up for class.
23 They're geared up for work. They come in, and we get
24 them when they're fresh. And we use that instead of a
25 three-hour thing on Saturday afternoon where 45 minutes

1 is spent, you know, wandering around or not focused on
2 what you're doing. So we're going to put that into
3 place.

4 At some point -- and this is way down the line,
5 because obviously we have a bigger hurdle to jump with
6 you all right now -- but at some point down the line, we
7 would like to talk about and prepare for putting in
8 place some sort of professional law degree. Either an
9 MLS, if we can do it, or an executive JD or whatever the
10 form -- the preferred form is of the committee at the
11 time when we're able to do it.

12 That's just a future plan so that we can
13 continue to serve both our "I want to practice" audience
14 and our "I don't want to practice ever" audience.

15 All right. So next thing, we are going to start
16 instituting a broader range of electives. I always
17 found in law school that -- you know, I didn't expect
18 it, but oftentimes I learned more about the law by
19 taking an elective than I did by taking the required
20 course. So I want to get some electives on board that
21 students are really interested in, that will teach them
22 the skills that -- that will translate to the bar exam,
23 but whose underlying subject matter they'll prefer.

24 Anything from entertainment law to real estate
25 and the law to medical malpractice. Almost anything.

1 And we're looking around now for people who can teach
2 those.

3 I want to broaden the range of internships,
4 externships, and pro bono that we do. We're going to be
5 starting that immediately after this process is
6 complete. I'd like to create -- and I've already mapped
7 out what, for lack of a better term, because I haven't
8 come up with a good buzz name yet -- a return to school
9 for alums. It's something that I know that Cal Northern
10 does.

11 And their description is interesting. For the
12 first three to four years when you're out as a junior
13 associate, you're learning where the men's room is and
14 you're learning how to draft documents and you're
15 learning how to do whatever it is that the partner on
16 your deal wants you to learn how to do.

17 But after about five years, there comes a need
18 at some point, which just happened to a friend of mine,
19 where someone walks into your office and says, okay,
20 what about new business? Are you going to be able to
21 bring in new business? I don't know too many law
22 students who come out knowing how to bring in new
23 business.

24 So what I'd like to do is, five years out, I'd
25 like to bring our alums back and run a workshop seminar

1 on the skills that will take them into the second half
2 of their law firm associate career. Reviewing the first
3 half and then showing them the second half. And we
4 would bring in, obviously, experts from the Bar and from
5 local practice to teach that.

6 I've talked about Barbary already.

7 We had a program that we started last year, I
8 believe, and we're going to increase it, where we raise
9 some money and we give grants to our graduates for child
10 care when they're studying for the bar. One of the
11 biggest problems we've heard about from our last, let's
12 say, two classes is, hey, once school's over, terrific.
13 I've still got these two kids. I can't really spend the
14 six or eight hours a day I want to spend to study for
15 the bar, because I've got two kids and I'm a single
16 mother. What do I do?

17 So we found that if, in giving small grants to
18 people to pay for child care, their -- their ability to
19 put the time in goes way up. So we're going to look to
20 do more of that.

21 We're also going to look at merit scholarships
22 and other grants, things like that.

23 We are going to raise our admissions standards.
24 And I'm going through that right now. I want to get a
25 picture of basically every student who's been admitted

1 to this school in the last five years, and then I want
2 to look at exactly how we're going to do it in the
3 future.

4 We have some terrific students that are coming
5 in now. One's a senior engineer. One's -- you know,
6 these people have incredible resumés. And I sort of
7 wonder, you know, why they're suddenly going to law
8 school, but I think it's great. But I want to get
9 everything on paper. I want to come up with very firm
10 admissions guidelines and processes. And that's being
11 done now.

12 One thing that -- oh, we want to increase career
13 counseling. I'm going to bring in somebody to do that.
14 And we're going to make sure that people don't pass from
15 level to level just because they can breathe. We're
16 going to pay very serious attention to any student with
17 a subpar grade or failing grade. We're not going to
18 shove them through the system.

19 I should tell you that I have the Board of
20 Directors' financial and authorities support for all of
21 these programs. We're going to be moving forward great
22 guns to do this stuff.

23 Two or three things. I would very much like us
24 to be able to have a different relationship with you
25 all. Going back through the files, it seems to me

1 that -- I don't know how many years ago, maybe 15, 16,
2 17 -- it turns adversarial. And I'm not sure why. I'm
3 not sure what happened. But I don't like it. I think
4 that we're a better school if we work with you. And I
5 see no reason for us to be on opposite sides of the
6 fence.

7 And we'll do our part to -- to bring ourselves
8 to the point where you're, you know, you're proud of us.
9 And we'll work with you in any and every way that you
10 suggest.

11 The other thing is, I want to make PCU more a
12 part of the community. I want to bring more of the
13 community to the students and more of the students to
14 the community. So we're going to institute some things
15 that will allow students to believe that it's more than
16 just a place where they come to sit and study. We're
17 talking about bringing in groups or speakers from women
18 in the law and arts and entertainment and, you know,
19 doing events and even -- somebody even suggested a legal
20 dance. But we'll figure out the specifics.

21 But we want our students to feel at home with
22 us. I have a great staff. The -- the staff is -- they
23 know all the students by name. They know their back
24 histories. They spend a lot of time with them. So once
25 we get the new top-level administrators in place, then I

1 think we'll be in a great position to really create a
2 nice world for our students.

3 So that brings me around to where I started,
4 which is, are we out of compliance? Yes, we are. Are
5 we far out of compliance? Well, this year, yes.
6 Projected for next year, 37 percent, maybe 38, not so
7 far.

8 So here's -- here's the only position that I can
9 reasonably take. Because I know from all the
10 documentation and from hearing you speak, I know, you
11 know, how you feel about these things. I -- the only
12 thing I'm asking is, if there would be any consideration
13 for giving us at least the time we thought we would have
14 had, which is till next fall, the other two
15 administrations. If we could have till 2021, that
16 changes the denominator.

17 If the passage rate doesn't significantly
18 improve by then, we'll pull the plug. But I would ask
19 just for a consideration to give us some time. I'm not
20 asking for years. I know that's been done here before.
21 You've seen tears. You've seen all kinds of arguments.
22 I'm not really asking for that.

23 I'm asking to have a chance to turn this around
24 without my first six months, seven months at this school
25 being used to explain why we lost the accreditation.

1 You know, this school survived 75 years without
2 it. But you know how it is. You get something like
3 this. And when you lose it, it seems like a much
4 greater hole than before you ever had it. And I think
5 that it will damage us with our students. It will
6 certainly damage us with our faculty.

7 And I feel powerless at that point, because
8 instead of dealing with all of these changes that I want
9 to make, I'm explaining. And I'm -- I guess, as I say,
10 I'm asking for -- asking you to give me a bit of time,
11 not a lot, a bit of time for me to pull the rest of this
12 together and then schedule another call or site visit.

13 And then make your decision and we'll live with
14 it, whatever it is. That's -- that's the substance of
15 my request, is just, let me get my feet on the ground.
16 Let me get this stuff turned around. Let me get on a
17 single track with the students so that we can focus on
18 each and every one of them. And we're not dealing with
19 crazy logistics.

20 And I can promise you that the bar rate will go
21 up next year. I can't promise it will hit 40. But I
22 can promise we'll get an awful lot closer than we are
23 now if you're willing to give us that chance.

24 MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you, Dean Valenti.

25 And at this point I want to open up to the other

1 panel members if they have any questions for you. And I
2 hope they don't mind if I ask the first one.

3 Can you just explain -- you mentioned the
4 two-track system as well as you talked about new
5 administration coming in.

6 Can you talk about sort of the motivations,
7 specifically about going from two tracks to one. And
8 then what specific new administration goals are you
9 looking at?

10 MR. VALENTI: Okay, sure. All right. So first,
11 the two-track idea.

12 This seemed to come not -- I'm reading back
13 through the files. It seemed to come not from a
14 conscious decision of, we need two tracks of students to
15 service everyone that's interested.

16 What seemed to happen was that the school was
17 requiring a very large upfront payment on tuition. And
18 the tuition included the \$3,000 for the mandatory lab.

19 The time of year, for a number of our students,
20 it was very difficult paying during the summertime or at
21 the end of summer, having to come up with a large sum of
22 money.

23 So someone here thought of the idea of, well,
24 maybe we give them longer to pay the bill and we simply
25 start a second class when they can pay that bill.

1 Now, on the face of it, I understand why they
2 did that. They didn't want to send away students who
3 would be great students except for the fact that they
4 didn't have \$5,000 that they could peel loose in one
5 shot to sign up. A lot of us can't do that.

6 But I don't think they thought through the
7 consequences. And the consequences are two sets of
8 faculty, two sets of staff to take care of certain
9 things. Constant confusion as to -- okay, it -- I don't
10 know if you remember the movie. But If It's Tuesday,
11 This Must Be Belgium. It was, like, if it's Tuesday,
12 this must be track 2.

13 And it got to the point where it's not serving
14 our interests and it's not serving students' interests.
15 So what we're going to do instead is change the payment
16 terms. We're reducing the tuition a little bit, and
17 we're going to ask all the students start at the same
18 time.

19 That allows the administration to focus on one
20 group, on one schedule, like most normal law schools. I
21 mean, there was no way I could start Yale Law School in
22 January. That wasn't going to happen. You either went
23 or you didn't go.

24 If we lose a couple of students in doing so but
25 it raises our overall performance, I think it's well

1 worth it, and so does the Board. And so that's the
2 idea, is to put everybody on, quote/unquote, normal law
3 school schedule so we have one set of admissions instead
4 of two.

5 I mean, basically, the staff here is working
6 year-round, because as soon as they get rid of one
7 session and get it enrolled, then they got to do the
8 next one. So we're going to back off that.

9 I want to use the summertimes to be productive
10 and create new things. I don't want to use it to push
11 paperwork of that kind.

12 As far as the staffing, we're currently -- what
13 I want to get in place as immediately as I can -- and
14 I'm working on it -- is the dean of students. That
15 person will help me with all of the academic
16 requirements and will keep -- I don't want to say ride
17 herd, because it makes it sound bad somehow, but they'll
18 ride herd on the whole Barbary partnership and how the
19 students are accessing that information and to make sure
20 that they are accessing that information.

21 I intend to meet with every student three times
22 per semester. That's already being scheduled. But I'd
23 like a dean of students to be able to do that as well.

24 We have our treasurer in place. I'm going to
25 promote from inside at least one associate dean. And

1 eventually, meaning as the next round of hires, I'd like
2 to look for a career counseling position.

3 There are lots of other positions I'd like to
4 fill as well. But we're a small school with small
5 classes. And even though the Board has said that money
6 is not an issue, I don't yet need five deans. You know,
7 it's -- we're not at that point yet. I want to keep the
8 administration lean. But I want to fill these roles
9 that need to be filled.

10 Okay. So -- and then we have our staff. We
11 have an executive director, who's great. We have
12 assistants. You know, so that will be the new -- the
13 new staff going into the fall.

14 MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you.

15 And at this time the other panel members, please
16 state your name before you ask your question.

17 MR. CHAN: Sure. This is Alex Chan again.
18 Thank you, Dean Valenti. I am the chair of the
19 operation and management subcommittee.

20 Can you inform the panel and remind the panel
21 how many incoming students are you expecting for the
22 fall and how many students you'll have in total as of
23 this fall.

24 MR. VALENTI: Okay. Let me get -- I need to get
25 you the exact statistics. I'm putting out a little help

1 message, because they're still working on those
2 documents. So let me get you that and maybe go on with
3 another question. And then I'll come back when I get
4 the figures in here.

5 MR. CHAN: Sure.

6 Another question I have -- and I'm sorry if
7 somehow I misunderstood earlier when you were talking
8 about the passage rates. I think at one point you
9 mentioned that you had a vision or you had a mission to
10 making sure that you would meet the minimum passage rate
11 that we have, which is 40 percent.

12 So by next fall, I think at one point you said
13 you would be able to meet that. But then I think in
14 another part of your message, you seemed to communicate
15 that you could get very close to it, like, 30-something
16 percent threshold, but you wouldn't be able to meet the
17 40 percent

18 So I just wanted you to clarify exactly what
19 your position is in terms of meeting that passage rate.

20 MR. VALENTI: Yes, yes, absolutely. I -- I know
21 I was a little -- a little more vague about that than I
22 should have been.

23 So here is the situation for us. Right now --
24 right now we are way below the passage rate, as you
25 know, or we wouldn't be on this phone call. And so our

1 2018 figures were 26.2 percent. That's with a
2 denominator of 145, numerator of 38.

3 Then we jumped a little bit in '19 to 26.6. And
4 during the whole pandemic fun and games we jumped
5 2 percent to 28.2.

6 Now, what we've done is, we have projected for
7 2021, conservatively projected a 37 percent MPR. It's
8 conservative because --

9 How many -- 1L? 25 in total? Okay. Thanks.

10 By the way, I just -- sorry to disappear like
11 that. I just got your answer on the other question. 25
12 incoming. I knew it was between 20 and 28. But I
13 didn't want to give you the wrong figure. 25. And, you
14 know, some of that -- one or two of that may -- you
15 know, there may be some kind of COVID fallout on that.
16 But that is the number we have slated right now.

17 Back to the MPR, we're projecting 37.4 percent
18 for 2021. If -- if we get the chance to move forward
19 with the plans that we have, I think we can beat that.
20 That's the -- that is what our accountants are telling
21 me. But I think we could be at 38 or 39.

22 Whether we can hit exactly 40, it will depend on
23 a number of things. I think it's very possible. But I
24 can't give you an ironclad guarantee, which is why I was
25 saying that if we got close, we could have this

1 conversation again and you could decide, well, close
2 isn't good enough.

3 MR. CHAN: Thank you, Dean.

4 Another question I have is that your projections
5 perhaps is that -- let's say roughly 38 percent for the
6 next administration.

7 How long would it take, in your opinion, to meet
8 the five-year average of 40 percent passage rate?

9 MR. VALENTI: That would require the 2015 class
10 and 2016 class to both fall off the bottom of the five
11 years. So I would say latest would be the first
12 administration of 2022.

13 MR. CHAN: Would that be fall or spring of 2022?

14 MR. VALENTI: I want to say spring of 2022. If
15 not spring, then certainly by fall.

16 MR. CHAN: Thank you, Dean.

17 One more question. Again, just to follow on my
18 previous question.

19 How many other students are currently at the
20 school, not counting the incoming ones, but just the
21 4Ls, 3Ls, and 2Ls?

22 MR. VALENTI: I believe it is 35.

23 MR. CHAN: 35 plus the incoming 25, so we're
24 looking at roughly 60 students; is my math correct?

25 MR. VALENTI: Yes, yes, I believe that's right.

1 I'm going to double-check that number as well. Yeah,
2 that's about right. We don't want to go above that
3 number. We don't want to expand too quickly. We want
4 to keep the classes small and, you know...

5 Total students, not counting the 1Ls this year,
6 both -- coming back -- all years except the 1Ls, except
7 the 25. Ah, I was wrong. I'm sorry.

8 About 125, 130.

9 MR. CHAN: Okay. So including incoming, we're
10 looking at about 150-plus students?

11 MR. VALENTI: Yes, correct. Right around 150,
12 yeah.

13 MR. CHAN: Now, earlier you talked about some of
14 your students, you know, enrolling that have no intent
15 to take the bar exam versus those students who have
16 every intent to take the bar exam.

17 MR. VALENTI: Yeah.

18 MR. CHAN: How do you differentiate who would be
19 taking the exam and who won't be when you enroll those
20 students?

21 MR. VALENTI: Well, I think that is counseling
22 that will happen with each and every student as they are
23 matriculating. And they will be told that they are not
24 locked into that decision.

25 But for example, I've already spoken with an

1 incoming student who is a peace officer. And he wants
2 the JD because he wants to be a detective. He said, I'm
3 not leaving the force. I'm going to put in my 20 and --
4 and, you know, that's it. So I'm not going to practice
5 law. But I can use the JD.

6 So if it's -- if the person is that decided,
7 then the counseling will be easy. If they're not, we'll
8 discuss it with them. We'll let the student -- and we
9 will check back with them probably once a semester.
10 I'll keep a list. And once a semester we'll check back
11 with them to determine whether they made the right
12 choice for themselves. And as I say, they can always
13 reverse the choice. That's up to them.

14 MR. CHAN: Thank you.

15 I have no further questions.

16 MR. KRAMER: This is Paul Kramer. I've got one
17 question for you.

18 I'm -- just to be clear -- make sure we have a
19 clear record, when you were speaking about 37 percent
20 next year, I had assumed that you were speaking about
21 the MPR. But then in response to Alex Chan's question,
22 it sounded as if you were speaking about the passing
23 rate on the particular bar exam next year.

24 MR. VALENTI: No, no, no. I'm talking about the
25 MPR.

1 MR. KRAMER: Okay. Good. Then I understood you
2 right the first time. Thank you. That's all I have.

3 MR. VALENTI: Oh, all right.

4 MR. LAWRENCE: Dean Valenti -- again, this is
5 Alex Lawrence. The calculations that you mentioned
6 earlier, have you or do you mind, say, at the end of
7 this meeting or after today, actually, providing those
8 calculations --

9 MR. VALENTI: Not at all.

10 MR. LAWRENCE: -- that you have been -- okay.

11 MR. VALENTI: The summaries of them are in the
12 documents that I sent over. I'll just get the person
13 who did the mathematic to send you the formula.

14 MR. LAWRENCE: Great. And actually, I just have
15 possibly just one more question, talking again about the
16 class size reduction and you mentioning that you
17 anticipate the reduction in the tuition.

18 Again, is that -- can you just talk a little bit
19 more about the reduction in the tuition a little bit
20 more.

21 MR. VALENTI: Yes, absolutely. Absolutely.

22 The consensus amongst the students and the
23 faculty was that the required \$3,000 Saturday lab wasn't
24 what the school hoped it would be. All right? So as I
25 said, we're going to revamp that and put it into the

1 times that our regular curriculum meets and all of that.

2 What that means is, we're taking a portion of
3 that \$3,000 off the tuition. Probably 2,000 of it. And
4 we'll -- the other 1,000 would be for the administrative
5 costs of -- of handling the review sessions.

6 So student tuition should drop to anywhere --
7 right now it's at 11-5. And it should drop to anywhere
8 between 9 -- between 9 and 10 by the time we're done.
9 And we're one of the few schools I know that's actually
10 dropping tuition. Everyplace -- my son, who's 17, is
11 looking to go to college -- is going the other
12 direction.

13 But we want to make this a doable thing. And
14 the more -- more grant money we raise -- we're going to
15 try to help people even with that level.

16 But -- so I would say you're looking at 9 -- 9
17 to 10, probably closer to 9.

18 MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you.

19 MR. VALENTI: You're welcome.

20 MR. LAWRENCE: So I believe we've come to the
21 conclusion unless Alex Chan or Paul Kramer have any
22 additional questions.

23 I want to thank you, Dean Valenti, and the
24 Pacific Coast University School of Law for your
25 participation in this hearing.

1 A transcript of the hearing and all exhibits
2 will be provided to the committee to be considered with
3 the other information received to date on this matter at
4 its next meeting.

5 I want to also thank the panel and staff and
6 court reporter for their time.

7 This concludes today's hearing. Thank you.

8 (Proceedings concluded at 2:17.)

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CERTIFICATE OF SHORTHAND REPORTER

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I, RICK GALTEN, a Certified Shorthand Reporter of the State of California, do hereby certify that I am a disinterested person herein; that I reported the foregoing hearing in shorthand writing; that I thereafter caused my shorthand writing to be transcribed into typewriting.

I further certify that I am not of counsel or Attorney for any of the parties to said hearing, or in any way interested in the outcome of said hearing.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 3rd day of June, 2020.

CAUSE: In Re Pacific Coast University
School of Law



RICK GALTEN, CSR 13202

	17:25;31:25	always (3) 22:16;27:16;42:12	audited (1) 23:2	Belgium (1) 35:11
\$	admission (2) 11:14;13:11	Amber (1) 7:14	Audrey (1) 7:12	below (2) 11:14;38:24
\$3,000 (3) 34:18;43:23;44:3	admissions (7) 7:12,13;12:3; 21:19;29:23;30:10; 36:3	amongst (1) 43:22	authorities (1) 30:20	best (4) 16:3,7;21:19,20
\$5,000 (1) 35:4	admit (1) 22:10	amount (1) 17:2	available (2) 4:22;19:4	better (6) 13:24;18:19;22:3; 23:8;28:7;31:4
A	admitted (1) 29:25	Amy (1) 7:12	average (1) 40:8	big (2) 12:24;24:8
ability (2) 18:4;29:18	advance (2) 6:1;8:18	analysis (1) 23:19	aware (1) 24:25	bigger (1) 27:5
able (8) 13:14,23;27:11; 28:20;30:24;36:23; 38:13,16	adversarial (1) 31:2	analyst (1) 7:14	away (3) 12:4;18:4;35:2	biggest (1) 29:11
above (1) 41:2	affecting (1) 6:21	anticipate (1) 43:17	awful (2) 15:4;33:22	bill (2) 34:24,25
absolutely (4) 25:20;38:20; 43:21,21	afford (1) 13:9	apart (1) 16:2	B	bit (11) 9:10,11;18:3;20:4; 22:22;33:10,11; 35:16;39:3;43:18,19
academic (3) 23:16;24:9;36:15	afternoon (3) 4:5;26:16,25	apologize (2) 8:9;11:7	back (12) 23:10,11;28:25; 30:25;31:23;34:12; 36:8;38:3;39:17; 41:6;42:9,10	bleed (1) 14:24
academically (1) 10:18	again (11) 9:12,16;12:14; 14:23;24:17;37:17; 40:1,17;43:4,15,18	approach (2) 16:23,25	background (2) 17:6;20:12	board (5) 10:23;27:20; 30:19;36:1;37:5
academics (2) 17:25;18:5	agenda (1) 4:13	approximately (1) 9:10	bad (1) 36:17	boils (1) 14:8
access (2) 16:11;19:16	ago (4) 14:23;19:17; 25:22;31:1	arguments (1) 32:21	Bar (39) 4:15;5:6,8,20; 6:25;7:5,9,17;11:9; 12:13;13:1,5;14:10, 25;17:14;18:5; 19:11,23;21:10,13, 14,16,25;22:6;23:7; 24:11,20;25:3,10,11, 16;27:22;29:4,10,15; 33:20;41:15,16; 42:23	bono (1) 28:4
accessed (1) 4:23	ah (2) 22:5;41:7	Arizona (3) 10:5,6,12	based (2) 5:14;12:20	book (2) 10:2,5
accessing (2) 36:19,20	air (1) 20:6	around (13) 10:3,22;13:1; 15:11,11;20:4;22:5; 27:1;28:1;32:3,23; 33:16;41:11	basically (5) 10:24;16:12;19:6; 29:25;36:5	both (7) 12:10;13:24; 16:21;26:3;27:13; 40:10;41:6
accountants (1) 39:20	air-conditioning (1) 11:5	Arps (1) 9:23	Barbary (9) 19:5,7,8,9,10,12, 16;29:6;36:18	bottle (1) 11:4
accreditation (4) 5:2;6:22;9:7;32:25	Aldridge (1) 7:14	arrange (1) 25:12	beat (1) 39:19	bottom (1) 40:10
Accredited (7) 4:7;5:3,5,10,21; 6:15;9:5	Alex (6) 7:6,7;37:17;42:21; 43:5;44:21	art (2) 10:15;16:23	be-all (2) 14:10,11	break (2) 9:13;23:13
acquisitions (1) 9:22	alike (1) 18:22	arts (1) 31:18	basis (1) 5:3	breaks (1) 9:10
action (1) 6:21	alleged (1) 5:15	assign (1) 21:11	beavers (2) 13:4;14:22	breathe (1) 30:15
actual (2) 11:17,18	all-new (1) 17:25	assistant (2) 7:13,15	become (3) 13:10;15:8;24:8	briefly (1) 11:24
actually (6) 13:1;16:19;23:12; 43:7,14;44:9	allow (5) 5:7;7:18;18:16; 20:9;31:15	assistants (1) 37:12	becoming (1) 26:19	bring (7) 28:21,22,25;29:4; 30:13;31:7,12
acuity (1) 13:16	allows (2) 23:11;35:19	associate (3) 28:13;29:2;36:25	begin (1) 9:17	bringing (1) 31:17
additional (7) 8:23,24;20:19,20; 23:11;25:24;44:22	Almost (1) 27:25	Association's (1) 17:14	begins (1) 19:6	brings (1) 32:3
administration (8) 12:19;18:22;34:5, 8;35:19;37:8;40:6, 12	alone (1) 13:19	assumed (1) 42:20		broaden (1) 28:3
administrations (1) 32:15	along (2) 5:11;16:17	assuming (2) 18:13;24:24		broader (1) 27:16
administrative (1) 44:4	alumni (3) 21:5,18,25	attention (1) 30:16		brought (1) 11:25
administrators (2)	alums (5) 21:20,21,22;28:9, 25	audience (3) 25:5;27:13,14		bunch (1) 13:4
		audit (1) 18:9		

burden (1) 5:22	20:5	8:14;10:14;44:24	consequences (2) 35:7,7	9:24
business (3) 28:20,21,23	CHAN (15) 7:3,7,7;37:17,17; 38:5;40:3,13,16,23; 41:9,13,18;42:14; 44:21	College (2) 10:15;44:11	conservative (1) 39:8	crazy (2) 19:2;33:19
buzz (1) 28:8	chance (4) 23:13;32:23; 33:23;39:18	combine (1) 19:23	conservatively (1) 39:7	create (6) 10:4;20:6;24:2; 28:6;32:1;36:10
C	change (4) 15:8;18:14;24:1; 35:15	coming (9) 11:23;15:4;17:25; 23:16;26:14,22; 30:4;34:5;41:6	conservatory (1) 16:24	created (1) 10:16
Cal (1) 28:9	changed (1) 10:25	comment (5) 4:11,14;8:15,23,24	consideration (2) 32:12,19	credit (1) 15:19
calculation (1) 12:19	changes (4) 18:1,6;32:16;33:8	comments (2) 4:21;22:2	considered (2) 6:2;45:2	cumulative (2) 5:5,20
calculations (2) 43:5,8	changing (1) 10:24	Committee (13) 4:15;5:8,14;6:13, 16,20,25;7:9;9:5; 11:19;26:11;27:10; 45:2	Constant (1) 35:9	current (2) 21:4;22:4
California (2) 10:6,7	Chan's (1) 42:21	Committee's (2) 5:1;8:25	contact (1) 17:3	currently (2) 36:12;40:19
call (7) 7:24,25;8:6;11:18; 17:19;33:12;38:25	charged (1) 25:24	communicate (2) 16:7;38:14	content (2) 16:7;26:3	curriculum (2) 24:2;44:1
called (1) 4:23	check (3) 22:24;42:9,10	community (3) 31:12,13,14	contention (1) 24:9	cycle (1) 13:12
came (1) 16:21	checkup (2) 22:20,20	company (1) 14:3	contests (1) 20:5	D
camera (4) 4:20,22;9:14;11:4	child (2) 29:9,18	compete (2) 10:6,7	continue (3) 6:7;16:5;27:13	damage (2) 33:5,6
cameras (1) 7:19	Ching (1) 7:12	complete (1) 28:6	continuing (1) 12:15	dance (2) 11:8;31:20
campus (2) 10:14;21:22	choice (3) 25:17;42:12,13	completes (1) 6:8	contracts (1) 20:25	data (1) 23:11
can (31) 4:20,21;7:2;9:12; 13:21;15:14;23:8,10, 10;24:12,12,15; 25:21;27:9,12;28:1; 30:15;32:8;33:17,20, 22;34:3,6,25;36:13; 37:20;39:19,22;42:5, 12;43:18	choose (2) 5:23;21:14	compliance (7) 5:10,19,22;6:18; 11:23;32:4,5	conversation (1) 40:1	date (1) 45:3
care (3) 29:10,18;35:8	chosen (1) 14:14	concentrate (1) 25:4	convinced (1) 22:16	day (2) 14:24;29:14
career (6) 13:6;14:14;15:1; 29:2;30:12;37:2	citizens (1) 13:8	concentration (2) 18:17;26:20	copies (1) 5:25	days (1) 16:13
careers (2) 13:22,23	clarify (1) 38:18	concept (1) 20:3	copyright (1) 10:11	deal (3) 14:3,22;28:16
case (1) 14:17	class (12) 12:18;22:19;24:3; 25:10,15;26:5,9,22; 34:25;40:9,10;43:16	concerned (1) 24:23	coronavirus (1) 18:24	dealing (2) 33:8,18
cater (1) 13:2	classes (17) 11:24;12:5,7,9,11; 13:20;15:4,13,23; 16:20;18:13;19:2; 23:24;24:5;29:12; 37:5;41:4	concerns (1) 17:17	correlate (1) 23:8	dean (16) 7:24;9:16,18,20; 12:1;19:17;23:6; 33:24;36:14,23,25; 37:18;40:3,16;43:4; 44:23
CBX (1) 21:23	clear (2) 42:18,19	concluded (1) 45:8	costs (2) 13:19;44:5	deans (1) 37:6
certain (1) 35:8	clearly (2) 4:9;20:25	concludes (1) 45:7	counsel (1) 7:16	debate (1) 11:14
certainly (3) 24:20;33:6;40:15	close (4) 12:22;38:15; 39:25;40:1	conclusion (1) 44:21	counseling (4) 30:13;37:2;41:21; 42:7	December (1) 18:9
chair (4) 6:25,25;7:7;37:18	closer (2) 33:22;44:17	conducted (1) 4:12	country (1) 10:3	decide (2) 25:11;40:1
chairman (1) 7:4	clumsy (1) 10:17	confusing (2) 18:11;24:18	couple (5) 10:1;12:13;23:17; 25:25;35:24	decided (3) 11:5;15:5;42:6
Chairperson (1) 8:4	Coast (7) 4:6;5:2,19;7:22;	confusion (1) 35:9	course (7) 10:21;17:15; 19:12;22:1;23:3,19; 27:20	decision (5) 6:11;25:9;33:13; 34:14;41:24
challenges (1)		connection (1) 9:1	court (3) 4:8;7:6;45:6	decisions (2) 17:15;18:2
		conscious (1) 34:14	COVID (1) 39:15	degree (2) 15:7;27:8
		consensus (1) 43:22	crazier (1)	delivery (1)

16:5 demonstrating (1) 5:22 denominator (3) 12:11;32:16;39:2 depend (1) 39:22 describe (1) 8:13 description (1) 28:11 Design (1) 10:15 detective (2) 14:2;42:2 determination (4) 5:9;6:17,19,20 determine (1) 42:11 devote (1) 25:3 different (5) 13:2,7;17:9,23; 30:24 differentiate (1) 41:18 differently (1) 18:25 difficult (1) 34:20 direct (1) 19:16 direction (1) 44:12 directly (1) 6:4 director (3) 7:12,13;37:11 Directors' (1) 30:20 directs (1) 6:7 disappear (1) 39:10 discovered (2) 22:1;25:24 discuss (1) 42:8 discussion (3) 5:11;21:15,16 displayed (1) 6:3 distributed (1) 9:2 doable (1) 44:13 doctors (1) 14:4 document (1) 24:7 documentation (1) 32:10 documents (4)	26:10;28:14;38:2; 43:12 done (11) 11:17;12:20; 15:23;16:2;17:8,22; 18:4;30:11;32:20; 39:6;44:8 Donna (1) 7:11 door (1) 19:6 double-check (1) 41:1 down (5) 14:8;16:19;23:13; 27:4,6 draft (1) 28:14 drill (1) 26:9 drop (2) 44:6,7 dropped (1) 12:18 dropping (1) 44:10 Due (1) 9:9 during (7) 4:21;6:4;9:13; 15:17;22:17;34:20; 39:4 dwarf (1) 19:3	13:17;27:8;35:22 elective (1) 27:19 electives (2) 27:16,20 electronic (1) 5:25 elements (1) 23:22 else (3) 7:25;8:10;18:11 embarrassed (2) 22:2,9 emphasis (1) 21:2 end (5) 7:25;23:1,3;34:21; 43:6 end-all (2) 14:11,11 ended (1) 9:25 ends (2) 16:6;19:2 engineer (1) 30:5 engineers (1) 14:15 English (2) 14:16,17 enough (3) 19:18;25:19;40:2 enroll (1) 41:19 enrolled (1) 36:7 enrolling (1) 41:14 enrollments (1) 18:8 enrolls (2) 18:8,9 entertainment (3) 10:2;27:24;31:18 Entire (2) 10:25;25:7 entrepreneurship (1) 10:16 equal (1) 16:13 equivalent (1) 16:24 essay (1) 19:15 essays (2) 20:10;26:4 estate (2) 14:4;27:24 ethics (3) 10:2,8,9 evaluation (2) 22:13,14 evaluations (2)	22:25;23:2 even (6) 12:22;24:21; 31:19,19;37:5;44:15 event (1) 21:24 events (2) 21:18;31:19 eventually (1) 37:1 everybody (2) 20:7;36:2 everybody's (1) 18:21 everyone (3) 4:5;12:8;34:15 Everyplace (1) 44:10 everywhere (1) 17:4 evidence (5) 5:8,17,18,23;6:10 exact (2) 25:7;37:25 exactly (4) 19:18;30:2;38:18; 39:22 exam (13) 14:25;21:10; 22:11;24:11,20; 25:11,12,16;27:22; 41:15,16,19;42:23 examination (1) 7:5 Examiners (5) 4:15;5:9;6:25;7:5, 9 example (4) 13:3;14:4,10; 41:25 Exemplify (1) 23:7 exams (2) 23:10,11 ExamSoft (2) 23:6,7 except (3) 35:3;41:6,6 exceptions (1) 12:3 excuse (1) 21:7 executive (2) 27:9;37:11 executor (1) 7:11 exercises (1) 24:5 exhibit (1) 6:6 exhibits (5) 6:1,1,15;9:1;45:1 exist (2)	10:19,19 existence (1) 16:12 expand (1) 41:3 expanding (1) 21:18 expect (1) 27:17 expecting (1) 37:21 expensive (1) 13:11 expert (1) 10:18 experts (1) 29:4 explain (5) 11:24;23:14;26:9; 32:25;34:3 explaining (1) 33:9 extensive (1) 4:13 externships (1) 28:4 extremely (1) 16:18 eyes (1) 14:24
	E			F
	eager (2) 13:4;14:22 earlier (3) 38:7;41:13;43:6 earliest (1) 16:13 early (2) 11:23;26:7 Earth (1) 9:24 easy (1) 42:7 economic (1) 15:4 education (3) 14:11;16:15;25:7 educational (3) 7:1,13,15 efficient (1) 26:1 eh (1) 23:12 eight (1) 29:14 either (5) 10:19;12:13;			face (3) 9:21,24;35:1 fact (5) 13:10;15:15;17:1, 3;35:3 faculty (9) 15:20;18:22; 20:20;21:1,5;22:5; 33:6;35:8;43:23 faculty-student (1) 17:2 failed (1) 12:14 failing (1) 30:17 fall (8) 32:14;37:13,22, 23;38:12;40:10,13, 15 fallout (1) 39:15 faltering (1) 10:20 families (1) 14:21 family (2) 17:5;26:18 far (9) 19:17;20:9,11; 21:7,8;24:23;32:5,7;

36:12 faster (1) 23:10 feel (5) 17:4;24:21;31:21; 32:11;33:7 feeling (1) 15:10 feet (1) 33:15 fence (1) 31:6 few (1) 44:9 fields (1) 20:24 figure (2) 31:20;39:13 figured (1) 12:19 figures (2) 38:4;39:1 figuring (1) 12:12 file (1) 22:21 files (3) 18:10;30:25;34:13 fill (2) 37:4,8 filled (1) 37:9 film (3) 9:25;10:3,4 final (3) 6:20;22:25;24:3 financial (1) 30:20 find (2) 13:14;21:19 finding (1) 9:6 finishing (1) 15:24 firm (2) 29:2;30:9 first (15) 8:1;11:8;12:25; 18:7;22:13;23:21, 25;24:5;28:12;29:2; 32:24;34:2,10; 40:11;43:2 five (6) 11:20;28:17,24; 30:1;37:6;40:10 five-minute (1) 9:10 five-year (2) 12:18;40:8 fix (1) 10:20 fixed (1) 17:20	floor (1) 11:6 focus (5) 18:5,5;21:12; 33:17;35:19 focused (1) 27:1 folk (1) 13:8 follow (2) 17:10;40:17 followed (2) 10:5;16:17 Following (1) 10:1 force (1) 42:3 forced (1) 20:14 form (3) 22:14;27:10,10 formal (1) 6:11 formula (1) 43:13 forward (3) 16:4;30:21;39:18 found (3) 10:10;27:17;29:17 founded (1) 10:14 founders (1) 16:14 four (3) 8:5;25:14;28:12 freezing (1) 8:6 fresh (1) 26:24 FRIDAY (2) 4:1;26:15 friend (1) 28:18 friends (1) 25:10 full (5) 5:8,14;6:16,19; 15:16 full-time (2) 13:21;26:13 fun (1) 39:4 further (1) 42:15 future (2) 27:12;30:3	general (1) 7:15 gets (1) 24:11 giant (1) 11:11 gist (1) 8:5 given (1) 21:20 gives (1) 18:19 giving (2) 29:17;32:13 goals (1) 34:8 goes (3) 19:10;20:12;29:19 Good (5) 4:5;26:19;28:8; 40:2;43:1 grade (2) 30:17,17 graduate (1) 19:22 graduated (2) 19:11;21:9 graduates (1) 29:9 grant (1) 44:14 grants (3) 29:9,17,22 great (8) 19:21;30:8,21; 31:22;32:1;35:3; 37:11;43:14 greater (2) 18:16;33:4 ground (1) 33:15 group (4) 18:8,9;20:3;35:20 groups (2) 20:5;31:17 guarantee (1) 39:24 guess (1) 33:9 guidance (1) 21:20 Guideline (2) 5:4,16 guidelines (1) 30:10 guides (1) 21:1 guns (1) 30:22 gut (1) 22:24	<table><tr><td>H</td></tr><tr><td>hackneyed (1) 20:3 half (4) 25:22;29:1,3,3 handbooks (1) 20:25 handling (1) 44:5 happen (4) 14:25;34:16; 35:22;41:22 happened (3) 18:2;28:18;31:3 happens (2) 20:15,15 hard (1) 26:17 harder (1) 13:19 hate (1) 24:17 hear (1) 26:15 heard (1) 29:11 hearing (20) 4:5,8,12,16,25;5:7, 14,17;6:4,7,11;8:7; 9:2,4,9,15;32:10; 44:25;45:1,7 heart (1) 13:4 help (4) 22:11;36:15; 37:25;44:15 herd (2) 36:17,18 here's (2) 32:8,8 Hershowitz (1) 7:11 hesitate (1) 8:11 hey (1) 29:12 hires (1) 37:1 histories (1) 31:24 hit (2) 33:21;39:22 hole (2) 24:2;33:4 Holloway (1) 7:15 home (3) 13:13;14:18;31:21 honor (1) 18:12 hope (1)</td></tr></table>	H	hackneyed (1) 20:3 half (4) 25:22;29:1,3,3 handbooks (1) 20:25 handling (1) 44:5 happen (4) 14:25;34:16; 35:22;41:22 happened (3) 18:2;28:18;31:3 happens (2) 20:15,15 hard (1) 26:17 harder (1) 13:19 hate (1) 24:17 hear (1) 26:15 heard (1) 29:11 hearing (20) 4:5,8,12,16,25;5:7, 14,17;6:4,7,11;8:7; 9:2,4,9,15;32:10; 44:25;45:1,7 heart (1) 13:4 help (4) 22:11;36:15; 37:25;44:15 herd (2) 36:17,18 here's (2) 32:8,8 Hershowitz (1) 7:11 hesitate (1) 8:11 hey (1) 29:12 hires (1) 37:1 histories (1) 31:24 hit (2) 33:21;39:22 hole (2) 24:2;33:4 Holloway (1) 7:15 home (3) 13:13;14:18;31:21 honor (1) 18:12 hope (1)	34:2 hoped (1) 43:24 hot (1) 21:8 hours (2) 11:10;29:14 hurdle (1) 27:5
H						
hackneyed (1) 20:3 half (4) 25:22;29:1,3,3 handbooks (1) 20:25 handling (1) 44:5 happen (4) 14:25;34:16; 35:22;41:22 happened (3) 18:2;28:18;31:3 happens (2) 20:15,15 hard (1) 26:17 harder (1) 13:19 hate (1) 24:17 hear (1) 26:15 heard (1) 29:11 hearing (20) 4:5,8,12,16,25;5:7, 14,17;6:4,7,11;8:7; 9:2,4,9,15;32:10; 44:25;45:1,7 heart (1) 13:4 help (4) 22:11;36:15; 37:25;44:15 herd (2) 36:17,18 here's (2) 32:8,8 Hershowitz (1) 7:11 hesitate (1) 8:11 hey (1) 29:12 hires (1) 37:1 histories (1) 31:24 hit (2) 33:21;39:22 hole (2) 24:2;33:4 Holloway (1) 7:15 home (3) 13:13;14:18;31:21 honor (1) 18:12 hope (1)						
			I	idea (4) 12:7;34:11,23; 36:2 ideas (1) 17:22 identified (1) 5:15 identify (1) 6:24 immediately (2) 28:5;36:13 important (1) 26:19 improve (1) 32:18 included (1) 34:18 including (2) 5:24;41:9 incoming (8) 18:13;25:15; 37:21;39:12;40:20, 23;41:9;42:1 increase (3) 21:22;29:8;30:12 incredible (1) 30:6 Indicating (1) 18:3 inexpensive (1) 13:10 inform (2) 16:4;37:20 information (3) 36:19,20;45:3 initial (1) 19:7 inside (1) 36:25 inspection (7) 8:19,21;11:17,19, 20;17:18,18 Instead (5) 6:13;26:24;33:8; 35:15;36:3 institute (4) 18:20;21:3;24:16; 31:14 instituted (2) 25:22,23 instituting (3)		

20:1;21:17;27:16 intellectual (1) 10:11 intend (1) 36:21 Intent (5) 5:1,16;9:6;41:14, 16 intention (2) 13:25;25:15 interest (1) 24:19 interested (5) 14:5;25:2,2;27:21; 34:15 interesting (1) 28:11 interests (2) 35:14,14 intermittent (1) 7:11 internals (1) 12:20 internships (1) 28:3 into (20) 9:25;11:24;13:5, 14:14;5,19;16:15; 19:18;22:4,21;23:20, 22:24;19,22;27:2; 28:19;29:1;37:13; 41:24;43:25 introduce (4) 6:22,23;7:2,21 ironclad (1) 39:24 issuance (1) 5:1 issue (3) 8:16;17:12;37:6 issued (1) 9:6 issues (5) 13:17;14:3,22; 17:20;24:12 issue-spotting (1) 24:6 item (1) 4:13	jumped (2) 39:3,4 junior (1) 28:12	4:4;7:10;8:9; 33:24;37:14;43:4,5, 10,14;44:18,20 lawyer (1) 26:19 lawyers (1) 15:9 lead (1) 7:21 lean (1) 37:8 learn (1) 28:16 learned (4) 16:6;18:24;24:4; 27:18 learning (5) 16:8;20:2;28:13, 14,15 least (5) 5:6;22:18,19; 32:13;36:25 leave (1) 20:15 leaving (1) 42:3 legal (5) 14:3;16:15;23:19; 24:7;31:19 length (1) 9:9 less (3) 10:17;13:10;22:23 lessons (1) 16:7 level (3) 30:15,15;44:15 life (1) 13:7 liked (1) 16:22 line (3) 4:18;27:4,6 lined (1) 26:6 link (1) 4:24 list (1) 42:10 listen (1) 6:9 little (14) 9:10,11;11:7; 12:22;18:3;20:4; 22:22;35:16;37:25; 38:21,21;39:3;43:18, 19 live (2) 17:14;33:13 lives (2) 13:24;14:21 local (1) 29:5	locked (1) 41:24 logged (1) 9:12 logistics (2) 18:18;33:19 long (2) 20:15;40:7 longer (1) 34:24 look (7) 11:3,4;15:8;29:19, 21;30:2;37:2 looking (6) 28:1;34:9;40:24; 41:10;44:11,16 loose (1) 35:4 lose (2) 33:3;35:24 lost (1) 32:25 lot (10) 12:12;15:5,16; 16:6,9;18:24;31:24; 33:11,22;35:5 lots (2) 12:2;37:3 loving (1) 19:20 low (1) 16:18	41:23 matter (2) 27:23;45:3 MAY (5) 4:1;5:23;9:17; 39:14,15 maybe (5) 12:22;31:1;32:6; 34:24;38:2 MB (1) 20:10 mean (3) 21:15;35:21;36:5 meaning (1) 37:1 means (2) 22:6;44:2 meant (1) 12:11 meantime (1) 19:14 measures (1) 23:14 medical (2) 14:6;27:25 meet (7) 8:2;13:20;36:21; 38:10,13,16;40:7 meeting (7) 4:15;6:14;8:25; 20:21;38:19;43:7; 45:4 meets (1) 44:1 member (3) 6:24,25;7:8 members (5) 4:17,19;7:10;34:1; 37:15 men's (1) 28:13 mentioned (4) 16:20;34:3;38:9; 43:5 mentioning (1) 43:16 mentor (4) 21:5,6,11,24 mentorship (1) 21:3 mergers (1) 9:22 merit (1) 29:21 message (2) 38:1,14 method (1) 16:5 microphone (1) 9:13 middle (1) 22:24 midterm (1)
J	K	L	M	
January (2) 8:22;35:22 JD (4) 14:12;27:9;42:2,5 jobs (4) 13:21,23;14:21; 15:6 juggle (1) 18:18 jump (2) 12:24;27:5	keep (7) 13:17;15:6;20:23; 36:16;37:7;41:4; 42:10 keeps (1) 8:6 Ken (1) 7:15 kids (3) 15:1;29:13,15 kind (6) 10:20,25;13:2; 17:9;36:11;39:15 kinds (3) 13:16;24:4;32:21 knew (1) 39:12 knowing (1) 28:22 Kramer (6) 7:4,4;42:16,16; 43:1;44:21	lab (4) 25:23;26:3;34:18; 43:23 lack (3) 10:17;22:2;28:7 language (2) 14:17,18 large (6) 11:24;12:5,10; 15:3;34:17,21 last (8) 11:17,18;17:18; 26:13,15;29:7,11; 30:1 later (1) 9:11 latest (1) 40:11 latter (1) 10:21 Law (38) 4:6,7;5:3,3,5,10, 21;6:15;8:14;9:5,22; 10:12;11:25;13:3,5, 15,18,21;14:1,19; 16:15;19:21;23:19; 24:11;27:8,17,18,24, 25;28:21;29:2;30:7; 31:18;35:20,21; 36:2;42:5;44:24 LAWRENCE (11)	maintain (1) 5:5 makes (1) 36:17 making (3) 6:11;18:6;38:10 malpractice (2) 14:6;27:25 management (3) 7:8;10:25;37:19 mandatory (1) 34:18 manner (1) 6:6 many (6) 28:21;31:1;37:21, 22;39:9;40:19 mapped (1) 28:6 material (3) 5:11;15:23;16:11 materials (2) 19:15,15 math (1) 40:24 mathematic (1) 43:13 matriculating (1)	

22:19 might (3) 13:14,17;15:2 Miguel (2) 7:23;9:19 mind (3) 16:14;34:2;43:6 mine (1) 28:18 minimum (3) 5:5,20;38:10 minute (3) 17:11;19:6;24:14 minutes (1) 26:25 mission (1) 38:9 misunderstood (1) 38:7 MLS (1) 27:9 moment (2) 8:12;11:13 Monday (1) 26:14 money (5) 15:7;29:9;34:22; 37:5;44:14 months (3) 18:19;32:24,24 more (27) 12:22;13:11,17; 14:6;15:7;16:11; 18:22;19:24;20:9; 22:22,23,23;23:17; 25:5;27:18;29:20; 31:11,12,13,15; 38:21;40:17;43:15, 19,20;44:14,14 Most (2) 13:7;35:20 mother (1) 29:16 motivations (1) 34:6 move (3) 13:24;14:13;39:18 movie (1) 35:10 moving (4) 15:23;16:3,4; 30:21 MPR (6) 12:12;16:22;39:7, 17;42:21,25 much (6) 13:19;18:16,25; 24:11;30:23;33:3 multistate (2) 19:15;26:4 Must (2) 35:11,12 mute (1)	9:13 muted (2) 4:22;7:3 myself (1) 7:24 N name (6) 7:23;9:17,19;28:8; 31:23;37:16 Natalie (1) 4:4 nearly (1) 15:25 necessary (1) 23:15 need (10) 10:20;11:15; 14:13;17:7;19:18; 28:17;34:14;37:6,9, 24 needed (2) 10:8;17:20 needs (1) 8:10 nevertheless (1) 4:16 new (17) 7:24;9:20,21; 18:20,20;20:1;24:8; 26:2;28:20,21,22; 31:25;34:4,8;36:10; 37:12,13 next (17) 6:13;8:13;11:20, 21;13:11;14:13; 27:15;32:6,14; 33:21;36:8;37:1; 38:12;40:6;42:20, 23;45:4 nice (2) 8:2;32:2 niche (2) 10:8,8 night (3) 13:20;16:20;26:21 nightmare (1) 18:11 nights (1) 26:15 noncompliance (5) 5:3,15;8:16;9:6; 11:12 None (1) 26:18 normal (3) 18:15;35:20;36:2 Northern (1) 28:9 note (1) 4:11 notes (1)	18:10 Notice (3) 5:1,16;9:6 notices (1) 8:16 number (14) 11:14;13:15; 17:19,21;20:13,16; 21:18;24:10;26:12; 34:19;39:16,23;41:1, 3 numbers (1) 12:21 numerator (1) 39:2 Nunez (1) 7:12 O o0o- (2) 4:3;45:9 observations (1) 6:14 observers (1) 4:18 obviously (5) 11:9;17:10;25:21; 27:5;29:4 October (4) 8:19,22;11:18; 17:19 off (6) 9:14;11:5;26:17; 36:8;40:10;44:3 offer (2) 14:18,18 office (2) 11:5;28:19 officer (1) 42:1 officers (1) 14:1 oftentimes (1) 27:18 old (2) 12:25;20:2 Once (9) 6:19;12:13;19:2; 22:18,19;29:12; 31:24;42:9,10 one (28) 7:25;9:24;12:13; 14:17;18:1,8,9,16; 24:24;29:10;30:12; 33:18;34:2,7;35:4, 19,20;36:3,6,8,25; 38:8,12;39:14; 40:17;42:16;43:15; 44:9 one-credit (1) 23:19 one-hour (1)	8:21 ones (2) 22:10;40:20 One's (2) 30:5,5 online (8) 15:23,23;16:3,10; 19:1,2,3;22:20 only (8) 5:15,17;11:2; 17:12;25:7,16;32:8, 11 open (2) 4:16;33:25 operation (2) 7:8;37:19 opinion (1) 40:7 opportunity (1) 16:13 opposite (1) 31:5 oral (1) 4:14 orientations (1) 19:7 others (1) 4:22 otherwise (2) 13:14;16:16 Otis (2) 10:15;15:24 ourselves (1) 31:7 out (14) 8:4;12:12;13:17; 15:4;20:24;22:9; 28:7,12,22,24;31:20; 32:4,5;37:25 over (5) 9:15;10:25;18:14; 29:12;43:12 overall (1) 35:25 overheated (1) 11:7 P Pacific (6) 4:6;5:2,18;7:22; 8:14;44:24 paid (1) 19:13 pandemic (3) 15:17;16:6;39:4 panel (15) 4:19;6:2,9,14,22, 24,24;7:16;9:3,8; 34:1;37:15,20,20; 45:5 paper (1) 30:9	paperwork (2) 18:10;36:11 parents (1) 13:8 part (4) 6:2;31:7,12;38:14 participated (1) 8:21 participation (1) 44:25 particular (2) 20:24;42:23 partner (1) 28:15 partnership (2) 19:5;36:18 pass (6) 5:6,20;21:14,25; 22:6;30:14 passage (6) 32:17;38:8,10,19, 24;40:8 passed (1) 12:4 passing (4) 13:5;21:13;22:11; 42:22 past (3) 11:10;16:11;22:16 Paul (6) 7:2,2,3,4;42:16; 44:21 pay (5) 19:12;29:18; 30:16;34:24,25 paying (2) 19:10;34:20 payment (2) 34:17;35:15 PCU (7) 7:18,24;9:1,7; 10:21;12:25;31:11 peace (2) 14:1;42:1 peel (1) 35:4 peer-reviewed (1) 22:17 peer-to-peer (1) 20:1 people (12) 13:13,21;14:16,18, 20;15:20;16:16; 28:1;29:18;30:6,14; 44:15 per (1) 36:22 percent (14) 5:6;12:22;15:15; 32:6;38:11,16,17; 39:1,5,7,17;40:5,8; 42:19 percentage (2)
--	--	---	---	---

14:9;15:17 performance (1) 35:25 perhaps (1) 40:5 person (3) 36:15;42:6;43:12 personal (1) 17:3 persuasive (1) 24:6 phase (1) 14:13 phased (1) 8:4 phone (2) 11:18;38:25 physical (3) 17:18,20,22 picture (1) 29:25 pipeline (1) 21:23 place (10) 8:19;15:11,21; 23:16;27:3,8;31:16, 25;36:13,24 places (1) 9:24 plan (2) 26:2;27:12 plans (2) 12:1;39:19 plant (1) 17:22 playing (1) 12:21 please (8) 4:9,11;6:24;7:20; 8:7,10;9:16;37:15 plug (1) 32:18 plus (1) 40:23 PM (4) 4:2;6:7;9:11,12 point (14) 7:17;9:15;10:24; 11:13;27:4,6;28:18; 31:8;33:7,25;35:13; 37:7;38:8,12 points (1) 15:17 policemen (1) 14:14 poorer (1) 13:8 portion (2) 19:9;44:2 position (4) 32:1,8;37:2;38:19 positions (2) 13:8;37:3	possible (1) 39:23 possibly (2) 24:15;43:15 potential (1) 6:21 powerless (1) 33:7 practice (7) 10:1;24:19;25:2; 27:13,14;29:5;42:4 practices (1) 16:3 practicing (3) 14:1;15:8;25:15 prefer (1) 27:23 preferred (1) 27:10 premises (1) 17:20 prep (1) 21:12 prepare (1) 27:7 prepared (1) 4:10 presence (1) 21:22 present (2) 7:11;9:7 presentation (2) 4:21;6:8 presented (1) 5:14 pressured (1) 24:22 pretty (2) 15:4,11 previous (1) 40:18 prior (6) 4:13,14;8:25; 19:17;23:6;26:9 prioritize (1) 14:9 priority (2) 20:14,16 pro (1) 28:4 probably (5) 11:22;20:21;42:9; 44:3,17 problem (4) 12:10,11;14:20; 16:21 problems (4) 10:23;13:16;20:7; 29:11 procedure (1) 8:13 Proceedings (1) 45:8	process (3) 18:18;22:13;28:5 processes (1) 30:10 proctors (1) 26:6 producing (1) 9:25 productive (1) 36:9 professional (1) 27:8 professor (3) 22:12,17;23:3 professors (4) 20:8,18;26:6,7 program (5) 7:14;10:16;21:4; 23:7;29:7 programs (6) 10:19,20;18:20, 20;20:2,30:21 Projected (3) 32:6;39:6,7 projecting (1) 39:17 projections (1) 40:4 promise (4) 18:13;33:20,21,22 promote (1) 36:25 promotion (2) 14:2;15:7 property (1) 10:11 proud (1) 31:8 provide (3) 16:13;18:25;20:4 provided (8) 5:12,25;8:14,22; 9:1;20:19,20;45:2 providing (1) 43:7 public (7) 4:11,14,16,17; 8:15,23,24 pull (2) 32:18;33:11 pulled (1) 16:2 purpose (2) 5:7;16:14 purposes (1) 14:12 pursuant (1) 4:7 push (1) 36:10 put (11) 13:4;17:7;21:2; 22:3;23:15,22;27:2;	29:19;36:2;42:3; 43:25 putting (4) 10:17;16:9;27:7; 37:25 Q quickly (2) 15:12;41:3 Quinnipiac (1) 10:13 quite (1) 10:9 quote/unquote (1) 36:2 R raise (3) 29:8,23;44:14 raises (1) 35:25 range (2) 27:16;28:3 rate (9) 5:6,20;32:17; 33:20;38:10,19,24; 40:8;42:23 rates (2) 13:9;38:8 rather (5) 13:11;15:8;16:19; 18:17;22:7 read (1) 24:25 reading (1) 34:12 real (4) 14:4;17:18;21:2; 27:24 realize (1) 12:23 realized (1) 10:23 really (14) 9:23;11:9;14:9; 15:18;17:1;19:19, 19;21:12;22:3;24:6; 27:21;29:13;32:1,22 reason (3) 12:6,7;31:5 reasonably (1) 32:9 receive (2) 6:9;21:24 received (4) 6:2;8:17,25;45:3 recommendation (2) 6:12;11:19 recommended (1) 17:21 record (3)	6:3;17:8;42:19 recorded (1) 4:8 red (1) 11:3 redo (1) 22:14 reducing (1) 35:16 reduction (3) 43:16,17,19 referenced (1) 6:3 referrals (1) 21:19 refresher (1) 22:1 reg (1) 25:20 regarding (1) 6:20 regular (1) 44:1 reinforce (1) 16:8 relationship (1) 30:24 relatively (1) 15:24 relevant (2) 5:17,23 relying (1) 22:7 remedial (1) 23:14 remember (1) 35:10 remind (1) 37:20 REMOTE (1) 4:1 repeat (2) 4:10;8:10 reporter (2) 4:8;45:6 represent (1) 5:23 representative (2) 7:18,20 representatives (2) 4:20;6:23 representing (1) 7:16 request (1) 33:15 requested (3) 4:6,25;9:4 requests (1) 6:5 require (2) 5:4;40:9 required (5) 23:21,24;25:23;
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27:19;43:23 requirements (1) 36:16 requiring (1) 34:17 resources (3) 19:3;20:20;25:3 response (3) 4:25;8:15;42:21 responses (1) 8:15 responsibilities (1) 20:23 responsive (1) 17:17 rest (1) 33:11 results (1) 12:16 resumés (1) 30:6 retread (1) 11:10 return (1) 28:8 revamp (3) 23:18;20;43:25 reverse (2) 25:9;42:13 review (5) 19:12;25:3,8,12; 44:5 reviewed (1) 22:18 Reviewing (1) 29:2 richer (1) 19:1 rid (1) 36:6 ride (2) 36:16,18 right (21) 11:1;13:20;18:3,7; 24:20;26:5;27:6,15; 29:24;34:10;38:23, 24;39:16;40:25; 41:2,11;42:11;43:2, 3,24;44:7 road (1) 13:18 roles (1) 37:8 rolling (1) 18:18 room (3) 22:4,6;28:13 roughly (2) 40:5,24 round (1) 37:1 Rule (6) 4:7;5:4,16,21;	6:15;25:20 Rules (5) 5:11;9:5;12:3; 17:10;24:24 run (3) 12:17;15:20;28:25 running (1) 25:25 S sadly (1) 12:3 safer (1) 15:6 same (7) 12:15;14:22; 17:24;23:6;25:7; 26:3;35:17 Saturday (5) 25:23;26:16,18, 25;43:23 saying (2) 17:16;39:25 schedule (4) 18:15;33:12; 35:20;36:3 scheduled (2) 6:13;36:22 scheduling (1) 24:2 scholarships (1) 29:21 School (55) 4:6,7;5:2,4,10,10, 21,22,25;6:5,6,8,15, 17,23;7:20;8:14,16, 21,22;9:4,5,16;10:4, 7,12;11:25;13:3,5, 13,18,22;16:15,23; 17:9,17;19:22; 20:14;22:5;23:19; 25:23;27:17;28:8; 30:1,8;31:4;32:24; 33:1;34:16;35:21; 36:3;37:4;40:20; 43:24;44:24 schools (5) 5:5;10:3,7;35:20; 44:9 school's (4) 4:19;6:21;8:18; 29:12 screen (1) 6:6 seamless (1) 16:1 seamlessly (1) 15:24 second (5) 14:17;23:23;29:1, 3;34:25 seemed (4)	34:12,13,16;38:14 seems (4) 11:10;17:6;30:25; 33:3 semester (5) 14:8;22:24;36:22; 42:9,10 seminar (2) 23:21;28:25 send (3) 22:9;35:2;43:13 senior (2) 13:8;30:5 sense (1) 17:13 sent (1) 43:12 separate (1) 18:8 September (2) 18:9,15 series (1) 21:17 serious (1) 30:16 seriously (1) 22:15 serve (1) 27:13 service (1) 34:15 serving (2) 35:13,14 session (1) 36:7 sessions (2) 25:8;44:5 set (2) 17:11;36:3 sets (2) 35:7,8 seven (1) 32:24 several (3) 10:3;13:22;20:1 share (2) 6:5,14 Sherman (1) 9:22 shot (1) 35:5 shove (1) 30:18 showing (1) 29:3 shut (1) 23:17 sic (1) 8:20 sides (1) 31:5 sign (1) 35:5	significantly (1) 32:17 simply (2) 23:12;34:24 Single (4) 13:8;14:24;29:15; 33:17 single-track (1) 18:14 sit (2) 22:18;31:16 site (4) 11:17,18,20;33:12 situation (1) 38:23 six (2) 29:14;32:24 size (1) 43:16 Skadden (1) 9:23 skills (3) 24:14;27:22;29:1 slated (1) 39:16 slowly (1) 4:9 small (4) 29:17;37:4,4;41:4 sole (1) 5:13 solely (1) 22:7 solo (1) 10:1 solve (2) 16:22;20:7 somebody (3) 21:12;30:13;31:19 somehow (2) 36:17;38:7 someone (2) 28:19;34:23 sometimes (1) 21:21 son (1) 44:10 soon (2) 18:23;36:6 sooner (1) 6:8 sorry (4) 11:3;38:6;39:10; 41:7 sort (7) 16:23;20:6;22:23; 24:16;27:8;30:6; 34:6 soul (1) 13:5 sound (1) 36:17 sounded (1)	42:22 speak (2) 4:9;32:10 speaker (1) 21:17 speakers (1) 31:17 speaking (3) 42:19,20,22 speaks (1) 5:18 spearhead (1) 11:1 special (2) 12:1;17:13 specific (1) 34:8 specifically (1) 34:7 specifics (1) 31:20 spelled (1) 20:24 spend (3) 29:13,14;31:24 spent (1) 27:1 spoken (1) 41:25 spot (1) 24:12 spring (3) 40:13,14,15 staff (11) 6:5;7:10,17;15:20; 31:22,22;35:8;36:5; 37:10,13;45:5 staffing (1) 36:12 stages (1) 14:20 standard (1) 13:9 standards (4) 7:1,14,15;29:23 start (5) 18:15;27:15; 34:25;35:17,21 started (5) 9:11;19:17;20:22; 29:7;32:3 starting (3) 13:6;18:23;28:5 state (4) 7:17,21;9:16; 37:16 statement (2) 4:10;8:18 statistics (2) 18:10;37:25 stay (1) 9:12 steps (1)
---	--	---	--	---

8:13 Sterling (1) 9:23 still (6) 12:23;13:21;16:6; 21:23;29:13;38:1 strong (1) 15:10 structural (1) 18:1 student (13) 9:22;13:2;19:6,11; 22:14;23:12;29:25; 30:16;36:21;41:22; 42:1,8;44:6 students (60) 12:1,12;13:7,15, 16;14:9;15:5;16:8, 10;17:4;18:17;19:1, 8,20;20:9;21:4,9,20; 22:4,8;23:24;24:10, 18,23;25:1,4,6,14; 26:5,8;27:21;28:22; 30:4;31:13,13,15,21, 23;32:2;33:5,17; 34:14,19;35:2,3,17, 24;36:14,19,23; 37:21,22;40:19,24; 41:5,10,14,15,20; 43:22 students' (1) 35:14 studies (1) 19:24 study (7) 14:24;19:21,23; 20:3,5;29:14;31:16 studying (1) 29:10 stuff (2) 30:22;33:16 subcommittee (3) 7:5,8;37:19 subject (1) 27:23 submit (1) 6:15 submitted (1) 26:10 subpar (1) 30:17 substance (1) 33:14 successful (1) 21:10 suddenly (2) 25:11;30:7 suggest (2) 23:14;31:10 suggested (1) 31:19 suggesting (1) 17:11	sum (1) 34:21 summaries (1) 43:11 summary (1) 24:4 summer (2) 18:19;34:21 summertime (2) 11:6;34:20 summertimes (1) 36:9 supervise (1) 20:8 supplemental (1) 8:18 support (1) 30:20 sure (17) 4:9;7:7,23;16:10; 20:19;22:15;23:5; 24:13;30:14;31:2,3; 34:10;36:19;37:17; 38:5,10;42:18 survived (1) 33:1 system (5) 18:8,15;24:18; 30:18;34:4 T talk (4) 11:16;27:7;34:6; 43:18 talked (4) 24:9;29:6;34:4; 41:13 talking (6) 8:12;11:2;31:17; 38:7;42:24;43:15 target (1) 19:24 targeted (1) 25:5 taught (1) 10:11 teach (3) 27:21;28:1;29:5 teaching (8) 10:9;15:22;16:4; 20:12,13,13,16;23:4 tears (1) 32:21 teasers (1) 20:5 technically (1) 11:12 technology (2) 8:3;15:22 telephone (2) 4:23;17:19 telling (1)	39:20 tells (1) 12:8 tentative (1) 12:19 term (2) 22:18;28:7 Terminate (2) 5:1;9:7 terms (2) 35:16;38:19 terrible (1) 8:3 terrific (3) 17:21;29:12;30:4 testament (2) 15:18,19 Thanks (1) 39:9 third (2) 14:17;23:23 though (2) 11:16;37:5 thought (4) 26:12;32:13; 34:23;35:6 thoughts (1) 26:13 three (9) 8:5;11:10;20:21; 23:25;24:5;25:14; 28:12;30:23;36:21 three-hour (1) 26:25 threshold (1) 38:16 tightening (1) 22:12 till (2) 32:14,15 times (4) 8:5;25:25;36:21; 44:1 timetable (1) 12:17 today (4) 6:12;8:13;9:2;43:7 Today's (3) 4:5;9:4;45:7 together (2) 20:7;33:12 told (1) 41:23 took (3) 8:19;12:13,14 tools (1) 19:16 top (1) 10:25 topic (2) 4:13;8:19 top-level (1) 31:25	total (3) 37:22;39:9;41:5 touches (1) 17:4 toward (1) 19:10 track (3) 24:17;33:17;35:12 tracks (2) 34:7,14 traditional (1) 13:18 training (4) 18:22;20:19; 24:14;25:13 transcript (1) 45:1 transition (1) 15:22 translate (1) 27:22 treasurer (1) 36:24 tremendous (1) 17:2 tries (1) 13:13 trouble (1) 8:7 try (4) 12:15;18:20;24:1; 44:15 trying (2) 17:24;18:17 Tuesday (2) 35:10,11 tuition (12) 13:9;16:18;19:10; 25:24;34:17,18; 35:16;43:17,19;44:3, 6,10 turn (8) 7:18;9:13,15; 10:22;11:5;20:4; 23:20;32:23 turnaround (1) 10:18 turned (1) 33:16 turning (2) 15:10,11 turns (1) 31:2 tutor (1) 22:9 twice (2) 12:14;18:18 two (21) 9:20;11:24;12:5,7, 8;15:1,13,16;18:8; 20:21;29:12,13,15; 30:23;32:14;34:7, 14;35:7,8;36:4;	39:14 two-track (4) 18:7;24:18;34:4, 11 U Under (4) 5:21;6:15;9:4; 12:23 undergrad (1) 9:21 underlying (1) 27:23 understood (1) 43:1 University (7) 4:6;5:2,19;7:22; 8:14;10:14;44:24 unless (2) 6:8;44:21 unmute (1) 7:18 up (23) 8:6;9:25;15:15,16, 16,24;16:19;20:23; 22:12;23:18;26:6,8, 18,22,23;28:8;29:19; 30:9;33:21,25; 34:21;35:5;42:13 upfront (1) 34:17 use (11) 15:6;16:4,5;19:14; 20:2;22:23;24:17; 26:24;36:9,10;42:5 used (3) 5:8;10:3;32:25 uses (1) 23:7 using (2) 14:12;23:6 usually (1) 24:10 V vague (1) 38:21 VALENTI (25) 7:23,23;9:16,19, 20;33:24;34:10; 37:18,24;38:20;40:9, 14,22,25;41:11,17, 21;42:24;43:3,4,9, 11,21;44:19,23 valuable (1) 16:7 verbal (1) 8:23 versus (1) 41:15 VIA (3)
---	--	---	---	---

4:1,23;9:16 view (1) 4:22 violate (2) 24:24;25:18 visible (1) 4:20 vision (1) 38:9 visit (1) 33:12 visual (1) 13:16	31:17 wonder (1) 30:7 word (3) 9:20;20:17;24:17 work (12) 14:2,12;19:8,9,19; 20:9;21:12;26:7,17, 23;31:4,9 working (5) 14:2;20:7;36:5,14; 38:1 works (1) 26:13 workshop (1) 28:25 world (3) 16:16;19:1;32:2 worst (1) 12:8 worth (1) 36:1 write (2) 24:6,13 writing (5) 22:21;23:20,24; 24:3,8 written (6) 4:14;8:15,23,24; 22:25,25 wrong (2) 39:13;41:7 wrote (1) 10:2	1,000 (1) 44:4 1:14 (1) 4:2 10 (2) 44:8,17 11-5 (1) 44:7 12.1 (2) 5:4,17 125 (1) 41:8 130 (1) 41:8 145 (1) 39:2 15 (4) 12:18;15:3,14; 31:1 150 (1) 41:11 150-plus (1) 41:10 16 (3) 15:3,14;31:1 17 (2) 31:2;44:10 19 (1) 39:3 1927 (1) 13:1 1L (2) 19:7;39:9 1Ls (2) 41:5,6	25 (5) 39:9,11,13;40:23; 41:7 26.2 (1) 39:1 26.6 (1) 39:3 28 (1) 39:12 28.2 (1) 39:5 29 (1) 4:1 2Ls (1) 40:21	
W				7
walk (1) 22:4 walks (2) 19:6;28:19 wandering (1) 27:1 wants (3) 28:16;42:1,2 waste (1) 11:11 way (23) 10:11,17;11:3; 12:2;13:14;14:10, 19;15:13,14;16:15, 17;19:9,21,23;20:10; 22:3;26:1;27:4; 29:19;31:9;35:21; 38:24;39:10 weakens (1) 26:20 Web (1) 4:23 Wednesday (1) 26:14 weeks (1) 20:21 welcome (2) 4:17;44:19 West (1) 10:14 what's (1) 20:23 whiskey (1) 11:4 whole (3) 11:6;36:18;39:4 who's (3) 29:25;37:11;44:10 whose (1) 27:23 who've (1) 21:9 willing (1) 33:23 without (2) 32:24;33:1 women (1)	world (3) 16:16;19:1;32:2 worst (1) 12:8 worth (1) 36:1 write (2) 24:6,13 writing (5) 22:21;23:20,24; 24:3,8 written (6) 4:14;8:15,23,24; 22:25,25 wrong (2) 39:13;41:7 wrote (1) 10:2	15 (4) 12:18;15:3,14; 31:1 150 (1) 41:11 150-plus (1) 41:10 16 (3) 15:3,14;31:1 17 (2) 31:2;44:10 19 (1) 39:3 1927 (1) 13:1 1L (2) 19:7;39:9 1Ls (2) 41:5,6	25 (5) 39:9,11,13;40:23; 41:7 26.2 (1) 39:1 26.6 (1) 39:3 28 (1) 39:12 28.2 (1) 39:5 29 (1) 4:1 2Ls (1) 40:21	75 (1) 33:1
	Y		3	9 (5) 44:8,8,16,16,17
	Yale (3) 9:21,22;35:21 year (19) 11:21;12:17; 15:15;18:18;19:17; 21:24;23:3,16,21,23; 25:22;29:7;32:5,6; 33:21;34:19;41:5; 42:20,23 year-round (1) 36:6 years (13) 10:1;11:20;14:23; 23:25;28:12,17,24; 30:1;31:1;32:20; 33:1;40:11;41:6	2 (2) 35:12;39:5 2,000 (1) 44:3 2:00 (1) 9:11 2:17 (1) 45:8 20 (2) 39:12;42:3 2015 (3) 8:17;11:25;40:9 2016 (2) 11:25;40:10 2018 (2) 8:17;39:1 2019 (1) 8:17 2020 (4) 4:1;8:19,22;9:1 2021 (4) 11:21;32:15;39:7, 18 2022 (3) 40:12,13,14	3:00 (1) 9:12 30-something (1) 38:15 35 (3) 14:23;40:22,23 37 (4) 12:22;32:6;39:7; 42:19 37.4 (1) 39:17 38 (4) 32:6;39:2,21;40:5 39 (1) 39:21 3Ls (1) 40:21	
	Z	2	4	
	ZOOM (2) 4:1;16:5			
	1		6	
	1 (2) 20:13,16	40:12,13,14	60 (1) 40:24	



SCHOOL OF LAW
Founded 1927

Pacific Coast University, School of Law
Committee of Bar Examiners Hearing
May 29, 2020

Table of Contents

Letter from Dean F. Miguel Valenti	3
Current MPR	17
Gender and Ethnic Testimonials	18
Alumni Testimonials	19
Current Student Testimonials	27
Professor Testimonials	57
PCU Distinguished Alumni	63

BAR EXAMNINERS OFFICIAL APPEAL MEETING

5.29.20

1:00-4:00 (via zoom)

Pacific Coast University

School of Law

“School of the People”

(PCU)

Attendees:

PCU: F. Miguel Valenti, Dean

Bar Panel: Alex H. Chan
Paul Damien Kramer
Alex Lawrence
Natalie Leonard

Dear Committee Panel Members:

Pacific Coast University School of Law is a very special place, as I am sure you know. Founded in 1927, it has long been a fixture in the Long Beach Community. It has also always been known as a great advocate for diversity. It was so, even prior to the recent popular rush to make diversity in society a byword for all hiring, promotion, financial and other decisions. Also, before it was ‘PC.’ In fact, one of the main reasons I chose to change my career path and take up the gauntlet of being the Dean during these troubled times, is that PCU’s central aspirational mission is to serve diversity. Diversity not simply of race and racial origin and identification, but diversity of sex, age, national origin, sexual preference, economic status and prior career. This school’s premise and promise is to be a way into the legal system for those who would never otherwise be able to afford the cost or be able to create the time to obtain a strong legal education. (I have included a summary of demographics on this point as an exhibit to follow). To train the working single mother, the full time worker, the person for whom English is a second or even third language, a senior citizen or someone with full time family obligations, is, to me and to PCU a noble goal of the first order.

I absolutely will not now spring into a lengthy *advertisement* here. You each have much more important things to do with your time than listen to me parrot brochure badinage and PR and wax poetic about ourselves.

Let me just summarize by saying that PCU, by choice, exists to educate those with less choice in their educational pathways than many of their more typical law-school bound brethren. We do this at an extremely reasonable tuition cost, which, in fact, will be lowered a bit this year by eliminating some heretofore student expenses (see below), and we offer our classes in the evening, when our full-time working contingent can make time for class.

We serve the underserved, and we serve them well. We intend to continue to so do. We fervently believe in the Bar Association’s mission, and most especially in its final sentiment:

... to protect the public and includes the primary functions of licensing, regulation and discipline of attorneys; the advancement of the ethical and competent practice of law; and ***support of efforts for greater access to, and inclusion in, the legal system.***

Now, to the purpose of this Appeal. I have been Dean here since May 9th, and have spent the majority of that time ready through all correspondence between the Bar Association and PCU, interviewing various stakeholders and examining statistics in order to make sure I understand everyone’s concerns.

One thing that puzzles me is why we are having this final appeal now.

I have a report, written by your former Director of Educational Standards in the Office of Admissions ('09-'18), George C. Leal, Esq., in which he discusses a number of inspections of PCU and many other CALS schools he himself made in his official capacity. In this letter, dated 4.22.2020, he says PCU has a 'storied' history, and says, in part, that PCU

"...has operated continuously for 95 years, and is an institution that is older than the State Bar of California. Since 1925, it is not hyperbole to say that PCU has admitted, educated and trained generations of attorneys, many of whom came from the Long Beach community and stayed to represent the citizens and businesses that make Long Beach their home. As such, it also has an enviable record of training attorneys who, as women and members of minority communities, were later appointed to the Superior Court of California where, as they did as attorneys, they help diversify both the California legal profession and judiciary, long before it became fashionable to do so. A close look at its current enrollment would prove that the law school's commitment to its community is as strong as it has ever been."

He goes on to recommend Probation, stating that during the site inspections, the Bar Examiners provided a list of physical plant and other recommendations, all of which were substantially cured by PCU in a timely fashion. He then goes on to point out the fact that, when PCU received its accreditation in 2010, there was no MPR in place. The MPR guideline was adopted in 2015, but there was no data available to PCU to allow an accurate assessment concerning who was passing and who was not and why. Now that the information is routinely presented to law school, we can see the hole left by the lack of said information. For several years, PCU had no operable guidance. This was a significant impediment to improving the PCU program, since it created a vacuum of information.

Finally, Mr. Neal points out, and with this I agree wholeheartedly, that the final inspection that seems to have sealed our fate as an accredited institution, occurred not within the context of a site visit, during which the Committee could have seen the school as a whole for what it is, but during a single hour-long telephone call. The Committee could not possibly have been able to fully appreciate all of the changes and developments to PCU since its last inspection, nor could it have gotten more than the most cursory look at the positives the school has to offer. Mr. Leal stated that he believed that the most important decision regarding this school was being made in a manner that amounted to, basically, a violation of due process.

I am not here to argue the capacities and choices of the Committee. You obviously can interview, inspect, visit and make decisions in any way you choose, based only on your own charter's rules and regulations. Rather, what I am suggesting is that this very brief telephone assessment could not possibly have shown PCU to its best advantage. The school was eager to show you the progress it has made and the wonderful program of study and the eager students and faculty. As we have all learned, rather bitterly, I feel, is that communicating via telephone or via zoom, is just simply NOT like being there. Converted classes in zoom can impart information, sure. They can perhaps even engender some discussion. But are they remotely like humans in a room. Very few people would think so, particularly after months of being stuck with it.

Now, perhaps the biggest factor for me that has been brought to light by earlier reports in our files at PCU, is a document saying that, following the completed first site inspection in 2016, the Bar Examiners review team stated that PCU was in "substantial compliance" and scheduled a follow on site review for five years later, or 2021. What I am unsure of, is why we lost that 18 months on our timetable and had a telephonic review in October 2019. Now, again, I do not question the Committee's prerogative to change dates and methods for reasons that it, in its wisdom, finds compelling. You are the regulators, we are the regulated. I understand the dynamic.

However, I would briefly like to explain PCU's position and examine in brief certain of the changes we are undertaking. I would then like to argue for probation, at least until that original 18-month period is up. I am not asking for five years, ten years or what have you. Give me 3 administrations of the CBX without removing our accreditation. Let me consolidate what I've found here and let me set the new direction. If we do not see improvement that satisfies you that we are progressing, then I'll suggest 'pulling the plug' myself. I have some backup for this request in more current MPR figures, as well as other ideas, which I will run through briefly at this point.

MPR - Quick Catch-Up History

PCU had two very large and seemingly less than successful classes regarding the CBX back in 2015 and 2016. They, sadly, form our denominator for assessing MPR. These two classes skew the results horribly. If we are able to experience three more administrations until fall, 2021, as expected, the class of 2015, at least, would have dropped from the statistics. I have included a sheet showing the effects that this would have on our MPR, as well as showing our 2% increase in passage this past term.

In addition, of course, PCU received its accreditation during a period when there was no MPR requirement, AND, more importantly, there was no data available on passage or lack thereof by individual students.

In addition, now we have lovely **Coronavirus**. This, as you well know, has been a spring term of improvisation all over the educational world. PCU was able to adapt swiftly and efficiently to taking all content online. Our students and our faculty together praised the efforts of the school and its staff in this regard. We lost little to no instruction time and all glitches and potential glitches seem to have either been avoided or solved.

Our CBX pass rate has also gone up 2% in this last administration for which we have data (attached).

At any rate, my intention here, is to briefly explain the changes that have been initiated at Pacific Coast University School of Law. Prior to our scheduled Appeal hearing on Friday, May 29th, I thought that some context might help in our discussion.

As a new Dean, I must admit to being a bit confused as to the current Appeal. I am reading the Periodic Inspection Report of the Bar Examiners, dated April 11-14, 2016 (submitted by the Visitation Team of Traci C. Belmore, Member of the Committee of Bar Examiners, Dean E. Barbieri, Dean of the John F. Kennedy University College of Law and George C. Leal, Director of Educational Standards, Office of Admissions, The State Bar of California), and the conclusion of the report states, in relevant part, that:

“The Team recommends that this Periodic Inspection Report be received and filed; that each of the Team’s mandatory and suggested recommendations, as noted above, be adopted; and that the accreditation of the Pacific Coast University School of Law be continued; and that its **next periodic accreditation inspection be scheduled in the fall of 2021**, unless an earlier visitation is deemed necessary.”

Now, clearly, the Committee of Bar Examiners may do as it wishes. However, I am unaware of the reason for the change, and, as a Dean who has been brought onboard only recently, if there is any way to have that time to put all of our new programs in place, that would be exceedingly helpful. Again, I have no knowledge of why PCU seems to have lost 18 months to prepare for this appeal, but we are moving forward quickly and, if we can provisionally keep our accreditation for those 18 months, PCU will be a place of which the Bar can be proud.

In any case, I will proceed as if that time is not available to us. What I ask you to consider is that re-starting the clock will give me, us, the chance to fully realize the changes we have begun and that are starting to be felt in our MPR.

I have been brought on as the new Dean, and the all of the prior senior administration has left the school. The Executive Director and the full time Administrative Staff have stayed on, at least for the present, to ease the transition to the new Administration.

The Board of Directors has determined that glacially paced change is not the proper order of the day, so we will be approaching new initiatives and a new attitude, completely within the bounds of rules and regulations of the Bar, of course.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES. These are the administrative changes already initiated. We have begun laying out the hiring process for the following (full time) Administrators:

1. Dean of Students & Student Success
2. Associate Dean, Career Development & Bar Exam Preparation
3. Associate Dean & Registrar
4. Associate Dean, Finances & Information Technology
5. Associate Dean, Alumni Engagement, Development & Special Projects

Several of these new hires will come aboard quickly, as soon as the proper candidates can be selected in the midst of our current world situation. Our current Registrar inherited the position when the former Registrar left the school. By all reports, she has done an exemplary job handling her new responsibilities. I plan to provide her with additional training and to introduce her to several Registrars with solid experience at other law schools in California to add any dimension she might be missing. I will also be removing many of the less important responsibilities she has taken on as a result of PCU being somewhat short-staffed. She will be our full time Registrar moving forward.

II. ADVENTURES IN CORONAVIRUS/COVID19

- a. MPR for our most recent graduates has gone up a full 2%.
- b. This is both promising in itself and good in that it has allowed us to see what is working and what needs adjustment.
- c. We had heretofore made all of the changes and reacted to all of the suggestions of the Examiners as to physical space, Library and the like.
- d. **Coronavirus** – We are aggressively capitalizing on this moment in history, using the Bar’s guidance and suggestions and revamping – we will either be able to serve the students still in lockdown or, if the pandemic eases, at least temporarily, we will be able to successfully and swiftly pivot to dealing with normal campus in person instruction. It is a common wisdom that the crucible of crises brings out the best in people and systems and, providing they don’t explode, allows them to clear away the noise and see what really matters. This has been such a time at PCU.
- e. We are also capitalizing on this moment to move as many of our class materials, tutorials and bar preparation methods and lessons online as possible. I am not a believer in total student autonomy in learning (student plugs/plays and is given an exam at the end of the day. Rather, I am and always have been a fierce believer in the live classroom experience, student to faculty direct discussion/confrontation, and peer-to-peer learning. However, the Coronavirus has proven that certain materials and certain learning techniques can flourish in an online environment, as long as all of these are carefully monitored by experienced faculty. To improve this process further, we will be providing additional training in online course delivery to each of our returning faculty and an intensive deep dive into online education to any new faculty that will interface with students at any level.
- f. Further, I am creating Zoom “study groups” (‘zuddy’ groups someone has termed them) to create more peer-to-peer learning. These groups will be mixed in order to generate an influx of new perspectives and new ideas. These groups, drawn from a single class, say Torts, will function as any normal study group in a law school environment, EXCEPT that these groups will be assigned challenges – CBX type essays – and technical challenges, in order to teach best practices in the online environment. Each group, together, will analyze a given set of facts and an essay question. Each member of that group will then have to write their own answer. These questions

will be graded at the faculty level by the most appropriate faculty member for that challenge, and then pass to the Dean for my review. The “winning” group or essay will then be awarded a prize that is ‘good for them’ – a copy of a solid grammar tome for lawyers which, it is hoped, will help them with legal writing in their studies.

III. TEACHING BEST PRACTICES

One of the compliance issues, which could not really be properly reviewed in a telephonic meeting but should be seen, is the quality of PCU teaching. From now on, no value and no other issue will ever take pride of place. The quality of teaching and the constant striving to improve our teaching is our number one priority in this new administration.

To that end, the following are some of the practices and techniques PCU has already put in place, together with my notes as to how this drive toward best practices is continuing to evolve.

1. **Professor Responsibilities.** Our professors are expected to work constantly to improve both their working knowledge of their subject areas *and* their teaching techniques. We have all had to learn from professors who are encyclopedic in their knowledge of a particular subject, but who cannot keep a class engaged to 50 minutes to save their lives. At PCU, the professors must constantly hone both knowledge and skills.
2. **Faculty Handbook** update to spell out specifically each professor’s responsibility to be constantly improving their teaching and classroom performance.
3. **Faculty Meetings.** Each faculty member will be required to have a monthly meeting with the Dean in order to discuss classroom teaching, outstanding issues, support and any difficulties or special circumstances.
4. **Support for Professors.** PCU will provide all materials reasonably required for its Faculty to succeed, including classroom support, outside training, workshops, and other opportunities to improve teaching skills and subject mastery.
5. **MENTORSHIP/OUTSIDE INFLUENCES PROGRAMS.** PCU is currently creating several mentorship programs which will aid students in both their studies and in their preparation for the Bar Exam and for life as an attorney.
 - a. **Speakers’ Series.** We intend to introduce students, starting this term, to a wider range of voices from the practice of law and the employment of law school skills and/or a Juris Doctor degree in the pursuit of alternative careers. Speakers will be drawn from regional practitioners, as well as noted experts in particular fields. Student attendance at these lectures shall be mandatory.
 - b. **Faculty Mentors** - Each matriculating student shall be assigned a faculty mentor, whom that student will need to meet with, at the very least, at the start of each term. More frequent meetings are recommended, but will be up to the faculty member and the student to arrange. A written report regarding all non-personal issues affecting the student’s education will be filed with the Dean’s Office.
 - c. **Alumni Mentor** - Each matriculating student shall be assigned an alumni mentor, whom that student will need to meet with, at the very least, at the start of each term. Representing success in getting through law school and starting or continuing a career, this alumni mentor shall help keep the student focused on the importance of excelling in law school and planning ahead for career.

d. **Mentors for Alumni** – Finally, PCU is early in the process of assigning each alumnus who has not yet passed the CBX, an alumni mentor who *has* passed the CBX. Certain alumni will not wish to return to campus for our collective review (see point e. anon), as they might feel embarrassed to publicly admit they did not pass. This does not mean they do not need our help – rather, the reverse. PCU shall therefore assign them a mentor and, if need be, a tutor, to meet with them confidentially off campus.

e. **Bar Review** - PCU holds a bar review session for those who did not pass the CBX on previous attempts. The seminar is held on campus, with instructors and BarBri personnel in attendance to give review and help students with particular problems they might be having. In addition, there is a section on legal writing and analysis.

6. **EVALUATION.** Faculty undergo periodic review, both from peers and from students:

a. At the conclusion of each course, **written student evaluations** shall be completed and the results discussed by the Dean with the professor in question.

b. Each faculty member shall be **peer reviewed** at least once per class, and those reviews, too, shall be discussed by the faculty member with the Dean. The peer review is focused on several factors, including how well prepared the professor appears for the class, how strong is their command of the law and legal principles involved, and how well they are able to pass on this knowledge on to their students.

c. Each professor is instructed to perform the “**mid-term check**,” a process of gathering written student evaluations at the mid-point of each term.

d. If a situation surfaces in which the Dean believes action is warranted, solutions and possible **additional training** shall be directly discussed by the Dean with the faculty member.

e. Student Evaluation as Record. All written **student evaluations**, at the end of each course, shall be shared with the professor and then placed in the professor’s permanent faculty file, along with any suggestions or discussions between the professor and the Dean.

f. The Dean, then the Board of Directors, performs an **annual audit** of all evaluation materials.

g. The professor with the highest level of achievement is then **honored** at PCU’s annual awards banquet.

h. One important element of the evaluation of any professor at PCU is the ability of that professor to encourage the active **participation of the students**. Law School is NOT a spectator sport. Beyond the Socratic Method, which PCU employs, we have many other techniques. Students shall be called upon to act as legal counsel to argue a point of law with a classmate, for example, or to prepare and deliver research on a particular topic germane to the subject matter.

i. As a grading matter, classroom **participation** of all students is required in every class. If students do not wish to speak in public, they will be taught to do so; if they have stage fright, they will get over it; if the students come ill-prepared to discuss *assigned* material, they will likely be asked to leave class and an ‘absence’ shall be recorded for that day’s session. There are very few exceptions.

- j. **Exams.** PCU is now experienced in using Examsoft. This allows our professors to see questions more clearly and accurately, as well as to provide more written comments in support of any final grades given to a student.

IV. CURRICULAR & SCHEDULING UPDATES & CHANGES. We are embarking on a number of curricular changes, both large and small, all within the regulations of the Bar, as well as revamping and increasing mentorship, feedback for our students' work and interaction between students and the Faculty/Administration. Several of these new initiatives are detailed below, and others will come online in the near future.

Given the way the world is heading, the Coronavirus has handed us the opportunity to “up our game” for law students and eventual lawyers in the online space, and we intend to inculcate good habits and best practices before they develop the bad ones.

Our required courses will remain as they are, but we are proposing that some scheduling and all of our professor training and evaluation is being modified as follows:

a. LEGAL ANALYSIS AND WRITING

- i. We are in the process of creating and instituting a Writing Intensive Program. This program will expand our current offering “Introduction to Law School and Legal Analysis” from a One Credit course for 1Ls to a full three credit intensive writing and legal analysis program. Our students have asked for this training and we are responding.

- ii. Additional Writing Intensive Workshops will be required of 2Ls/3Ls.

- iii. We are proposing to push the 4L practicum programs to the summer following 3L (more on this anon) and creating an intensive writing workshop and Bar review program for the Fall semester that will review, expand and deepen the students' ability to recognize and comprehend issues and to put their knowledge into persuasive writing.

b. TWO TRACK OPTION (Exam/No Exam)

We are moving through a study of the past five years of Bar Exam pass rates.

It is apparent, obviously, that in a statistically small group sampling (small law school classes, such as those at PCU), a few students can make a great difference in meeting the MPR.

After discussing this at length with students, the Board and staff, it is clear that PCU attracts not only a very diverse student population, but students of two primary types – those that wish to practice law and therefore must pass the Bar Exam, and those who are intending to use the knowledge and the Juris Doctor to aid in their chosen career paths. Policemen, Doctors and Engineers, in particular, each of which PCU attracts, do not often see Bar Exam passage as a priority.

Clearly, no matter how intelligent, well-read and well-studied a student may be, passing the Bar Exam, particularly in California, without that being one's top priority, is exceedingly difficult.

We therefore propose creating a Bar Exam/No Bar Exam track for our students. Prior to matriculation, students would be counseled, and make a choice concerning, whether or not to work towards taking the Bar Exam.

It is clear that, for several students in each incoming class, to get their degree without the added stress of preparing for an exam they do not see as a priority, would be a blessing. Students have told us this. They could opt out of consideration for the Exam and focus on learning the law, to be used in their non-legal practice careers.

If they changed their focus at any point, they could rescind this decision. We would obviously not stop them from taking the exam. I might have considered this myself had the opportunity existed at Yale in 1983.

Given the size of the PCU classes coming up for the Exam each administration, should 3-5 students make this determination, that would be a statistically significant change in the mathematics of PCU's MPR.

In addition, all of our Bar preparation resources could then be focused on those students for whom the *practice* of law is their life's goal. Given that every small school has somewhat limited resources, this would prove a distinct advantage for all of the students preparing for the exam.

Once we are past this appeal, we intend to plan for a “**Professional Law Degree**” beyond our Juris Doctor, pursuant to Division 13, (Guideline 13.1.), in order to better serve that *statistically significant* portion of our students who wish to study law and earn a professional law degree, but have no intention of practicing law and do not wish to take the CBX. Our choice would be to seek the Bar Examiners’ *acquiescence* for a Master of Legal Studies (M.L.S.). Alternatively, we would opt for an “Executive Juris Doctor,” should the Bar Examiners determine that that professional degree would better mesh with our overall program. In the medium term, we will also be considering whether an LLM degree might serve our students and will at some point contact the Bar Examiners to discuss whether or not such a degree is feasible.

b. FOURTH YEAR SCHEDULING RESTRUCTURE

Issue:

1. We believe that a change needs to be made in the way the 4L schedule is structured. Since the thing on most 4L minds in the fall of their fourth year is the looming Bar Exam, it is difficult to attain maximum performance in the myriad of practicum, preparatory and advanced courses PCU offers that term. The students’ focus, already fractured by careers/jobs, family and day-to-day life is split between the vital courses of the Fall of 4L and Exam preparation.

Solution:

1. We would like to lessen this strain and use the opportunity to institute the Intensive Analysis and Writing for 4L, which we believe will greatly aid in Bar Exam passage. We would shift significant portions of the fall curriculum to the summer before 4L. Certain of the practicum and advanced courses would therefore be completed by the start of the fall. Fall would then be given over to Intensive Writing Workshop for 4L and Bar

Preparation, both with our Faculty and with our BarBri partners. We are working to determine the logistics of making this happen as soon as next fall.

c. REQUIRED LAB RESTRUCTURE

Issue:

1. Currently, students are required to pay an additional \$3,500 in tuition in order to attend a required Saturday Lab. This lab was designed as a way to aid CBX passage by working through writing projects and sample MBE questions on a weekly intensive basis. The problem has been that, for many of our students, already attending class Monday, Wednesday and Friday (or Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday morning), the addition of the Saturday afternoon lab caused issues. For some, it was time off work that they could not manage. For others, it was the requirements of family. Finally, something about the atmosphere of this extra session made it difficult for the students to use it to best advantage.

Solution:

1. In consultation with stakeholders, we have determined to spread our required lab services out and calibrate them to individual courses, rather than to have a one-size-fits-all Saturday afternoon lab required for everyone.
2. Students will arrive 30 minutes prior to the first two scheduled class periods of the week. They will be given multiple MBE questions related to that class's subject matter to answer, monitored by a professional proctor. After 30 minutes, the professor of the course will enter and start the class session as per usual.
3. The answers to these MBE questions will be analyzed and, for students displaying any weaknesses or misunderstandings related to the material, the students can choose to either review with the Professor, or with their faculty or alumni mentor, or with our representatives from BarBri, or with our proctors.
4. Prior to the start of the third class meeting period of the week, each student shall be given a writing assignment during the 30-minute pre-class period. They will then perform the analysis and write a persuasive answer during that period.
5. This method will quickly make apparent those students of any grade level (1L – 4L) who have trouble formulating an analysis and writing an answer in under tight time constraints. The student may then choose to receive instruction and review from the Professor of the Course or from our writing tutor. Said instruction shall be mandatory.

6. This new system will make much better use of students' time and will focus them on the MBE and written type problems that may occur in each type of required material. Students will be focusing at the same time that they are already geared up for class and not have to fight the vagaries of a Saturday afternoon and fight against all the other things on their mind during that day. They will be here to answer questions and go to class. Period. Their increased focus and increased serious attention will profit them more than the current system, even though the time spent will be similar.

d. OTHER CURRICULAR CHANGES

1. PCU is currently working to create a broader spectrum of elective courses than we have had available to our students in the past. These include classes in subjects such as Intellectual Property, Entertainment & Sports Law, Legal Issues in Real Estate, Law in Medicine and the like. These electives will serve to increase student interest, widen horizons and offer alternative career ideas.

2. PCU is also working to develop a broader spectrum of internship, externship and approved clinical programs so students may earn non-classroom credit.

3. PCU is in the midst of expanding Pro Bono opportunities for its students. We believe it is vital for our students to see that law firm and traditional legal practice in the private sector is only a fraction of the value of being a practicing lawyer.

4. In the not-too-distant future, we would like to launch a return program for our alumni. This is somewhat in line with the program Cal Northern has instituted of a "5 Year Return." We wish to bring our alums back for courses in updating their skills and a refresher in professional responsibility. We are working on the design of this program now and will present it to the Bar at the appropriate time.

e. BAR REVIEW, INSTRUCTION & PRACTICE CHANGES

As has been reported, PCU now has an arrangement with BarBri (BarBri Amp & BarBri Prep). The result is that students use BarBri materials throughout their education, and that when they graduate, they have already paid for their bar review course in full and do not have to worry about how to raise thousands more dollars to cover the expense.

PCU has been experimenting with providing small childcare grants to free up our single parent students so that they can put in the time required to pass the CBX. WE have had some success with this program to date, and we intend to expand its use for our graduating classes. Certain of these grants might also make it easier for those with full time employment to take some needed time off from their jobs to study and still be able to keep the lights on.

I have already discussed our on campus alumni mentoring sessions and our individualized mentoring sessions for non-passing alumni in points 5 d) and e) above.

We are instituting a procedure for the Dean and one or more faculty members to hold a frank, objective conversation with each recent alum who has not yet passed CBX. These discussions will be held in order to determine, a) if the CBX is appropriate to the alum's goals at this point in their career, and, b) if so, how to provide the sort of one-to-one aid the alum needs in order to be successful.

As explained in D.ii.2 supra, PCU will replace the required Saturday lab with required MBE and essay questioning periods prior to every meeting of every class. This should serve to focus our exam review and increase the total amount of time used for exam review considerably.

Students will form 'work groups,' or specialized 'study groups.' Each group will be assigned a CBX essay-type question, and the members will need to work out the answers collectively, acting as a check one to another and creating a means for peer-to-peer learning. The group will then have to verbally present their answer to the class and respond to questions. As this practice becomes more embedded in our student culture, contests, tie-breakers and other motivations will be introduced.

The use of Examsoft for class exams will allow professors to more clearly visualize particular student deficiencies more swiftly and will help in the explanation and review of all exam questions.

To whatever extent possible, we will provide an increasing amount of online CBX preparation materials. We will institute a "Bar Blog" for hints, tips and stories, in addition to announcements and tricky problems to solve. We will also include any reputable study materials, or parts thereof or references thereto as are appropriate.

Where an essay question arises, professors will ask the student to read their answer aloud, teaching them to hear what seems right and what is clearly mistaken.

We will begin this fall instituting a mock CBX before the end of the 4L year. If necessary, we will do the same in 1L, presenting a mock first year Bar Exam.

We are instituting a workshop concerning the **psychology of test-taking**, that will be offered for the first time this fall. This workshop will address issues from test anxiety to time management, from clarity of ideas to personal preparedness. The workshop will not be discipline specific, but rather, will address how a test as grueling as CBX can best be approached.

f. ADMISSIONS, STUDENT ADVANCEMENT & STUDENT SUCCESS

Issue:

While it is certainly true that PCU is designed to, and sees as its core mission to, provide a track into the legal system for people who would otherwise not have that chance, this has, in the past, rather caused the school to be a bit more tolerant of students who are perhaps not ready for the burden and the work involved in getting a first rate legal education. I applaud this impulse and it is one of the reasons I came to PCU as Dean. However, being coldly realistic, we must pull back the sheet just a bit to make

sure that the students we are admitting have a fighting chance of coming out the other end as graduates and members of the CA Bar. Otherwise, we do both these students and PCU and the Bar a disservice.

Solution(s):

1. We are in the process of tightening up the admissions standards for new applicants to PCU. (This becomes considerably harder, as I'm sure you understand, if we lose our accreditation). We will be less flexible, moving forward, on admitting students who seem as if they just might not be able to manage the time for whatever reason, or the curriculum, for whatever reason. Selecting the best students will already put us some ways down the road to having a solid MPR and a strong class of graduates.
2. We are working to establish a small series of merit-based scholarships for our most promising students in order to help them with educational costs.
3. Students will be removed from a class for achieving a failing grade. In certain circumstances, the student may be allowed to repeat the class, but not necessarily – we will follow Bar Guidelines to the letter in this area.
4. Should we be forced to have our students take same, we will eliminate any student from our roster who fails the First Year Bar Exam more than the allotted number of times.
5. We will be publishing shortly a new and more explicit version of the Attendance Policy. Every student will sign it, as will the faculty. No deviations from the policy will be allowed, barring extreme or unique circumstances, to be determined by the Faculty member and the Dean. PCU has had no serious attendance issues to speak of, but we intend to make a strong statement in any case, through reprinting and discussing of this policy. Any student who fails to adhere to the policy will be written up, as they have been. Repeated violations will result in the student being asked by the Dean to withdraw from PCU.
6. Passing on to 4L will not be automatic. Students will have to earn their promotion through grades, attendance and so on.
7. Every enrolled student shall meet with the Dean at the start (enrollment), in the middle (midterms), and at the end (finals) of each term.
8. PCU will be increasing the amount and quality of career counseling available to each and every student of whatever class year.

g. COMMUNICATIONS

Issue:

1. PCU communications with the public need upgrading.

Solution:

1. We are beginning work on a new website.
2. We are beginning work on a social media presence.
3. We will be reviewing all of our brochures, fliers, advertisements, commercials and so on to improve the overall picture and presence of PCU in Southern California and in the communities of our students.

h. MISCELLANEOUS PROPOSALS

In the future, we would like to offer widely a Mediation/Negotiation Certificate, building off of our current Mediation program.

We would like to consider the establishment of a small, limited Paralegal program.

PCU will institute a program whereby we will hold lectures, discussions and demonstrations of any and all relevant technology changes that may affect the study or practice of law.

We are in the process of planning for increased numbers of and quality of Alumni events. This will further expose our students to the world of PCU alums, two of which grace the cover of "Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce" magazine this issue. It will allow our students to see a variety of ways forward from where they find themselves and will open their horizons.

PCU would like to increase its involvement with local and state-wide Bar Associations for the benefit of our students.

We have already begun to embark on a program of forming strategic alliances with local lawyers and law firms, businesses and not-for-profit organizations for the benefit of our students and their futures.

We are in the process of adding to the social life and social involvement of the school – to capitalize on the feeling of safety and family that our students feel when they are here. We are looking at the fluffy things – an annual dance, for example, or a legal themed night of performance. I have previously organized a legal film festival event and we might give that a try at PCU.

1. In addition, we would be interested in conducting joint programs with area High Schools, including such events as:

- a. Moot Court Competitions.

- b. Legal Challenge Queries
- c. Lawyer for a Day/Week Challenges
- d. Ethical & Legal Issues in Technological Change

provide wider perspectives to our students regarding areas of interest, and that will wish to make presentations on campus, such as:

- a. Women in Law
- b. Law & The Arts/Entertainment
- c. Law & Real Estate
- d. Law & Medicine
- e. Law & Law Enforcement
- f. Law & Tech - LogiCull/Ediscovery Software/VR & Augmented Reality
- g. Law & Ethics

Finally, and actually much too importantly to be included last under miscellaneous, PCU desires to improve the school's connection to our community, the Long Beach Community, Southern California, California as a whole and the nation in general.

I hereby request the Bar Examiners allow us to return to the site visit date of Fall, 2021, so that we have three additional administrations of CBX to reflect in our rates and so that the older years will be less of an anchor on our progress. I would like also to invite the Panelists personally to attend a site visit, wherein we can gladly show PCU to its best advantage. I think you would see, by being on campus (after Coronavirus), the real good this school is accomplishing by being true to its almost 100 year old mission.

Respectfully submitted, and Very truly yours,

F. Miguel Valenti
 Dean
 Pacific Coast University,
 School of Law
 1650 Ximeno Ave., Ste #300
 Long Beach, CA 90804
www.pculaw.org
 562.961.8200 (o)
 310.850.7150 (c)

MPR

2018 MPR is 26.2%

Numerator 38

Denominator 145

2019 MPR is 26.6%

Numerator 42

Denominator 158

2020 MPR is 28.2%

Numerator 42

Denominator 149

PROJECTED 2021 MPR 37.4%

Estimated Numerator 46

Estimated Denominator 123

Pacific Coast University, School of Law
Gender & Ethnic Enrollment

		Black	Hispanic	Asian	White	Native American	unknown	Total
2011-2012	Female	12	19	17	23	0	0	71
	Male	8	16	14	43	0	0	81
	Total	20	35	31	66	0	0	152
2012-2013	Female	16	27	9	24	0	0	76
	Male	10	19	12	29	0	0	70
	Total	26	46	21	53	0	0	146
2013-2014	Female	20	39	18	23	0	1	101
	Male	8	32	33	34	0	0	107
	Total	28	71	51	57	0	1	208
2014-2015	Female	24	28	22	23	0	4	101
	Male	10	33	25	26	0	6	100
	Total	34	61	47	49	0	10	201
2015-2016	Female	16	22	16	23	0	8	85
	Male	12	27	16	46	0	2	103
	Total	28	49	32	49	0	10	168
2016-2017	Female	13	26	10	23	0	7	79
	Male	9	19	19	25	0	3	75
	Total	22	45	29	48	0	10	154
2017-2018	Female	12	18	14	15	0	0	59
	Male	5	17	17	18	0	1	58
	Total	17	35	31	33	0	1	117
2018-2019	Female	6	21	13	20	0	0	60
	Male	5	18	13	17	0	0	53
	Total	11	39	26	37	0	0	113
2019-2020	Female	4	18	14	17	0	3	56
	Male	4	19	10	11	0	5	49
	Total	8	37	24	28	0	8	105

Alumni Testimonials

- Gladis Farahani- Scholarship recipient 2019
- Stephanie Patterson- Class of 2011
- Zach Tinker- Scholarship recipient 2019
- Robert Aguilar- Class of 2015

Gladis Farahani
855 N. 17th Street
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101
T: (702) 420-0250

May 26, 2020

Committee of Bar Examiners of
State Bar of California

Re: Pacific Coast University, School of Law

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in support of Pacific Coast University School of Law continuing to maintain accreditation.

I am a recent graduate from Pacific Coast University School of Law. I received a juris doctorate degree in August 2019.

Personally, attending Pacific Coast University School of Law was a great experience. The academic program they offer allowed me to seek a law degree and at the same time retain full-time employment at a law office. I believe this was greatly beneficial because I was able to not only receive a legal education, but also help my family financially in any way possible during my time in school and allowed me to pay my ordinary living expenses.

Throughout the years, I was fortunate enough to meet professors who were knowledgeable about the subject matter they were teaching and always willing to assist students with any questions that would arise. Pacific Coast University School of Law provided tutoring sessions to further help students that were struggling in understanding certain law material. Professors care about their students and provide tools for success in the legal field.

Further, Pacific Coast University School of Law along with their supporting staff, want their students to succeed and find ways to help students in achieving their academic goals. Moreover, Pacific Coast University School of Law provides students affordable tuition. This was extremely important when I decided to apply to the school as it gave me an opportunity to finally be able to attend law school. In addition, the school for example, does fundraisers to raise money to provide scholarships to students in need. During my last year at law school, I was one of the 8 recipients who was awarded a PCU Scholarship. The scholarship funds were helpful as it allowed me to cover in part my tuition fees.

I believe Pacific Coast University School of Law deserves an opportunity to continue serving the community and maintain their accreditation. They have provided individuals like me with an opportunity to receive a juris doctorate degree. Their program helps individuals from all age groups, different race, and socio-economic backgrounds. An opportunity that many times is denied by other schools and/or institutions, however, at Pacific Coast University School of Law there is a possibility to accomplish your dream and get a legal education.

Of course, should you have any questions, you may contact me personally.

Sincerely,

/s/ Gladis Farahani

Dear State Bar Panel,

I am currently serving on the State Bar of California's Lawyer Assistance Program Oversight Committee. In this role, I provide my unique set of skills, legal knowledge and expertise as a mental health professional, to not only help protect the public -- but to also support legal professionals who are suffering from mental health disorders and substance use disorders.

It is also important for me to note that I completed the night law school program at Pacific Coast University, School of Law (PCU), a California-accredited law school, while working full-time as a Deputy Public Conservator with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (L.A. County). PCU's affordable and accredited law degree program enabled me to earn my law degree on a fixed public service income in 2011, while making a positive impact with underserved clients in the field of mental health. One of the primary reasons why I decided to attend the institution was because of its accredited program, in addition to PCU's established presence in the community and mission to offer a quality legal education to working adults like myself.

As a primary care provider and a graduate of an accredited law program, the legal training that I received during my time at PCU, has enabled me to improve overall patient-centered care and health outcomes among underserved mentally ill patients in the Los Angeles area. I am fully in support of maintaining PCU's law school accreditation status.

Sincerely,

Dr. Stephanie A. Patterson, DNP, JD, MPA, MBA, PMHNP-BC

May 26, 2020

Dear State Bar Panel,

It has come to my attention that the California State Bar's Committee of Bar Examiners has issued a notice of intent to terminate Pacific Coast University School of Law's CalBar accreditation. As a proud PCU Alum, and a recipient of their Dean Lewis Foundation Scholarship, I feel it is necessary to communicate how PCU School of Law has positively impacted my life and allowed me to serve my community in a greater capacity.

PCU's genuine approach provides an opportunity for working individuals from varying backgrounds to obtain a Juris Doctorate and thereby satisfy the California State Bar's Legal Education requirement for admission to the bar. The impact of PCU's philosophy is readily apparent on the frontlines of advocacy in communities that are typically unable to afford access to the legal system, which nevertheless impacts them.

The students at PCU spread the gamut of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, and overall life experience. Many have spent years cultivating expertise in their various careers only to find themselves in need of further education, which they then take back to their respective fields. The skills that we acquire in PCU's classrooms translate directly to serving disenfranchised communities in a way that few other schools do. PCU School of Law's professors, who are all working attorneys or judges, offer real-life experience that helps hone the skills of their students and prepares them to make practical use of the legal concepts we learn.

Although attending law school had been a dream of mine for years, it seemed insurmountable due to my past and the barriers that being a justice-involved youth presented. When I learned that I could attend PCU School of Law, it felt like the sky had opened up. The alternative approach to providing a legal education found at PCU allowed me to enroll as a special admissions student and go on to clerk with the Ventura County and Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office. It

also granted me access as one of thirty nationwide to the 2019 Equal Justice Works - Rural Summer Legal Corps internship, where I received training to be effective in my role as a future Public Interest attorney.

During my time with the Rural Summer Legal Corps and my host organization, Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles County, I learned about the disparity of access to justice present in rural communities. Throughout California, individuals struggling with poverty, homelessness, mental illness, domestic violence, and housing issues are often cast aside and lost in the shuffle of our justice system.

The beautiful thing about PCU School of Law is that they train legal minds directly from these communities who, in turn, serve these communities in a way that cannot be achieved by mainstream means. The compassion and empathy for the clients served by the PCU School of Law's alumni is unsurpassed. Many of PCU's graduates have been in similar circumstances; they know what it's like to be victims of domestic violence, to be unjustly evicted, or caught in a cycle of recidivism, which can be challenging to break.

Upon being selected for the Dean William Lewis Foundation Scholarship, not only was the financial strain of attending law school alleviated, but I felt a sense of confirmation that I was on the right path. Having a Senior Deputy Public Defender with the Ventura County Public Defender's Office state, "You are exactly who we look for" during my interview to clerk with their office was further affirmation of the same. The truth is that without the opportunity Pacific Coast University School of Law offered, I would most likely still be washing windows and struggling to make ends meet.

My life has gotten exceedingly better since attending PCU School of Law. I have been able to obtain post-conviction relief for myself and secured gainful employment advocating for homeowners navigating property damage claims with their insurance carriers. I have also been able to network with attorneys in Ventura County, and draft Mental Health Diversion Motions

for their clients on the side. My wife and I recently started a special education advocacy business, VSEAS, earlier this year to help families in Ventura County traverse their school district's IEP process for K-8 children with autism. Beyond that, I have been fortunate enough to become a certified domestic violence counselor, where I currently facilitate Court-Ordered, Batterer Intervention Programs for men with domestic violence convictions to curb person-directed violence in our communities. Without attending PCU School of Law, none of this would have been possible.

Thankfully, my time at PCU has brought me to the point where I am looking forward to receiving a positive moral character determination and sitting for the February 2021 bar exam so that I can continue to serve my community in a greater capacity. Before his passing, Dean Lewis had pulled me aside and told me without hesitation, "you can be an attorney." I'm glad I believed him and took PCU up on their offer.

It is for these reasons, and many more, that I feel the Pacific Coast University School of Law should maintain its accreditation and continue to positively impact our community at large.

Please feel free to reach out to me directly if you would like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Zachary E. Tinker".

Zachary E. Tinker, JD

424.477.4919

962 Catalano Ct.

Fillmore, CA 93015

5/26/2020

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Robert Aguilar, Jr. and I'm a proud graduate of Pacific Coast University School of Law. I also served as the President of the Student Bar Association, which was high instrumental in engaging law school students and enhancing the experience for our unique student body.

PCUSOL is unique because their student body consists of working adults, parents and returning students who made it their mission late in life to pursue their dream of becoming an attorney and making a difference.

I earned my Juris Doctor in 2015 and at the time I was a divorced single father working as a clerk in a law firm hoping to find the time to study for and take the bar exam while still being able to provide for my small family, pay my bills and make sure we didn't go hungry. But I did it. I managed my time, finished school in the top half of my class, served as student body President, while studying for what was known to be one of the most difficult bar exams in the country.

I didn't pass the bar exam but was eventually hired to work as a litigation specialist for an California State Insurance Guarantee entity where I am fighting on behalf of injured workers who's original insurance carriers have gone out of business.

But that is not the only career my J.D. has brought to my life. I have also served as a law maker for the city I live in, Seal Beach, on the City Council and on several boards handling park and recreation, planning and budgetary matters.

Not all students who come to PCU are intending to get licensed and practice law in California. Some are already executive in their company and utilize their legal knowledge to enhance their ability to do their jobs effectively or to advance in their company. Others work in real estate and use the law to secure their deals in a lawful and ethical manner. And some use their degree to return to their native countries and advocate for those who are unable to speak for themselves.

PCU is not just a school, it is a mission. A mission to provide a high-quality legal education for those who traditionally would never have the opportunity. And the school believes that if an individual has the will and determination to pursue their dream they should be able to do so without hindrance.

By granting bar certification to PCU, They are able to clear a path for these hard working adults to realize their dream and serve as advocates for those less fortunate than themselves.

Respectfully,

Robert Aguilar, Jr., J.D.

Current Student Testimonials

- **4L Students**
 - Kenneth Stewart
 - Rigoberto Guzman
 - 
- **3L Students**
 - Roland Stucken
 - Oscar Ischiu
 - Donovan Mauga
 - Susan Volpe
 - Devika Patel
 - Talar Toprakjian
- **2L Students**
 - Yun Kelly Wang
 - Habib Akl
 - Sam Kordab
 - Cherry Coachrell
- **1L Students**
 - Natalia Hunter
 - Lia Mohammadi
 - Candy Archila
 - Richard Le
 - Stephanie Hughes

Mr. Kenneth Stewart
 419 E 6th Street, Apt 204
 Long Beach, CA 90802
Stewartkennethd@gmail.com

April 5, 2020

The Committee of Bar Examiners of The State Bar of California
 180 Howard Street
 San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Pacific Coast University, School of Law – CBE Accreditation

Dear Esteemed Committee Members:

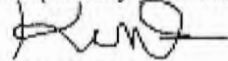
My name is Kenneth Stewart; I am a 4L at Pacific Coast University, School of Law (PCU). During the day, I am a Trial Support Paralegal with The Los Angeles County Public Defender Office in Downtown Los Angeles. I am assigned to felonies, tasked mainly with Death Penalty/Special Circumstance cases. My goal is to pass the California Bar and become an Attorney with the Los Angeles County Public Defender Office. Fortunately, PCU has been instrumental in helping me achieve my goal.

PCU makes working full-time and attending law school at night doable. Our professors are practicing attorneys and underline their teachings towards passing the California Bar. The professors are top-tier! Specifically, two professors; Professor Lee, a legal savant and Professor Yu, an exam strategist. Professor Lee teaches our Academic Support Lab and Professor Yu teaches our 4th year Advanced Legal Reasoning (ALR) course.

Thankfully, ALR and the Academic Support Lab reduced my bar preparation anxiety. Before PCU my MBE approach was flawed. Due to Professor Yu's in-depth analysis of each multistate question he administered to us weekly and his knowledge of the MBE tested subjects, my flawed approach no longer exists. We were fortunate to have access to Barbri and NCBE materials, which were great supplements outside of the classroom lectures.

I am grateful that PCU gave me the opportunity to complete my legal education. I am proud to be a PCU law student and soon-to-be alumni. As such, I respectfully ask the Committee Members to wield a fair decision. You all hold significant power with regard to the future of PCU.

Respectfully submitted,



Kenneth Stewart

April 5, 2020

California State Bar Examiners:

My name is Rigoberto Guzman. I am a fourth-year student at PCU. I plan to graduate in August 2020 and take the February 2021 California Bar exam. Further, I reside in Downey, CA and my career goal is to become an Immigration attorney in this community.

I have been a student in other law schools and in the Fall 2018 I began at PCU as a third-year student. I believe deciding to finish my law school education at PCU was one of the best decisions I ever made. Besides being the law school closest to Downey, PCU's evening classes have fit my work and study schedule perfectly. In addition, PCU professors are always willing to answer all my questions and, in the process, have given me the knowledge and tools I need to successfully prepare and pass the California Bar exam. For example, I currently have two professors, Peter Lee and Tom Yu, who I believe, are as good as it gets, in regard to preparing students for the bar exam.

My fourth-year class has reaped the benefits of PCU's professors' knowledge. This is evident by a simulated MBE exam our class recently took as the final exam for our ALR course. I am proud to share that we were the class that performed the best cumulatively in all of Professor Yu's years of teaching. I will continue to diligently prepare for the bar exam as I did for that simulated MBE exam and I trust that my classmates will do the same. In addition, I believe that PCU professors will keep providing the necessary guidance so PCU students can achieve a similar result in upcoming bar exams.

Sincerely,

Rigoberto Guzman

California Bar Examiners

April 3, 2020

RE: Pacific Coast University, School of Law

To whom it may concern,

My name is Roland Stucken and I am a student at Pacific Coast University School of Law in Long Beach, California. I am currently a third year student at the University. I am a full-time sworn peace officer for a municipality in Orange County, California. I am writing to you as a proud student of Pacific Coast University.

It has been expressed that your office is reviewing our school on the basis of consumer protection to ensure that students of a California Accredited Law School are receiving an education that will prepare the students for taking and passing the bar. I truly appreciate your concern and desire to protect current and future law school applicants. Unfortunately, I think your concern and aim directed toward Pacific Coast University is coming from a place of misinformation and misjudgment.

My view on this may not echo the sounds of others standing behind Pacific Coast University in expressing their love for the school; however, I come from a family of educators and I am a child of a Pacific Coast University alumnus. My mom attended Pacific Coast University in the late 1970's and graduated in 1982. She passed the California Bar Exam on her first attempt. My mother has always had a great deal of respect for Pacific Coast University and appreciated the opportunity to attend law school at night while working full time. She explained to me that the originating dean, Dean Manson, had a unique and noble vision for this University. The University was established in order to provide students who likely may never have the opportunity to attend another more traditional law school an opportunity to obtain a sound legal education. Dean Manson had a unique and very selfless vision for Pacific Coast University. Dean Manson believed the legal profession desperately needed people with real life experience and it was for these people that Pacific Coast University was created.

The vision of the University and a part of the creed at Pacific Coast University is that it is the "School of the People." To deprive these "people" of the ability to attend a school with an important accreditation is a disservice to those men and women who diligently dedicate three to

four nights a week away from their families in order to obtain a quality legal education. Furthermore, it deprives the legal profession of some outstanding future lawyers that bring a tremendous diversity to the legal profession. Not every student is able to attend law school on a full-time basis or enter into debt in excess of \$100,000 in order to obtain a legal education. This school exists in order to benefit the legal profession as a whole by allowing some of the brightest and most hard working students I have ever met with an opportunity to sit for the California State Bar Exam. Pacific Coast University affords an opportunity for a different class of people to obtain a sound legal education that likely may never have the ability to obtain a legal education at a more conventional brick and mortar law school. The vision that Pacific Coast University was founded upon approximately 90 years ago is what our society and in particular, California legislation has been attempting to foster in academia. The Pacific Coast University vision to provide a legal education to those who would not ordinarily have the means or background to have a chance to become an attorney is directly in line with equal education opportunities our society is continuing to embrace. Pacific Coast University provides students an opportunity, regardless of age, ethnicity, or socioeconomic background, to earn a sound legal education. Undoubtedly, this may impact the bar exam passage rate, but it provides a public service unmatched by any other law school in the nation.

Pacific Coast University provides an affordable education that allows individuals the opportunity to advance their education and pursue a field that has largely been held by upper middle class and privileged individuals. The University provides an outstanding education at an affordable price. It is geared toward primarily working individuals. My class has been comprised of many extremely intelligent and hard working individuals. We have a medical doctor, several real estate brokers, a certified public accountant, multiple paralegals, registered nurses, medical administrators, and many other hard working professionals.

I am not certain if you are aware, but the staff of dedicated professors at Pacific Coast University is unlike many other brick and mortar law schools. The staff here is comprised of working legal professionals, ranging from a variety of different fields. We are fortunate enough to have county commissioners, actively seated criminal and civil court judges, practicing public defenders, former municipality attorneys, and attorneys with successful private practices. All of these actively practicing professors dedicate their time to provide an outstanding legal education to a predominately working class group of individuals. The life experiences and the work history of the students at Pacific Coast University, coupled with the unique real world active experience of the professors, leads to a unique legal education and experience.

To single out or direct any type of allegations towards Pacific Coast University in regard to our administration not having the upmost sincere intentions of providing a quality legal education to us is wrong and baseless. Your concerns are misguided. If Pacific Coast University has any fault in the passage rates of the bar, it's not because of a lack of quality education or the misbelief they are trying to milk the consumer of money. If anything, Pacific Coast University comes from a place of kindness and willingness to help and facilitate a quality legal education to a group of individuals that most schools may turn away. To place the blame for a lower bar passage rate on the quality of teaching is absurd and absolutely disrespectful. The professors that show up on a nightly basis to 1650 Ximeno Avenue in the City of Long Beach and teach for the next four hours are pouring their experience and knowledge into a hungry group of students wanting to grow in education.

As a school comprised of primarily working individuals, the diversity of students entering into their first year is very unique. It is unlike many other law schools which are comprised of freshly groomed and recently graduated college students. The life experience and socioeconomic backgrounds that are represented at Pacific Coast University are what makes the legal education so unique and exceptional. Many of the students enter law school with a variety of intentions, some of which may change over time. Additionally, working students are pulled and tugged in a variety of different directions throughout the school year. I know for myself, I struggled to balance work, raising my three children, and attending school three days per week. Any missed assignments, poor test scores, or misunderstood concepts was as a result of my life chaos, not a lack of quality in the education being provided by Pacific Coast University staff. The staff has been consistent on a nightly basis in being prepared to provide the utmost quality legal education. Any poor performance, whether that be on course exams or even bar exam attempts, must be directed toward the individual student, not Pacific Coast University and/or any staff member that is dedicating their time to educate us. Obtaining a legal education is not a spoon feeding of concepts in order to pass the California State Bar Exam. Students are required to dedicate thousands of hours to prepare themselves for the exam. There is not a law school in this country that can guarantee bar passage. That responsibility alone rests upon the individual student alone. And unfortunately, due to the life circumstances of many Pacific Coast University students, the time required to be successful in passing the bar exam might be outside the current scope of their life circumstances. Even those who elect not to pursue passing the bar exam have gained a valuable legal education that will help them both in life and any career. To punish Pacific Coast University for this is absolutely wrong.

I would encourage you before making any decisions to come meet the students, meet faculty members, and sit in a class room lecture before making such a decision that will result in the stripping this university of an accreditation they deserve for the dedication to educate the past, present, and future men and women who represent Pacific Coast University School of Law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Stucken', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Roland Stucken
(562) 858 - 0977

April 2, 2020

RE: Pacific Coast University, School of Law CALS Accreditation

Dear California State Bar Examiners:

I am writing this letter on behalf of my school Pacific Coast University, School of Law (P.C.U.). I have been attending P.C.U. since fall 2017, I am currently in my third year.

I feel compelled to write and tell you my story in the hope that you can see how much P.C.U. and its CALS accreditation means to our entire P.C.U family.

I was a first generation student to attend College. I attended the University of California Riverside in 2006 majoring in Biochemistry. Unfortunately, my family pressured me to pursue a medical career and I was not given the opportunity to choose my life path. I endured the unhappiest, lost, and empty moments in my life studying Biochemistry at UCR. In fact, I hated and had no interest while studying biochemistry and all course requirements. After 3 years, I finally got the courage to change majors to Political Science.

After College, at age 22, I began working in Trucking as a business owner and witnessed firsthand how government regulations, unforeseen business circumstances, or even unforeseen market recessions can affect a business owner's everyday life. Further, I witnessed how drivers were verbally and emotionally abused by their superiors and found my true calling of becoming an Attorney. However, this was a dream that was far away as I did not possess a competitive GPA.

One of the best decisions of my life was turning my PCU application. Shortly after my application, I was called for an interview. While most people are unenthused about interviews, I was ecstatic. I would get an opportunity to explain how I hated every moment studying Biochem and had neither interest nor desire to study the subject, and thus had said GPA. At my interview, I met with Dean Carmona, and two other administrative professionals. All three took the time to learn about me as a person, went through my history of work and school, asked me why I wanted to attend P.C.U. and answered my questions. Thankfully, days later Dean Lua notified me they were going to give me an opportunity to be part of PCU. I clearly recall promising Dean Lua that I will not let her down, and will be one of her hardest working students. I have kept and continue to honor my promise.

Below are just a few reasons why I am advocating for P.C.U. to maintain its status as a CALS accredited school.

PROGRAM

P.C.U. is a four-year program with a schedule of classes delineated by year. At my interview in 2017, I was advised that P.C.U. was instituting an additional day of learning on Saturday for lab resources. Lab consisted of 3 hours; 1.5 hours for reviewing essays and the last 1.5 hours of doing MBES for a particular subject. While I knew that attending school Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings from 6:30 to 10:10 p.m. was going to be challenging, I welcomed the opportunity to attend this additional class on Saturdays. I am a person that requires a rigid

learning regimen and I appreciated the organization in doing so. I was also impressed by how P.C.U. implemented an extra day of learning in an effort to help their students succeed. That to me is what a law school should be.

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

Dean Lua and the entire PCU staff truly care about every single student in attendance. In fact, we are a family. To being with, Dean Carmona gave all 1L's one on one feedback on our progress during 1L. Further, every single Professor that I have had the pleasure of taking a class with is always available and encourages submitting practice essays for review. In addition, PCU schedules annual meetings with recent bar passers to discuss their experience on passing the bar and study habits. Also, it is mandatory that all students in attendance study and complete MBE black letter law assignments. Lastly, and in my opinion, most importantly, PCU offers supplemental LAB class with Professor Lee for all subjects. Professor Lee goes above and beyond to assure himself that every single student in attendance understands the subject matter and reasoning of the law, how to outline, analyze and write a Bar essay, and is always available for one on one private sessions for a particular concept a student does not understand

P.C.U. has given me the very last opportunity I would receive in my lifetime to accomplish my dream. Today, studying has become a pleasure and love every single moment of it. Before every round of midterms for each subject, I issue spot and outline every single bar essay since 2002; I write at least 10 practice essays and complete approximately 2 rounds of 350 MBE's. Further, I have a notebook filled with my notes on every single MBE that I have practiced. Thankfully, this 3L year, I have scored above 80% on MBE's for subjects Constitutional Law and Real Property which are heavily tested on the Bar.

I am telling you my preparation methods for the purposes of advising that many students at PCU not only go above and beyond for exam preparations, but have the drive and hunger to succeed as law students and one day as Bar Passers. Personally, I can promise you that CALS accreditation is a sense of pride for me, my classmates, and PCU. I humbly ask you to please not allow past students to overshadow the greatness, additional resources, and above and beyond efforts that PCU implements.

For the foregoing reasons (and many more) I humbly ask that you allow my law school, Pacific Coast University, School of Law to keep its status as a CALS accredited institution. For myself, and many others like me, your consideration is deeply appreciated it.

Thank you for your time.

Best,



Oscar A Ischit

April 06, 2020

California Bar Examiners
180 Howard Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Donovan Mauga
3950 E Massachusetts Street
Long Beach, CA 90814

Dear CBE,

I am writing to you to genuinely relate my perspective as third year law student and to express the gratitude I have towards PCU.

When I committed myself to PCU the program, I knew I made the right decision. PCU offers many an opportunity to achieve personal goals, as well as to protect other consumers who seek justice. Most of us at PCU work full time, while raising families and being fully committed to the viability of our communities. The common theme among PCU students is that we are dedicated to making a difference in our communities.

Not only does PCU afford working professionals and heads of families a quality legal education at a very affordable price, but also nourishes an incredible environment of diversity. The PCU student body is a woven fabric of very diverse cultures and religions, socioeconomic backgrounds, age ranges, career experiences and political beliefs. Each of us benefits greatly from the different perspectives of such a diverse group and we help each other through various challenges inside as well as outside of the learning environment.

During these unprecedented times, a significant number of PCU students stay connected via telecommunications. Again, we help each other remain focused on our studies as well as help each other to cope with non-educational concerns. Many have lost jobs and many need essential supplies; we do our best to assist each other and find solutions. We are resilient and proud of the fact that we are PCU.

With that said, I am sincerely hopeful that the accreditation that PCU worked so hard to obtain and will continue to work hard to retain will remain intact. PCU gives it's heart and soul to the community. The education provides opportunities to individuals that otherwise would be unreachable.

We are PCU proud!

To that end, please note that I am a highly satisfied consumer of the quality legal education provided by Pacific Coast University, School of Law (PCU).

Respectfully,

Donovan Mauga

Susan C Volpé

3/16/20

State Bar California

Members, Committee of Bar Examiners

Natalie Leonard, Principal Program Analyst

RE: Action on Notice of Intent to Terminate Accreditation, Pacific Coast University

Dear Committee Members:

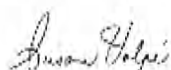
As someone who is struggling with visual limitations, I am so grateful to PCU. I do not believe I would have been provided with the additional opportunities I was given, to demonstrate my ability in a larger traditional law school.

The Bar Examiners must realize that this is not a cookie cutter society. Our constitution provides that we the people enjoy equal opportunity which includes going to law school and practicing law. PCU is that opportunity for many of us who require more than the limits a traditional law school would and could provide.

For that reason, I believe it is unfair to the individual students who require a PCU brand of legal education to limit us to a process with a preferred maintenance of a 40% Bar Pass rate.

Thank you for your attention in this very important matter.

Sincerely,



Susan C Volpé

March 31, 2020

RE: Pacific Coast University, School of Law CALS Accreditation

Dear California State Bar Examiners:

I am writing this letter on behalf of my school Pacific Coast University, School of Law (P.C.U.). I have been attending P.C.U. since 2017, am currently in my third year and I serve as the SBA treasurer.


I feel compelled to write and tell you my story in the hope that you can see how much P.C.U. and its CALS accreditation means not only to me, but to P.C.U. as a whole.

I have been working for over 11 years in workers' compensation law. I started my career in law with very little education, however with hard work I excelled. Almost 9 years ago I decided to go back to school. While working full time I finished my associates degree, got my paralegal certificate and obtained my bachelor's degree graduating with honors. It may have taken me a minute to realize but law school has always been my destiny. I was not content with my first LSAT score, so I paid for a course and took the LSAT a second time.

When looking at law schools I was devastated to learn that my first-choice law school lost its ABA accreditation and had shuttered its doors completely. It was at this point that one of the attorneys in my office told me about P.C.U. Truth be told, I was hesitant about possibly attending a CALS accredited institution versus an ABA accredited school. Regardless, I did my due diligence and researched CALS accredited schools and felt confident in my decision to apply to P.C.U.

I was turned down from what was previously an ABA accredited school but is now a CALS accredited school. No reason was provided for why I was not accepted and even upon appeal I was denied. The second ABA accredited school I applied to was until recently in limbo of being completely closed down. In hindsight, not attending the second ABA accredited school was the best decision I could have made.

Shortly after turning in my application to P.C.U., I was called for an interview. While most people are unenthused about interviews, I was happy. I would get a chance to show P.C.U. who I am and what I am capable of. For me, an interview seemed like a more objective criteria to assess my capabilities, rather than just reviewing an application and test scores to decide my fate. At my interview, I met with Dean Lua, and two other administrative professionals. All three took the time to learn about me as a person, went through my history of work and school, asked me why I wanted to attend P.C.U. and answered my questions. I expressed some concern that my dream of being a lawyer would not happen because I did not have high LSAT scores. I shared that that my good grades and me as a person would not be enough simply because I am a bad test taker. After talking to Dean Lua at the interview my fears were eased. Even while I was accepted to an ABA accredited school, I was optimistic for life at law school and knew then what I know now, P.C.U. is and always has been the school for me. Below are just a few reasons why I am advocating for P.C.U. to maintain its status as a CALS accredited school.



RE: Pacific Coast University, School of Law CALS Accreditation
 March 31, 2020
 Page 2 of 4

PROGRAM

P.C.U. is a four-year program with a schedule of classes delineated by year. At my interview in 2017, I was advised that P.C.U. was instituting an additional day of learning on Saturday for lab resources. While I knew that attending school Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings from 6:30 to 10:10 p.m. and now Saturday morning to early afternoon, would be tough I welcomed it. I am a person that requires a rigid learning regimen and I appreciated the organization in doing so. I was also impressed by how P.C.U. implemented an extra day of learning in an effort to help their students succeed. That to me is what a law school should be.

Orientation was two weeks and included signing the P.C.U. Handbook, my classmate and I heard speeches from teachers and those in administration with insight about life at P.C.U. and were provided the space and opportunity to have any questions answered. The best part of orientation was knowing now that P.C.U. was doing students a favor. By having us show up for two weeks straight for multiple hours, rather than just throwing us to the wolves, P.C.U. was acclimating students to get used to the time and energy needed to be at school for the next four years.

ENVIRONMENT

Upon my acceptance I began attending P.C.U. and sat down as a 1L with around 30 students including myself. The people I started with then are the same ones that I will end with next year. I appreciate the small class size as I am a visual learner and ask many questions. I thrive in environments with smaller groups rather than being lost in a sea of students. That to me speaks volumes because it makes me feel like my voice is heard and the fact that my professors know me and take an interest in my development as a student and future lawyer is crucial to development not only as a law student but as a future lawyer.

Further, P.C.U. offers a lab resource for all students. I have voluntarily attended lab for the past two years because the additional learning and resources not only helps me absorb and comprehend subjects now but will also be used when I prepare for and take the bar. I do not know many other institutions that offer an optional class taught by an amazing teacher, but P.C.U. does because they want to see all of us succeed.

CLASSMATES

Any law student will tell you that making friends in law school is no easy feat. Seeing others as competition, putting aside egos and interacting with various characters and personalities is a huge hurdle to tackle. The environment of learning that P.C.U. has created ensures that you interact with your fellow classmates in a positive manner. My classmates and I band together to help each other, whether it is to aid someone with a brief if struggling or a topic that is uncertain. My classmates and I have meaningful dialogue, constructive and respectful conversations about the law and life as well as study together. I spend more time with my classmates than my own family, and we have become close friends. We share meals and have a connection because of our bond of attending P.C.U. together, from beginning to end. Mental health is important and having classmates who look out for and support each other is integral. I know that me and my

classmates relate to one another because most of us are in similar circumstances. Most of us are full time working professionals, that chose P.C.U. to better ourselves and receive a quality education at a CALS accredited institution. Those of us that know law is what we love and being lawyers is where we are supposed to be.


TUITION

In looking at other schools, I know P.C.U. is the most economical even when they do not have to be. The fact that the P.C.U. is supported by so many should not be overlooked. Staff and faculty, alumni and sponsors donate their time and money investing in P.C.U. willingly and without hesitation. P.C.U. has provided me the ability to pay for law school knowing I will not be burdened by law school debt upon graduation. P.C.U.'s model for tuition should be lauded.

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

Dean Lua is the backbone of P.C.U. I know she has spent countless hours advocating for P.C.U. and it shows. There are not many schools where a dean let alone professors know your name, but I am proud to say that Dean Lua does. Dean Lua is not pretentious and truly cares for P.C.U. and us as students. Whenever I encounter Dean Lua, she always greets me by name, and we can engage in conversation freely. To me, having a personal relationship and the ability to have an open line of communication with administration sets students up for success. During my first and second years P.C.U. scheduled all students to have meetings with the dean of academics for feedback on our progress. These meetings were and continue to be vital to our education because feedback on our strengths and weaknesses is how we gauge our own accomplishments and continue to grow.

Since I was a 1L, the staff has always and to date continues to greet me by name with a wave and a smile. I have loved serving on the SBA for the past two years and I willingly participate in every event possible because P.C.U. is my school. My opinions feels heard when I advocate on behalf of my classmates and that is a significant consideration in why I take pride P.C.U. I legitimately feel like I am part of a family at P.C.U., because not only am I am treated like I matter but that I am accepted for who I am.



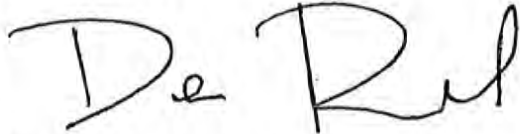
P.C.U. has given me an opportunity when others did not and for that I will be forever grateful. I would not be where I am today without P.C.U. I ultimately attended because of P.C.U.'s status as a CALS accredited institution. Not only have I invested the past three years of my life to P.C.U. but P.C.U. has made sure that they are making an investment in me. Whenever I need a pep talk or motivation P.C.U. is there. When I need a helping hand or just need someone to listen to me vent P.C.U. is there. At P.C.U. I am not just another number and the attention to my education and my ultimate goal of taking and passing the bar is undisputed. Simply said, there are so many positive experiences, goals and relationships I never would have achieved without P.C.U.

RE: Pacific Coast University, School of Law CALS Accreditation
March 31, 2020
Page 4 of 4

P.C.U. is full of so much greatness as a CALS accredited institution. For the foregoing reasons (and many more) I humbly ask that you allow my law school, Pacific Coast University, School of Law to keep its status as a CALS accredited institution.

Thank you for your time.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "De Rul". The letters are stylized and cursive.

Devika Patel

Talar Toprakjian
1747 Barry Ave. #105
Los Angeles, CA 90025

California Bar Examiners
180 Howard St.
San Francisco, CA 94105

March 31, 2020

Dear California Bar Examiners,

My law school, Pacific Coast University, School of Law, has been on the California Bar Examiners' agenda twice in the past year regarding the continued status as a California Accredited Law School. As a PCU student, I would like to share my thoughts about this issue for you to reconsider removing accreditation.

I received my undergraduate education from UCLA where I was an honors student. I have a solid educational background and high ambitions. Due to a long list of circumstances, I am currently in my 40s, a single mother and work full time to support myself and my young child. At the same time, I am furthering my education so that I can get a legal education to ultimately practice as an attorney.

Despite my ambitions, my situation and obligations make it impossible to attend a daytime school. Pacific Coast University has provided me with this opportunity so that I can have access to education that leads to a JD and eligibility to take the California Bar. Without their evening program, I would not be able to pursue my legal studies.

PCU's education is superior to many schools in many aspects. The professors provide a challenging curriculum that meets the State standards, the classes are engaging and the students feel proud to be a student there. By taking the accreditation away, it harms the school and the students in many ways that the school is not deserving of.

In looking at your website, I see that it says the following:

The State Bar's mission is to protect the public and includes the primary functions of licensing, regulation and discipline of attorneys; the advancement of the ethical and competent practice of law; and support of efforts for greater access to, and inclusion in, the legal system.

By taking away PCU's accreditation, the State Bar will be going against its mission as it will result in far less access and inclusion into the legal system. Students such as myself who are not the typical 22-24 year old student, who have to work and support a family, will be excluded from the legal system as even more roadblocks get placed in their paths, by the bar itself no less.

Everyone has a different path in life and those who have a windy road shouldn't have to experience more roadblocks along the way. PCU provides a rigorous and challenging legal education while being inclusive to students other schools do not accommodate. Please keep PCU's accreditation. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Talar Mary Toprakjian

Dear honorable CBE officers,

I'm a PCU student since November 2017. I'm a CPA and a public employee. I want to raise my concern regarding the proposed "Minimum Pass Rate" (MPR) requirement imposed on our law school. I think legal knowledge is a must if one wants to understand his/her professional role, and advocate interests with reason in this civilized society, no matter what trade one is in. If one can spare time to learn and understand the law instead of relying powerlessly on a distant, busy and expensive lawyer, one should take the action to study in a law school. I remember those moments not knowing what to say on the legal jargon spelled by attorneys, feeling foolish and disadvantaged, but was assured this is definitely not the same law this society upholding. And that's how I enrolled this law school – Pacific Coast University.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau illustrated his ideal civilized society in "The Social Contract", where its members are skilled in a great variety of trades, taking on different social roles (like negotiation in times of conflict) when time requires. He reasoned that in such an idealized society where majority people engage continuous self-improvement, taking versatile duties, people are more prone to uphold moral standard to ensure social prosperities, preventing arbitrary usurpation, servitude created by some wretched. One way to that ideal is affordable, supportive, high quality continuing learning institutions. I think PCU, by providing the legal education to working professionals, fits rightly into this vacuum of our need, and CBE's proposed requirement is taking this precious, vital tradition away from us.

An affordable, high quality law education will produce affordable attorneys for social demand. People are asking why the medical costs in U.S. are so expensive. In my opinion, it's because the medical schools tuitions are expensive. An increase in education cost and/or a stringent requirement will put a certain amount of people unable to afford a law school like PCU, hence reduces affordable service available in the market. The effect of the stringent requirement policy imposing on PCU, will result less amount of affordable attorneys concurrently holding other professional credentials. With such kind of policy in effect, it could drive the cost high and/or drive prospective students out, and eventually pull affordable legal service, self-help professional out of market. The worst scenario, which I wish is only a speculation, is that we see more attorneys protecting only the rich/money, less minding our social welfare. As the interest of the rich may contradict with public interest, we will see our public interest being under-represented. For this reason, I appreciate and feel lucky that we already enrolled in PCU (for affordable tuition, nurturing yet strict learning environment with no Baby Bar requirement), but am concerned about our future alumni, in both affordability and morale. So please kindly consider the unique attributes of our law school, with the adverse effect of the proposed requirement, and let her to continue to benefit our divers and changing community with continuing excellence.

All of us, law school students, study hard, and are inspired to become attorneys/law practitioners. You see, the proposed requirement of 40% MPR over 10 administrations of Bar Exam from the time eligible, is harsh on law schools like PCU. We, as a part-time student and working professionals, comparing to the students from conventional law school, don't have such high stake of passing Bar, such as obtaining first job/promotion depending on passing the Bar. Chances are we might take Bar Exam, failed in the first try, and wait for a while before second try, or just stop there, as Bar Exam requires a lot time and energy to prepare. We all know that first time passing rate is low even in elite full-time law school. I

understand CBE's rationale for such requirement - let students drop early at first year if 40% of its graduates could not pass BAR after graduation. I can see the reasoning. But it's simple and brutal. It omitted CBE's essential duty in the way to ensure and recognize the good education process in making good candidates for the BAR. I guess, CBE created requirement based on assumption that student go to law school only to be qualified for sit and pass the BAR, which is only partially true. PCU students go to law school with passing the BAR in mind, but also for education. They are more flexible in passing BAR than most students in conventional law school. And they don't want be eliminated prematurely or pondering whether they should take BAR, worrying if failed, they should keep on trying to maintain the school's MPR.

In addition, I have doubts in the method of putting MPR in the credential evaluation, and linking it to First Year Bar Exam. First, students are continuing learning and improving in the second, third, and fourth year even they didn't performed perfectly in the first year. They don't want to be cut off prematurely. Baby Bar requirement will affect the new student enrollment. Second, I don't hear about the existence of such MPR in credential evaluation in schools of business/accounting or medical, although those areas also have tests for qualification for public practice. Such requirement may be due to high tuition of law school and desirability of passing the bar as the only objective. Here, neither factor applies to PCU. PCU's tuition is reasonable; and passing BAR is not the only objective. We all know the school's past pass rate, but that doesn't prevent us from gripping on, helping each other, and learning from each other. Third, CBE have other criteria in evaluating credential to ensure quality of education. MPR is a result statistics, has nothing to do with education credential itself and should not be included in credential evaluation. Just like schools of medical and business, there're many ways in evaluating credential, but MPR is not one of them. And linking MPR with Baby Bar is even more arbitrary and irrational.

Overall, Bar is the ultimate test of the qualification for legal practice, and 40% MPR is an indication of success rate. CBE's credential process is to provide means to ensure good legal education. High pass rate is the natural result of good education, but not a part of evaluation of good education. If the pass rate is low, it's the business of the school to identify areas of improvement (such as finding each student's area of improvement). By the way, I like school's academic support program. But MPR less than 40% is not necessarily due to quality of education, because a law school for part-time students likely to have lower pass rate because part-time students are less likely to continuing taking BAR like young law school graduates.

I don't see why the action of stopping at the second try to pass BAR could harm my graduating law school, and put a hindrance on my future alumni, or cause them to pass First Year Law Exam to continue. Or, as an alternative, I need to ponder if I should take Bar exam at all, because in case I fail and stop trying, it will adversely affect my school's MPR. For a law school with a tradition of excellence since 1927, this MPR requirement is over broad, and not rationally related to its purpose.

Sincerely

Yun Kelly Wang SID 17082

Habib AKL
 Law Student 2L.
 Pacific Coast University School of Law.

04/05/2010.

To the State Bar of California
 180 Howard Street
 San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Pacific Coast University School of Law Accreditation by State Bar of California

To the Board of the California Board of Examiners,

The Purpose of this letter is to attempt to inform, and advice, the current California Board of Examiners ("CBE") **to refrain, and reconsider** their current decision, **to deprive** Pacific Coast University School of law ("University") from the benefits of its current accreditation granted by the Committee of Bar Examiners.

I am a **62 year old** citizen, with a Lebanese background, unfortunately not a professor at the school yet, lol, but a **second year (law) student** attending at this remarkable institution. I am writing this letter with an earnest request that you "the Committee of Bar Examiners" **reconsider the plan of depriving** Pacific Coast University School of Law of benefits to accreditation granted previously to the University.

We, as (law) students at **Pacific Coast University School of Law** learned about the recent critical news, through the University's Dean, in a general conference. **The news decimated many student's dreams and hopes along with many of the University's staff.** The implication of such a decision could have serious negative consequences on many students who aspire to graduate and be awarded an **accredited Juris Doctorate in Law** by and through this unique University. Additionally, the current **decision will underestimate, if not totally eliminate, the University's power to input and fight on behalf of their students' future needs, concerns and ethnic diversities who proudly attend this uniquely remarkable University.**

The current decision will diminish numerous additional opportunities that graduating (law) students and attorneys, form different working groups, and special ethnic diverse nationalities, from using and adapting their own talents, acquired and developed at PCU University, to contribute and impact the enhancement of the qualities of lives to many in their communities and the State bar as well. If this lousy outcome becomes a reality, it could subsequently kill the dream of many great potential (law) students, who are considered the **underprivileged (law) students.**

PCU has helped countless law students to become excellent lawyers and judges, who contributed, and still contribute, back to the society, due to PCU's mission to provide quality legal education to students in my position – working adults and senior citizens – who would otherwise not be able to attend law school. **PCU is the least expensive California Accredited Law School in California.**

On a brief, personal, note I would like to attest to the unique opportunity that PCU afforded me back in 2016. After several years of research and analysis, I found that only Pacific Coast University School of Law was uniquely designed to fit my own needs from among several CBE's universities like Trinity law School, Ventura Law School, Santa Barbara Law School, and Glendale College of Law, etc... None of which came even close to the financial and curriculum privileges offered by PCU. Though I live in Monrovia, CA, I chose to go PCU, over Glendale College of Law which is closer to me geographically, because of the low yearly fees offered and the comprehensive academic curriculum offered through their yearly program attendance.

I am an Independent Contractor Paralegal and Attorney Assistant who would have not been able to afford other CBA's school tuitions regardless of their geographical locations. PCU offer the **underprivileged students the lowest yearly fees and monthly payments plans** that are second to none. Notwithstanding the lower fees, PCU offers **uniquely small academic classes** designed to empower great personal interactions among students and teachers resulting in **greater opportunities for students to be personally guided and taught by their experienced, practicing teachers and judges**. PCU offer **direct accessibility** to its staff, board members and even the dean in person, **Lab classes** designed specifically to teach students how to approach, overcome and take the bar exam. The close relation between students and PCU staff is more than a professional relationship **it is a family relationship**. Aside from normal problems or general inconveniences PCU is a closely knit family school. All students are working individuals of all ages, **including many seniors like me if not older** who found genuine support, trust and confidence from staff and teachers at the University, had their dreams and hopes to advance, grow and assist their communities materialized. Nothing has or is being spared by Dean Lua, teachers and staff, **to enhance the academic possibilities of success** to all students, who come from different ethnic, cultural and age's backgrounds. Labs classes in all subjects taken at the bar exam are made available to any and all students who wishes to attend without any strings attached. Finally, I and most of the students alike will confirm, if asked, that **no other school could come close to the special dedication, teaching, academic curriculum, continuous query and search for new and enhanced methods for student to succeed within the meek financial means given and afforded to PCU better than PCU.**

Therefore, if the Bar ever does away with the benefits of Accreditation acquired by PCU, I am afraid PCU would eventually cease to exist, and all these incredible privileges offered to the community, especially the underprivileged, and senior old students like me will never be recapture again and would be lost forever. The Bar will be dealing a tremendous blow to the thin balance existing between general ABA and CBE schools by cancelling the accreditation of PCU, specifically because **no other School of law could rival PCU's yearly tuitions and personal dedications, transparency and accountability**. The Bar should instead uphold and support the CBE schools; not only because they, figuratively, belong and rely on the State Bar of California for their accreditation, but because they are the **last resort and shield for students like me/us that have a**

hope of making it in a world that is increasingly becoming harder, harsher, deceitful and unbalanced.

At the time you took the great mission to lead the State Bar of California, we were so impressed with your statement **“Our job is to protect Californians. We value transparency, accountability, and excellence.”** The State Bar’s mission is to protect the public and includes the primary functions of licensing, regulation and discipline of attorneys; the advancement of the ethical and competent practice of law; and **support of efforts for greater access to, and inclusion in, the legal system.**

WE PETITION YOU, THE COMMITTEE AND THE STATE BAR, TO PLEASE **RECONSIDER THE PLAN TO DEPRIVE** Pacific Coast University (PCU) School of Law from its accreditation benefits because by doing so the Bar would not only demise an amazing, genuine, committed, honest, self-struggling and transparent University, but the Bar would be shutting down and, impliedly, killing a unique beak of hope, aspirations and supports to hundreds of future students in my/our same situation(s).

We wish that the above will assist you to achieve the right decision of empowering PCU’s accreditation, a hope engraved into hundreds of students like myself.

Respectfully submitted,

Habib Akl
Law Student
2L.

CALIFORNIA BAR EXAMINERS

April 2, 2020

Dear CBE,

My name is Sam Kordab, and I am a second year student at Pacific Coast University (PCU). I am writing to you on behalf of my school in order to tell you that PCU is a great school with reasonable pricing, and a quality education. The professors at this university are caring and provide the best type of education, they are patient and they are more than ready to help, and I know that they teach out of passion for the law. This law school was my second chance at life, it is affordable, has a quality education, and passionate professors.

The university has gone above and beyond to help us in understanding the material, and have even added supplemental classes to help those of us who need just a little extra help. This university is the best there is, I could honestly tell you that I do not think I would have considered law school had it not been for PCU. They don't make you feel intimidated, they don't make you feel like you are competing with everyone, instead they help you understand the subject, and show you that you are all in this together. This is the kind of university that I needed, and that so many people need.

PCU is a night school, it gives its students a chance at greatness without having to sacrifice their lives to do it. I work during the day, and I have a son, and a wife that depend on me. Any other law school would not have worked, because of the timing and the fact that tuition would be too much of a burden. At PCU I can continue to have a life, work, and focus on school, because it is affordable I don't have to work 2 or 3 jobs to pay tuition. There are people out there who are capable of so much, and with the right tools they can achieve anything. Some people's circumstances wouldn't allow them to go to a "Traditional" law school, but I believe if you can change the

circumstance then you can change the out come, and that is what PCU has done for me.

Therefore, taking away PCU's accreditation would be taking away the dreams of so many people who thought they might have to settle in life, because their circumstances would never allow them to go to law school, or let alone ever become a lawyer. There are many capable people and minds out there, PCU's education system is second to none. I hope that you will reconsider your decision in taking away PCU's accreditation.

Sincerely yours,

Sam Kordab

CHERRY COCHRELL, MBA, Realtor

March 31, 2020

32622 Nantasket Dr. Unit 8, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

Phone (310) 947-9353

Email: ccochrell@gmail.com

March 31, 2020

California Bar Examiners
Los Angeles, CA

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to you regarding the outstanding issue on re-accreditation of my law school, Pacific Coast University (PCU) in Long Beach, California. I am currently a second year law student at PCU.

My background includes about 19 years working as a civil litigation paralegal. I came from Seattle, Washington to Los Angeles in 2003 with my 4-year old son, who is now in college at the California Maritime Academy in Vallejo, California. I started working as a paralegal in a mid-size law firm in downtown Seattle while I was going through divorce. After my dissolution was granted, I waited a year to file my motion for relocation to Los Angeles. Most of my family members are in Los Angeles, and I initially lived here in Los Angeles when I came from Manila, Philippines to the US after college. I attended one year of law school in Manila prior to coming here. I attended the famous University of Santo Tomas, the oldest university in Asia and the No.1 medical university in the Philippines. Thousands of international students attend this university and is very well-known for its academic excellence. I chose to come to the US and discontinue my law studies because I figured that the US will give me more opportunities in the field of law.

I have always wanted to become a lawyer since I was a little girl. As a matter of fact, my mother had my name engraved in gold in all my hard bound books. You may think this is a bit strange, but my mother told me later when I was already an adult, that she did that to pre-condition my mind. She said that since I was young, I did not just accept things the way they are and presented my arguments rationally when I wanted certain changes. That was when she knew that I could be a great lawyer someday. While growing up, I imagined myself being in court and helping people with legal problems and issues, especially those who cannot afford to pay expensive legal fees.

I have been a single mother since my child was two years of age, and I am still a single mother. I waited all this time until my child went to college to pursue my dream of being a lawyer. Although I have been working as a paralegal for almost two decades, I still want to become an officer of the court. Right now is the right time for me to obtain my law degree, since it was very difficult for me to do so when my child was younger and living with me. I had to pick him up from after-school care by 6:00 p.m. everyday, cook dinner, help him with homework and projects, among others.

Pacific Coast University is geared for very busy adults like me, who need to maintain a full time job in order to put food on the table, to pay the necessary bills, to put a shelter over our family. Most of all, it is because of PCU that adults like me are able to hold on to a dream and accomplish it, because life is too short. We only live once, and with this pandemic going on around the whole world, I believe that

CHERRY COCHRELL, MBA, Realtor

March 31, 2020

32622 Nantasket Dr. Unit 8, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

Phone (310) 947-9353

Email: ccochrell@gmail.com

people should not lose hope and continue to achieve what they always wanted in life before they pass away from this planet.

I want to become a lawyer without incurring unreasonable amounts of debt over my head, and PCU allows us, students, to achieve our goals and yet maintain a reasonable lifestyle and not become buried in debt.

PCU has excellent, experienced lawyers as professors. Each of them has his/her own unique way of teaching and I can tell you this: each professor puts his/her best in every class. They encourage us to hit the case books hard, to keep participating in class discussions, to IRAC properly in preparation for the State Bar. They explain the black letter law as it applies to the cases and drills these laws into our heads repeatedly, so we can be prepared for the State Bar. They equip us with everything we need to become better students everyday by providing us with extra tutoring and lab sessions aside from access to Barbri and Lexis Nexis.

PCU's class schedule is perfect for working adults. Most of the population are not recipients of huge trust funds; we all need a full time job as stated earlier. PCU accommodates us this way, by helping us continue to keep our full time jobs, maintain our family relationships, and still have a good education.

I wish I discovered PCU a long time ago. This school has survived for a very long time despite the several swings in the economy. I would recommend PCU to anybody who would want to become a lawyer.

We need PCU, we love this school; it makes the students feel like one big family. The Dean, the professors, and the entire staff have always worked hard in assisting the students in all of their needs.

I respectfully seek your cooperation to give PCU a chance to maintain its accreditation. Losing accreditation means that the tuition fees will increase and with what the world economy is undergoing at the present time, the damage could and would be devastating to the students. PCU's accreditation and existence are very critical to a country such as the United States because it is always and hopefully will be the "land of opportunity."

Respectfully yours,

/s/

Cherry Cochrell

Dear Sir or Madam,

In light of the current circumstances of our school with regard to their accreditation, I'd like to express my opinion and feelings about the PCU School of Law, where I am currently a 1L student.

My background is in medicine: I am an M.D. from Russia and am an American Medical Board-certified M.D. in the U.S. As a result, I have had copious experiences in studying and learning at various institutions, and I can assess with a high degree of objectivity the quality and strength of any given program or professor.

From the very first introductory class at PCU School of Law it's evident that the professorial staff here is excellent and committed to a rigorous curriculum. While they are undeniably caring about the students, they are also strong disciplinarians and adhere to a robust and demanding schedule at all times.

Because of the specific method of Socratic education, with which many of the students aren't familiar when coming here, our administration provides lab classes, taught by experienced professors, who are also practicing lawyers and not just academics. The dedication and commitment of these professors is remarkable: they are available during breaks, before and after class, as well as by email. They are glad to answer our questions and ensure our understanding of the subjects is thorough and not just book-based. They supplement our curriculum with relevant cases from their professional experience, as well as most up-to-date cases from the industry.

At the same time, most of our professors also have long, proven track records in academia. They have reared and overseen several generations of attorneys, who are now successfully practicing in California.

They never shy away from extra workload to help the students -- for example they always encourage us to write extra essays on any case or subject where we feel we need more practice, and dedicate extra time from their day to review and discuss it with us. That is an admirable level of commitment.

And the professors' efforts bear fruit -- my current class is a very strong cohort. All the students are dedicated, and their daily preparedness level is always at 100%.

Finally, the high quality of this school was further proven when COVID-19 upended our lives. PCU's response was swift and efficient. In a matter of days, they organized a program for remote learning, provided necessary tech and materials, poured their support and time into us, their students, so that we wouldn't miss even a day of high-quality learning.

COVID

Sincerely,
Natalia Hunter

April 5, 2020

Dear California Bar Examiners:

We hope this letter finds you well. Thank you for extending the time for Pacific Coast School of law to teach us remotely through August 30th.

I graduated from the University of San Diego Graduate Business Litigation Program. I additionally graduated from the University of California School of Medicine and California Western School of Law with a Master's degree in Health Law. I have been a paralegal for 14 years with experience in personal injury, business litigation and securities, real estate litigation, medical device litigation and presently work for the Senior Partner at my law firm, John A. Montevideo, Esq. since April 2013. I have worked in the legal field for 20 years. I started my career at a well known highly respected law firm at the age of 17 (Casey Gerry Schenk Francavilla Blatt & Penfield, San Diego, CA).

While I completed my undergraduate and Master's programs, I was working full-time and raising my son as a single mother.

Because of financial reasons and personal obligations, the only way that I would be able to attend law school was through Pacific Coast School of law. We are close to finishing the first year and I can attest Pacific Coast School of law has been one of the best school's I have ever attended. Dean Lua and her supportive staff are very diligent, caring, thorough, compassionate, driven and dedicated to the pursuit of training lawyers to pass the bar and practice law.

The recent graduates and alumni I have met are some of the best lawyers I have ever met. They are driven in the pursuit of justice and want to help people – they are not driven to go to law school just in hopes of becoming rich but rather to provide service to the community.

Pacific Coast School of law has worked very hard to obtain its accreditation and has worked hard to maintain such for its fellow students. Unfortunately, it's my understanding there have been past students that did not meet the requirements to succeed and this has placed a burden on the school's reputation.

I strongly believe that my fellow class-mates and I are receiving quality education at a fair price and that we have more than enough support and tools provided as if we were attending an ABA law school. In fact, I was recently discussing with my boss John A. Montevideo, that Pacific Coast Law school reminds me of Cal Western School of law but that I appreciate the professors and staff much more because of the small class size and one-on-one attention, etc.

California needs more "human" attorneys that understand the struggles of every-day life and that want to contribute to society as a whole. Pacific Coast School of law produces this type of attorney.

As a member of the class of persons you are seeking to protect, I strongly urge you to maintain PCU's full accreditation as a California Accredited Law School.

May you have a wonderful week and Easter.


Blessings,

Lia Mohammadi

Dear California Bar Examiners:

I am changing the trajectory of my life because of Pacific Coast University School of Law ("P.C.U.").

I understand that you are concerned that P.C.U. does not provide an education that will prepare students to pass the general Bar Exam, and I support and appreciate your concern. But I also know that P.C.U. does indeed prepare its students to take and pass the California Bar Examination. I attended the recent swearing in ceremony for P.C.U.'s newest attorney admittees. The discipline, confidence and knowledge exhibited by these individuals was awe-inspiring. It is to the credit of P.C.U. that these individuals were prepared to take and pass the California Bar Exam.



I see this same discipline, confidence and knowledge demonstrated by my classmates. I am nearing completion of my first year of law school, and am quite familiar with the rigors of the legal education here at P.C.U. Our professors are prepared at every class session to challenge us, make us break down legal concepts and theories, analyze complicated legal issues, understand the principles involved, and inspire us to learn the law, at the same time holding us accountable for our legal education that we are pursuing as non-traditional law students.

I am a single mother of two delightful young children. I have worked in the legal profession my entire adult life. I have pursued further education throughout my career, and am now, because of P.C.U., accomplishing my dream of being an attorney. Pursuing a legal education has many obstacles and challenges for any law student, and this is especially true for a non-traditional student such as myself. P.C.U. has been a partner in my legal education, making sure that I am ready to meet any obstacles and challenges that I encounter. I know that P.C.U. is preparing me to take and pass the California Bar Exam.

As a member of the class of persons you are seeking to protect, I strongly urge you to maintain P.C.U.'s full accreditation as a California Accredited Law School.

Very truly yours,

Candy Archila

CANDY ARCHILA



Doctors Abroad Foundation

doctorsabroadfoundation.org

March 10, 2020

To The California Bar Examiners.

My name is Richard David Le and I am a first year student at Pacific Coast University. For the past twenty years, I have been board a certified physician in Pulmonary Medicine, Internal Medicine and Critical Care. I am also the President and founder of a non profit charity called Doctors Aboard Foundation where I have traveled to third world countries once to twice a year bringing medical care to those less fortunate than us.

Over the last two years, I was hit with a lawsuit at work as well as going through an extremely tough custody battle with my ex-wife. I hired attorneys to help me understand the legal system and I saw firsthand how their expertise and knowledge of the law could help me. After going through these two lawsuits, I realized the importance of thoroughly understanding the legal system, in order to make sound recommendations, be of true legal counsel and affect change. A great lawyer can do that, and much more. It is that realization that has prompted my decision to pursue a Juris Doctorate degree at Pacific Coast University.

In my opinion, Pacific Coast University is a challenging and respectable school tailored to help students like myself who are working full time and caring for our families while seeking to better ourselves and our communities. I truly believe that Pacific Coast University can provide me that stepping stone to be a lawyer who can be an advocate for my colleagues and empower the medical community, and positively transform the way we work and live.

Since starting Pacific Coast University in October 2019, I have learned more about the legal system than the last two years from my attorneys. The classes are small and intimate and quite intimidating at times. At forty four years old, I still get intimidated when I get called. The professors make sure we do our homework every lecture by calling on us to discuss the class. We are held accountable to the definition of the rules verbatim. Missing class is not an option since strict attendance is taken. In fact, I look forward to attending classes and I am blown away after each lecture.

As a busy physician and a single dad, I work extra hard to not be placed on academic probation. I am confident with the education that I am receiving at Pacific Coast University that I will pass the California Bar. I am very proud to be a student at Pacific Coast University, coupled with my current profession as a physician. I would have the incredible opportunity to be an advocate for my colleagues and empower the medical community and positively transform the way we work and live.

Sincerely,

Richard Le, MD FCCP

1119 Pine Street, Huntington Beach, CA 92648
Tel: 714-369-4819
Fax: 714-369-6245

Dean of PCU

From: Stephanie Hughes <stephaniehughesdesign@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 01, 2020 9:39 AM
To: dean@pculaw.org
Subject: Excellent Testimonial - Pacific Coast University School of Law - JD Program.

Dear California Bar Examiners,

I am currently returning to law school as an enrolled JD student at Pacific Coast University School of Law. I graduated with an Executive Juris Doctorate in 2006 from another current CALS law school and I made the Dean's List. I have successfully completed CA State Bar examinable subjects from Contracts to Evidence.

I am one of the students who are severely impacted by the recent CBE motion to revert PCU Law School back to a previous status of being a non-CALS law school. I have studied at both an online (currently a CALS candidate) and a brick and mortar law school, (PCU Law School) and I fervently believe that PCU School of Law offers a far superior law school tuition both in-depth, combined with affordability and overall student support.

The level and quality of PCU Law School's JD program are first class and superior in my opinion to any CALS or ABA-Approved law school. The reason? Is that I have experienced both, and I would easily recommend and select PCU Law School as my law school of choice to study for a JD degree. I work in the legal profession as a Litigation Paralegal, eDiscovery Project Manager, and Trial Consultant.

I would not hesitate in continuing to recommend Pacific Coast University School of Law continuation with its classification as a fully-fledged CALS appointed law school in CA now and in the future. I look forward to many more years of JD study at Pacific Coast University School of Law to become a proud PCU Law JD graduate and "family" member and to become a valuable member of the CA State Bar by successfully sitting and passing the CA State Bar Exam to become a licensed Attorney in State of CA, which is my ultimate goal.

I am also on the Board of PCU Law School's - SBA Association and I am proud to be so.

Sincerest regards and thank you,

Stéphanie Hughes, eJD, MBA, BA, Dip. Paralegal
 Los Angeles, CA
 Téléphone: 1-612-655-7145
 Skype: stephanie.hughes15
 Email: stephaniehughesdesign@gmail.com

Professor Testimonials

- Kristine Twomey
- Thomas Yu
- Richard Rosas

Sonia Gomez

From: Kristine Castro Twomey <kris2mey@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, May 25, 2020 5:36 PM
To: Sonia Gomez
Subject: Re: letter regarding the mentorship you helped with Taylor Anderson

As a Professor at Pacific Coast University (PCU), I have mentored many students. One particular student success comes to mind, Taylor Anderson. Taylor was a diligent student and earned the top grade in my Wills and Trusts course. We stayed in touch during her time at PCU and after, as she studied for the bar exam. Taylor passed the bar exam on her first attempt, after which we met for breakfast to celebrate. We discussed ideas about the type of law she was interested in. Taylor told me her passions, and knowing her academic strengths, I suggested she would be an amazing City Attorney. I then reached out to Long Beach City Attorney and PCU graduate Charles Parkin. Charlie met with Taylor for an informational interview and explained what the City Attorney's office does on a daily basis. The City Attorney could not hire a new attorney without at least a year of working experience, per their city regulations, but he was able to offer Taylor an internship. Taylor worked as an intern for one year and then was hired as a Long Beach, Deputy City Attorney. Taylor has since been instrumental in forging city governance for the City of Long Beach. Taylor's success was the result of hard work, determination, and networking with PCU alumni and professors.

Sincerely, Kristine Twomey



LAW OFFICES OF PELAYES & YU

A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

10803 Foothill Blvd., Ste 112
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730

T: 844-998-1033
F: 909-801-7004

May 26, 2020

The Committee of Bar Examiners of the State Bar of California
1149 South Hill Street
Los Angeles, California 90015

180 Howard Street
San Francisco, California 94105

RE: Pacific Coast University School of Law's Notice of Intent to Terminate Accreditation

Dear Honorable Members of the Committee,

I would like to take this opportunity to respectfully encourage the Committee of Bar Examiners ("CBE") to provide the Pacific Coast University School of Law ("PCU") another opportunity to increase the compliance with the minimum bar pass rate.

I attended PCU in 2011 while serving as a full-time Gang Detective with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department- Homicide Gang Task Force. Similar to most students at PCU, attending law school was my second career choice. I spent approximately 20 years in public service, serving both in law enforcement and in the United States Marine Corps.

In my second year of law school, I began preparing for the bar exam by doing virtually every Multi-State Bar Examination ("MBE") question ever published, because I appreciated how difficult the exam is for the candidates. However, as I started to prepare for the ultimate test, I saw that many of my peers at PCU possessed an unrealistic fantasy: somehow, they were going to pass the bar exam without putting in the effort that is required. As a student, I witnessed the failures of not being prepared, with my fellow students only preparing to fail the bar exam. Nevertheless, deep down inside, I knew that I would pass the bar exam in my first attempt.

In July 2015, I sat for the bar exam and passed on my first attempt. That year, only 3 out of about 55 students from my class passed. Shortly thereafter, PCU hired me as an Adjunct Professor to teach the law school, focusing on the MBE portion of the examination.

Page 2

May 26, 2020

PCU's Notice of Intent to Terminate Accreditation

My philosophy is very simple: study, study, and study. My teaching style is very akin to the discipline I gained from the United States Marine Corps and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. More specifically, the class that I teach is called, Advanced Legal Reasoning ("ALR"), which is offered to 4L students and some selected repeater bar candidates.

The ALR program took about 18-months to inception and I am proud to inform you that as of November 2017, majority of the bar passers were my past students.

Please see the breakdown of all PCU bar passers in the chart below:

2017 Bar Passers	ALR Student
Taylor Anderson #314743	Yes
George Fernandez #319368	Yes
Taani Fuahala	Yes
Maria Gonzalez #317510	No
Margaret Healy #314677	No
Jay Im #317502	Yes
Kevin Kottke #318627	No
Luis Vizcocho	No

2018 Bar Passers	ALR Student
Jay Alkam #320394	Yes
Thea Guevara #320191	Yes
Melissa Lyons #320516	Yes
Emanuel Thomas #319906	Yes
2019 Bar Passers	ALR Student
Eurydice Harris #325342	No
Eric Linzer #326555	Yes
Michelle Zepeda	Yes

I wholeheartedly believe that as of 2018, PCU's mission has been redirected to passing the bar exam and several faculties who were instrumental to the previous failures are no longer at the school.

Page 3
May 26, 2020
PCU's Notice of Intent to Terminate Accreditation

Consequently, the ALR program still needs additional resources and improvement because our goal is to increase the first-time bar taker's pass rate and also assist the repeater bar candidates to pass the exam. I sincerely believe that my commitment and dedication to PCU will continue to improve the overall bar exam pass rate, if PCU were to be provided another opportunity to increase the compliance with the minimum bar pass rate.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Committee for taking the time to consider this letter in the process to evaluate PCU's accreditation. I am proud have graduated from PCU when the school was accredited by the CBE and pray that the accreditation will continue to bless the future students of PCU.

If there are any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Respectfully submitted,



Tom Yu, Esq.

Richard M. Rosas, Esq.
Adjunct Professor of Law
Pacific Coast University School of Law

May 26, 2020

Dear State Bar Committee of Bar Examiners,

I have been teaching law at Pacific Coast University School of Law since 2004, when I began teaching Contract Law to first year students. For 16 years straight, I am still teaching Contract Law on Saturday mornings and I have missed only one class during those years. I also have taught Constitutional Law for the last 8 years, and Remedies Law for the last 4 years.

Dean Lewis was a personal friend of mine and we worked together at State Compensation Fund for 20 years. When he asked me to teach Contracts, I did not anticipate teaching the subject for sixteen years! Although I have developed a "liking" for the subject, the reason I continue to teach is because of the students and the mission we have at Pacific Coast University (PCU).

I believe PCU has had the same basic mission for its law program for the last 94 years, which is to provide an opportunity for working adults in Southern California to attend law school on a convenient schedule at a reasonable cost. I have seen all types of students go through the program, but I can honestly say that most of them are hard-working dedicated students who have a great ambition to become a practicing attorney. Most, if not all, of the students are incredibly grateful for the opportunity that PCU provides.

There are not many institutions like PCU, and as you know, there are only a few State Bar Accredited laws schools in the Greater Los Angeles Metropolitan area. This particular school is not easily replaced. Therefore, from my point of view, and I think from a reasonable public opinion, that for the good of the public the task of this Committee in deciding the future of PCU should not be to degrade PCU's program or to contribute in any way to its closure. Rather, the task should be to find a way to ensure the success of the school.

I was a participant on the school's accreditation team when the State Bar Committee of Bar Examiners came to PCU to evaluate and decide whether or not to grant PCU provisional accreditation. At that time, the State Bar evaluators commented basically that they had not seen a more dedicated group of professors and students during an application process. I am sure that has not changed.

In conclusion, PCU has a mission and a vision. I believe the State Bar Committee of Bar Examiners should accept our mission and embrace our vision. With some more guidance and professional management, along with the dedication, I believe that PCU can exceed the requirements set forth by the State Bar. I think it would be favorable to the California public for the State Bar Committee of Bar Examiners to help PCU meet its goals.

Sincerely,

Richard M. Rosas, Esq.

PCU Distinguished Alumni

- Laura Doud
- Charles Parkin
- Kathleen Parker
- Edwin J. Wilson
- K.S
- Anonymous, OC County Employee

Celebrating 93 Years

PCU Distinguished Alumni



Long Beach City Auditor, *Laura Wilson Doud* PCU Class of 2005

Born and raised in Long Beach, Laura attended Wilson High School and Long Beach City College. She graduated from California State University, Long Beach with a degree in accounting and earned her law degree (JD) at Pacific Coast University, School of Law. She is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE).

As the elected City Auditor of Long Beach, Laura Doud leads the only department within the City that provides an independent review of City operations and spending without bias or pre-determined outcomes.

Laura was first elected in 2006 and re-elected, running unopposed in 2010 and 2014. She is one of only four elected City Auditors in California – giving Long Beach the benefit of having a truly independent City Auditor. In addition to completing significant reports such as audits of the Long Beach Police Department and the Queen Mary, her Office has conducted nationally recognized, award-winning audits of the Long Beach Museum of Art, the City's Towing Operations and Parking Citations Collections Process. She played a key role in the passage of Proposition H, a voter-approved referendum that resulted in raising more than \$3.5 million annually for public safety.

Laura has been honored by the Long Beach Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce with their "Mujeres del Año" award, and she has been inducted into the Long Beach City College Hall of Fame.

In addition to her public service, Laura supports many community organizations including the Long Beach Neighborhood Foundation. She is also a member of the Long Beach Rotary Club and serves on the Honorary Board of Governors of Leadership Long Beach.



Long Beach City Attorney *Charles Parkin* graduated cum laude from Pacific Coast University, School of Law and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from California State University, Long Beach.

Mr. Parkin was elected Long Beach City Attorney on June 3, 2014. City Attorney Charles Parkin has extensive experience with the City of Long Beach. He began his career with the City in 1985 working for the Department of Oil Properties. In 1995, Mr. Parkin was hired as a Deputy City Attorney, in October of 2006 was promoted to Principal Deputy City Attorney, in January of 2012 was promoted to Assistant City Attorney and in August of 2013 the City Council appointed Mr. Parkin City Attorney.

Mr. Parkin's experience includes representing the City of Long Beach in general civil litigation matters, conducting jury trials, bench trials, mediations and arbitrations.

Mr. Parkin is admitted to practice in California and before the United States District Court for the Central District, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal and the United States Supreme Court. Mr. Parkin is a member of the California State Bar Association (Public Law Section), Long Beach Bar Association (Elected to the Board of Governors for the terms of 2003-2004 and 2012-2013), IMLA, CAALAC, and served as President of the Long Beach City Attorney's Association for the term of 2003-2004 and served as the Vice-President 2002-2003. Mr. Parkin served as an elected member of the Board of Directors of the Long Beach City Employees Federal Credit Union since 1998 and as Chairman from 2011-2014.

Currently his office serves as the sole and exclusive legal counsel to the City of Long Beach, the Long Beach City Council, all Council Committees, all City Commissions, and all City officers and employees. Supervises and manages the Long Beach City Attorney's Office which includes 21 attorneys and 64 total employees. Oversees all aspects of office management and administration.



The first woman Superior Court Judge Kathleen Parker

During World War II, Parker worked as a naturalization examiner for the U.S. Department of Justice. She later served nine years as a research attorney in the state Court of Appeal.

Kathleen Parker, was appointed to the Los Angeles Municipal Court by Gov. Goodwin Knight in 1957. She was a pioneering judge who presided over murder trials and other criminal cases in Los Angeles courts for 35 years.

In 1962, when women jurists were still a rarity, Parker boldly ran for an open seat on the Los Angeles Superior Court bench against what she described as "14 very nice gentlemen." She won. Kathleen Parker in 1962 became the first woman to gain her judgeship on the Los Angeles Superior Court through election.

When she officially retired in 1975, hundreds of friends in the legal community crowded into a Hollywood sound studio to wish her well, and she greeted them grandly from atop the head of the largest guest, an elephant. But the next day, Parker was back on the bench, and she remained there by special appointment until 1992.

A former Times Woman of the Year, Parker was known for her refined manners and appearance on the bench and her off-duty activities, including serving as president of the Volunteers of America of Los Angeles. But the cases that she presided over were anything but demure. She handled rape, robbery, narcotics and frequently murder cases. She sentenced Elmer "Geronimo" Pratt, the former Black Panther official convicted of killing a woman on a Santa Monica tennis court, to life imprisonment.

In another celebrated murder trial, she reduced the jury's sentence of death for Deputy Dist. Atty. Jack Kirschke to life imprisonment after he was convicted of killing his wife and her lover. Known for being tough but fair, Parker said she reduced the sentence because jurors may have been prejudiced by Kirschke's barbed comments about them in his final arguments.

Born in St. Paul, Minn., Parker moved to California with her family, graduated from Los Angeles High School and became a secretary at the Bank of Italy (now the Bank of America), where her father worked. After a marriage and a divorce, Parker became a legal secretary to support her young son.

When she told her attorney employer that she intended to complete the law studies that she had begun at Southwestern University and later Pacific Coast University, he tried to dissuade her by noting that she made more money than most average lawyers.

"What makes you think," she retorted, "I'm going to be an average lawyer?"

FIRST BLACK LAWYER CAPING U.I.

L.B.'s Wilson cuts workload

By Henrietta Charles
Staff writer

Attorney Edwin J. Wilson looked out onto the streets of downtown Long Beach, and remembered what it was like 34 years ago.

"I walked all over downtown, but no one would rent an office to me," Wilson recalls. "But the manager of the Bank of America

building ... finally decided that he wanted to rent to me after all. Race didn't mean that much to him."

Finding an office was just one hurdle Wilson cleared in 1955 when he became the first black to practice law in Long Beach.

Now, 34 years and three downtown office locations, later, Wilson is phasing out his private law practice and moving toward

semiretirement

Only a handful of Wilson's court cases remain unresolved. But he plans to continue his occasional work in arbitration, which involves hearing legal cases and helping to resolve them prior to trial.

"Back in 1985, I decided that I wanted to cut back on my work activity and do things that are more pleasurable," the 74-year-old Wilson explained. "But I do not want to be totally without involvement."

His is a career that has

spanned both criminal and personal injury cases, a three-year stint on the State Bar of California's board of governors and a term as president of the Long Beach Bar Association.

Along the way, Wilson has also served on the Long Beach Planning Commission, the board of the Long Beach Museum of Art, and been involved in a number of other civic and professional activities.



Edwin J. Wilson
He's had a rigorous career.

First black lawyer reviews 34 years of labor

FROM/B1

only black to serve in those posts.

"In addition to practicing law, I had an obligation to make the black presence felt and seen," Wilson says. "I did it for a purpose — to promote and perpetuate black visibility in Long Beach."

Wilson's activism has largely been understated, but it has not gone unnoticed, according to his former law partner, acting Superior Court Judge G. William Dunn.

"Ed Wilson is the Jackie Robinson of the law profession," Dunn said. "I think we (blacks) have a lot of heroes that we don't know about — people whose struggles made possible a lot of the opportunities we now have."

The soft-spoken and courtly Wilson downplays his struggles in favor of the triumphs, as do many of his contemporaries.

"If you keep talking about how bad it was, it's like you're still bringing up the old days," said attorney William J. White, a classmate of Wilson's at Pacific Coast Law School in Los Angeles and Long Beach's second black attorney. "So, I try

not to think about it. Otherwise, it ruins my whole day."

The fact is, neither the Los Angeles County nor the American bar associations admitted blacks in the 40s and 50s. Few, if any, firms hired black lawyers.

"You take a guy like that, who came out of an unaccredited law school, comes out at a time where there are not a lot of black lawyers and those few are primarily limited to the ghetto. ... How do you learn to be a good lawyer? It's hard enough when you're coming out of Harvard Law School."

"For an Ed Wilson to learn to be a good lawyer speaks as highly of a person as I can speak. And Ed Wilson was a good lawyer," White said.

Wilson, a native of Florence, S.C., came to California in 1945 after enlisting in the U.S. Army. He was stationed in San Pedro for two years.

When he was discharged in 1947, Wilson moved to Long Beach and worked as a social worker and adult school teacher while completing the law studies he had started years earlier at the Howard Uni-

versity Law School in Washington, D.C.

"I wanted to be involved in an occupation that would allow me to meet the public and speak to the public," Wilson explained. "If I hadn't done this, I probably would have been a minister, although there are those who would say that I have been kind of devilish in my time."

For the first 10 years, Wilson handled criminal cases almost exclusively. He remembers, for instance, defending a prostitute who killed a customer for not paying and a man who "accidentally" bit another man's ear off during a heated dispute.

Eventually, Wilson turned to less stressful personal injury and worker's compensation cases.

With his background and equanimity, many Wilson friends and observers believe he would have been an ideal judge. But the timing and circumstances were never quite right.

"After being involved in (hearing) arbitration cases, I have concluded that I would have liked that (being a judge)," Wilson said. "But at the time, I thought

life as a judge would be kind of lonely. restraining kind of existence."

A Democrat-turned-Republican, Wilson lives in Long Beach's Park Estates with his wife of 47 years, Marion. Their son Edwin Wilson Jr., is a well-known area attorney as is daughter-in-law, Bernice. The younger couple has two children. In his spare time, Wilson gardens, travels and jogs three miles daily.

As he sat being interviewed in eighth floor office on Pine Avenue, Wilson contemplated the changes Long Beach undergone in recent years.

"There is an attitude about Long Beach among some of the black intelligentsia that it is prejudiced toward blacks and place to be — that it has no social warmth," Wilson said, partly explaining why there are still fewer than 10 black attorneys who practice locally. "To so degree, that is a fair assessment although the Long Beach environment was not like Mississippi or Selma (Alabama)."

"But Long Beach has moved forward and moved forward without fanfare ... riots in the street."

California State Bar
Los Angeles, CA 90017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

Thank you for taking time to review my letter regarding Pacific Coast University School of Law ("PCU"). Over 20 years ago I attended the ABA accredited law school, University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law ("McGeorge"). It was a horrible experience; at that time, McGeorge was notorious for high forced academic disqualification rates (about 25%) of their 1Ls. I was one of the unlucky 25% that missed the academic probation by .01%. Granted, at that time, I was not well-suited for the rigors of full time law study due to personal and health reasons however I received no outreach, no help, no offers of resources to help me become a successful student. I was a number, a source of funds, and cheap labor (through work study in their very profitable bookstore).

When I found out that I had been disqualified, I was in Europe waiting to start their summer course in Austria. I had to beg family for money to get back home. Then I was in \$30K debt for a year of school that counted for nothing. It was a very difficult several years before my self confidence returned so that I could return to school and get my MBA in 2008.

Professionally I found myself drawn to legal in nature work in compliance and spent several years working with corporate compliance and legal teams in the insurance industry. In 2015 I decided to take another huge gamble and start law school over again.

I am still paying off my UCLA undergraduate and McGeorge law school student loans so I am very adverse to digging that hole even further. I wanted a quality school that I could pay for out of my salary, and one that would help me achieve instead of doing everything to help me fail.

After a heart-to-heart discussion with an attorney friend who encouraged me to check out PCU, I finally did. I vetted them through other attorneys to get a sense of PCU's reputation and got positive feedback. Going to PCU was the best professional decision of my life. I found a family of professionals that actually cared about my success and my well being and want me to succeed. I am proud to be a part of their family. The faculty and administration obviously are not in the law school education business for the money; PCU actually cares about the experience they provide.

I am not a number at PCU, I am an actual person with challenges. I worked a very demanding job while attending PCU at night, which was very difficult. PCU is a no-nonsense school where the professors want you to learn instead of playing mind games with students with the intent of scaring you away. PCU is an opportunity school where people like me are offered opportunities to realize their professional dreams. I am profoundly serious about becoming a lawyer and plan on working in public service either full time or as a volunteer. I quit a remarkably high paying

position with a Fortune 100 corporation in 2019 so I can study full time for the Bar Exam. I took and passed the February 2020 Washington D.C. exam (under Rule 46, I am eligible to be barred in DC) and I am registered for the September 2020 California Bar Exam.

I realize that the bar pass rate from PCU is low and falls beneath the State Bar's guidelines for a CBE accredited school. I implore the Bar Examiners and Board of Trustees to perhaps implement new guidelines such as a specific bar pass rate over 2 years, similar to the new ABA accreditation rules (<https://www.americanbar.org/news/abanews/aba-news-archives/2019/05/legal-ed-bar-passage-rate/#:~:text=On%20May%2017%2C%20the%20Council,pass%20it%20within%20two%20years.>)

PCU is a gem and well-regarded among the legal community in Long Beach and Orange County. I am forever grateful for my experience there and the opportunities afforded to me as a result of my success there.

Sincerely,

KS, JD MBA CEBS
DC Bar – Pending Approval

In the last 10 years, while working for a government employer, I participated in the recruitment and selection of at least 3 employees, who all happen to be licensed lawyers in California. All three lawyers graduated from known ABA accredited schools in Southern California. They were hired as case deputy investigators/administrators handling estate and trust case management matters. My first impression was the 3 new hires, being practicing attorneys and graduates of ABA accredited law schools, would be persons of strategic thinking and of strong analytical skills. However, within the first two years of employment, sadly this was not the case. All three were struggling in managing their caseloads, especially the area of case analysis, that involves conceptual, analytical, and strategic thinking. Estate and trust matters require strategic approach and decision-making in a) deciding what is in the best interest of your client, b) anticipating counter arguments from third-parties and how to respond accordingly, and c) the ability to read the court especially how a presiding judge would react under the circumstances.

In my observation and professional opinion, prospective employers should not put too much emphasis on candidates who attended ABA accredited versus non-ABA law schools. Instead, candidates should be hired conditionally based on one's ability to articulate, analyze, strategize, decide, and perform.

Anonymous