



The State Bar of California

OPEN SESSION AGENDA ITEM O-405 AUGUST 2021 COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS

DATE: August 20, 2021

TO: Members, Committee of Bar Examiners

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

SUBJECT: Action on Periodic Inspection of University of La Verne College of Law

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This agenda item presents the attached report of the periodic inspection of University of La Verne College of Law (La Verne) conducted on April 19-21, 2021, as well as the law school's acceptance of the report and its findings, and recommends that the law school's accreditation be continued, with its next inspection to be set for spring 2026. (Attachments A, B).

BACKGROUND

Accredited law schools are inspected for compliance with the Rules for Accredited Law Schools (rules) and Guidelines for Accredited Law School Rules (guidelines) approximately every five years. (Rule 4.162)

Here, however, La Verne is undergoing its confirming inspection as part of its transition to exclusive California accreditation by the Committee of Bar Examiners (Committee) after previously being approved by the Council to the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar of the American Bar Association (ABA).

La Verne decided to voluntarily surrender its ABA approval and transition to exclusive California accredited law school status. Prior to doing so, La Verne filed a comprehensive Self-study with the CBE demonstrating current compliance, and, in a few cases where compliance could not be achieved until after full transition due to conflicting requirements between ABA standards and

the accredited rules, a plan to operate in compliance with those aspects upon transition to exclusive California accredited status rather than ABA approval.

In response, the CBE recognized the law school's compliance. As a condition of continued accreditation, the CBE also ordered that the law school undergo an inspection to confirm its compliance as detailed in the Self-study.

Upon receiving this determination from the CBE, La Verne made plans to teach out its students in the ABA approved program and to enroll its first exclusively California accredited class effective fall 2020.

As of the time of the inspection, the law school was been teaching out 176 students in its ABA-approved program and it enrolled its first accredited law school class in fall 2020 of 106 first-year students into the California accredited JD program, for a total JD enrollment of 276 students.

The law school is led by Dean Kevin Marshall, a graduate of Emory Law School who also hold a doctorate of Political Economy from the University of Texas. The faculty includes 16 full-time and 28 part-time professors. All but two faculty members graduated from ABA approved law schools. Sixty-four percent are State Bar licensees and four are judges. Though the law school generally teaches courses in a fixed-facility format, it has been teaching classes online via Zoom during the pandemic pursuant to the Committee's waiver allowing online course delivery.

JD students must complete 88 semester units, including 74 units of required courses. Total program tuition is \$85,800 based on current per-unit tuition of \$975; in addition, total program fees are \$6,500.

DISCUSSION

The law school was well-prepared for this inspection and was able to address all questions posed by the team. The law school submitted a detailed Self-study in advance of the inspection.

The inspection was conducted by the team of Heather Georgakis, educational consultant to the State Bar along with Committee member Dolores Heisinger.

As part of the inspection, the team reviewed the curriculum, learning platform, admissions, scholastic standards, faculty, legal research resources, facilities, records, Dean, administrators, and faculty. The inspection team recommends that the CBE receive and file this Periodic Inspection Report, adopt the report's recommendations listed below, and continue the California accreditation of the University of La Verne College of Law.

The team's recommendations follow here.

RECOMMENDED, MANDATORY ACTIONS

1. Guideline 2.3 (A)-(D) and (E)(2): The law school should report on the implementation and completion of website revisions, in compliance with the guideline, as part of its 2021 Annual Compliance Report.
2. Guidelines 4.7 and 4.8: The law school should report on the implementation of the faculty evaluation process, in compliance with the guidelines, in its 2021 Annual Compliance Report.
3. Guidelines 5.3 and 11.1(B)-(C)): The law school should take steps necessary to ensure that the Registrar has ongoing access to all records needed to perform her duties, including the monitoring of applicant files for timely receipt of documents showing eligibility for law study.
4. Guideline 6.6: The law school should report on the implementation of changes to its policies designed to clearly inform students of applicable credit limits for experiential courses, the cumulative nature of these limits, the courses to which such limits apply, and the hours of work required for each unit of credit, in the next Annual Compliance Report.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ENHANCED COMPLIANCE

1. Pursuant to Guideline 4.5, the law school is encouraged to continue to hire faculty from a variety of law schools.
2. Pursuant to Rule 4.160(F) and Guidelines 6.9 and 2.3, the law school is encouraged to publish course descriptions indicating which courses qualify toward practical skills training and how many units of academic credit and, as applicable, practical skills training credit, each course offers.
3. Pursuant to Guideline 14.1, the law school is encouraged to foster diversity and inclusion in the recruitment, development, and retention of faculty.

Subsequent to the inspection, Dean Marshal provided a formal response on behalf of the law school affirming the findings in the inspection report, accepting the inspection team's recommendations, and noting that some progress had already been made regarding the recommendations. (Attachment B).

FISCAL/PERSONNEL IMPACT

None

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the inspection report and letter from the law school accepting the report be received and filed, that the report's recommendations be adopted, that the law school be directed to implement those recommendations and document completion with supporting evidence as part of the law school's 2021 Annual Report, and that the law school's accreditation be continued with the next periodic inspection to be set for spring 2026 unless an earlier visitation is deemed necessary by the Committee.

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** receives and files the 2021 Periodic Inspection Report of University of La Verne College of Law, and the response from the law school accepting the report.

and it is

FURTHER MOVED, that the report's recommendations be adopted; that the law school is directed to implement the recommendations and to document the completion with supporting evidence as part of the law school's 2021 Annual Report;

and it is

FURTHER MOVED, that the accreditation of University of La Verne College of law be continued; and that the law school's next periodic inspection be scheduled for spring 2026, unless an earlier visitation is deemed necessary by the Committee.

ATTACHMENT(S) LIST

- A. 2021 Periodic Inspection Report for University of La Verne College of Law
- B. Formal Response from University of La Verne College of Law Accepting the Report



The State Bar *of California*

University of La Verne College of Law Periodic Inspection Report Conducted Pursuant to Rule 4.162

April 19-21, 2021

UNIVERSITY OF LA VERNE SCHOOL OF LAW
PERIODIC INSPECTION REPORT
329 East D Street, Ontario, California 91764

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

A periodic inspection of the University of La Verne College of Law (La Verne) was conducted from April 19-21, 2021 by an inspection team (team) consisting of Dolores Heisinger, Member, Committee of Bar Examiners (Committee) and Heather Georgakis, Educational Consultant and Team Leader.

The law school was founded in 1970 as part of La Verne College, now the University of La Verne (University). The University, a non-profit entity founded in 1891, has four colleges including the law school and enrolls 7,000 students online and at ten campuses. Because the University is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior Colleges and University Commission (WASC), La Verne students may qualify for federal student financial aid.

La Verne was accredited by the Committee in 1972. In 2001, as part of an initiative to seek approval by the American Bar Association (ABA), La Verne relocated to its current facility in Ontario, California. In 2016, the ABA granted the law school full approval after a successful term of provisional approval. In 2019, the University's trustees voted to voluntarily resign the law school's ABA approved status. To ensure an orderly transition to exclusive California accredited status, in January 2020 La Verne sought and received confirmation of its "deemed California accredited" status from the Committee based upon the Self-study that the law school submitted documenting its compliance with the Rules for Accredited Law Schools. The Committee ordered an inspection to take place in conjunction with the transition, and this report summarizes the findings of that inspection.

La Verne offers the Juris Doctor (JD) degree through full- and part-time programs with both day and evening classes. The law school's mission is, in part, "to guide our students in the discovery of law and self as they prepare for the practice of law or other professional careers."

At the time of inspection, the law school enrolled 276 students. Of that total, 170 students had enrolled at the law school before it resigned its ABA status, and those students will be deemed graduates of an ABA approved law school if they complete the JD program by spring 2023. The remaining 106 students are enrolled in the California accredited JD program offered for the first time in fall 2020, and those students will graduate with a California accredited law degree upon completing all JD requirements. Except as noted, this report addresses only the California accredited JD program.

Dean Kevin Marshall has led the law school since 2017. He graduated from Emory University School of Law and he is licensed by the State Bar of Texas. He also holds a Master's Degree in Public Affairs and doctorate in Political Economy from the University of Texas. The faculty includes sixteen full-time and twenty-eight part-time professors. With two exceptions, all of La Verne's professors graduated from a law school approved by the ABA. One instructor graduated

from a registered, unaccredited law school and one is not a law school graduate. Sixty-four percent of faculty are State Bar licensees and four are judges in California.

La Verne's academic year includes two fourteen-week semesters plus exam periods; a seven-week summer session is also offered. JD students must complete 88 semester units, including 74 units of required courses covering all subjects tested on the bar exam and several practical skills topics. The law school offers clinical and internship opportunities, as well as the option to combine a JD with a Master's degree in Business Administration or Public Administration through a dual degree program with the University's College of Business & Public Management.

Before the pandemic, most courses were taught on campus. Since spring 2020, most class sessions have been held synchronously through Zoom videoconferences on a temporary basis due to the pandemic and under the general waiver issued by the Committee.

Fifty-nine percent of La Verne's students are women and the largest ethnic or racial groups in the student body are Hispanic/Latinx (40 percent), white (27 percent) and African American or Black (6 percent).

In the California accredited JD program, total tuition is \$85,800 based on current tuition of \$975 per unit and total fees are \$6,500.

Under Guideline 12.1, an accredited law school must maintain a minimum cumulative bar exam pass rate (MPR) of at least 40 percent among its graduates who take the exam. La Verne's MPR has been above 40 percent during the three years it has reported an MPR to the State Bar: 2019 (69 percent); 2020 (66 percent); and 2021 (75.1 percent). Currently, this figure is calculated based on the performance of the law school's graduates of its ABA-approved program. As the law school graduates students from the California accredited program, those students will be included as well. The law school enrolled its first California accredited class in fall 2020.

Recommended Action by the Committee

The inspection team recommends that the Committee receive and file this Periodic Inspection Report, approve all recommended and suggested actions, continue the California accreditation of the University of La Verne College of Law, and schedule the next periodic inspection for spring 2026 unless an earlier visitation is deemed necessary.

Recommended, Mandatory Actions

1. Guideline 2.3 (A)-(D) and (E)(2): The law school should report on the implementation and completion of website revisions, in compliance with the guideline, as part of its 2021 Annual Compliance Report.
2. Guidelines 4.7 and 4.8: The law school should report on the implementation of the faculty evaluation process, in compliance with the guidelines, in its 2021 Annual Compliance Report.
3. Guidelines 5.3 and 11.1(B)-(C)): The law school should take steps necessary to ensure that the Registrar has ongoing access to all records needed to perform her duties, including the monitoring of applicant files for timely receipt of documents showing eligibility for law study.

4. Guideline 6.6: The law school should report on the implementation of changes to its policies designed to clearly inform students of applicable credit limits for experiential courses, the cumulative nature of these limits, the courses to which such limits apply, and the hours of work required for each unit of credit, in the next Annual Compliance Report.

Suggestions for Enhanced Compliance

1. Pursuant to Guideline 4.5, the law school is encouraged to continue to hire faculty from a variety of law schools.
2. Pursuant to Rule 4.160(F) and Guidelines 6.9 and 2.3, the law school is encouraged to publish course descriptions indicating which courses qualify toward practical skills training and how many units of academic credit and, as applicable, practical skills training credit, each course offers.
3. Pursuant to Guideline 14.1, the law school is encouraged to foster diversity and inclusion in the recruitment, development, and retention of faculty.

Submission of Self-study

La Verne submitted a prompt, thorough, and complete self-study to assist the team in its assessment of the law school's compliance with the Rules and Guidelines. Dean Marshall and Registrar De Anda responded promptly to requests for additional information and the information provided was considered when drafting this report.

Conduct of Site Visit

The inspection occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic when travel possibilities were limited. La Verne was given the choice to undergo a remote visit based on the same standards as an in-person visit, and the law school agreed.

Before the visit, the inspection team observed real-time class sessions via Zoom videoconference technology, received technology training to allow review of the student portal and learning management system, and reviewed self-study materials and school records.

The inspection took place via videoconference over a three day period. The inspection team met with Dean Marshall, Registrar and Director of Academic Affairs Evelyn De Anda, other law school personnel, faculty members, and students enrolled in the California accredited JD program as well as students enrolled in the ABA teach-out JD program. The inspection team also met with University leaders, including President Devorah Lieberman, Provost Kerop Janoyan, Trustees Wendy Lau and Frank Lizarraga, and vice presidents responsible for management of academic affairs, finance and budget, library, and enrollment. Finally, the team conducted an exit interview with Dean Marshall and Registrar De Anda to discuss preliminary findings.

After the visit, the team toured the Ontario facility remotely and completed its review of law school records. At the Consultant's request, the La Verne invited students to send comments about the law school, but no comments were received.

SPECIFIC FINDINGS AS TO THE COMMITTEE'S RULES AND GUIDELINES

Below are the team's findings, conclusions, and recommendations as to the law school's compliance with the Rules for Accredited Law Schools and Guidelines for Accredited Law School Rules.

Rule 4.160(A): Lawful Operation. The law school must operate in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. (Guideline 1.6.)

The University is a non-profit California corporation in good standing with the Secretary of State. It is tax-exempt under United States Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3) and California Revenue and Taxation Code section 23701(d) and licensed to operate in the City of Ontario, where the law school is located. The University maintains a low student loan default rate and appears to comply with federal financial aid regulations.

The law school campus appears to provide reasonable access to all. Sound policies and procedures governing requests for accommodations are published in the Manual of Academic Policies and Procedures and on the La Verne website (website). Disability-related requests are handled pursuant to a comprehensive process by the University's Office of Student Affairs and La Verne administrators. Students receive information about accessibility services during orientation as well as in course syllabi. The law school advises students that accommodations granted by the law school and the State Bar may differ.

Students are informed of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Disclosure of information to third parties is properly controlled and the school employs reasonable measures to secure digital student records. University policies addressing discrimination and substance abuse are published on the website and all first-year law students are required to complete an online program on substance abuse and prevention of sexual violence.

Finally, La Verne complies with California Business and Professions Code section 6061.7, which requires law schools overseen by the Committee to post a specific list of statistics about the law school's programs. The law school properly and timely updated and posted its 2021 report on its website.

Rule 4.160(B): Integrity. The law school must demonstrate integrity in all of its programs, operations, and other affairs. (Guidelines 2.1-2.10; Bus. & Prof. Code Section 6061.7(a) and Section 6061.7(c).)

Current, consistent information about accreditation, academic programs, faculty, and services appears on the law school's website and in numerous University and law school publications. The Manual of Academic Policies and Procedures, available through the website, clearly states policies affecting students. The University and law school appear to employ enough personnel to deliver programs and services as promised.

Financial affairs are conducted with integrity. Tuition and fees are accurately described on the website. The University provides appropriate staffing for financial aid services, including federal financial aid. Financial assets are effectively managed and controls are in place to protect against

fraud and other improprieties. The refund policy is clearly stated on La Verne's website. Full or partial refunds are given through the third week of classes and refunds are issued within thirty days, which is compliant. (Guideline 2.2(B).)

Guideline 2.3(D) requirements are met by disclosures in the Manual of Academic Policies and Procedures and on a webpage entitled Accreditation. Business and Professions Code section 6061.7 is satisfied because a link to the required Information Report appears on the Admissions web page. After the visit, La Verne initiated revisions to address concerns that the website should more clearly direct users to Committee-required disclosures and should state, in connection with a reference to WASC accreditation, that La Verne's degree-granting authority is based on its accreditation by the Committee. (Guidelines 2.3(A)-(D) and (E)(2).) It is recommended that the law school report on these revisions in the next Annual Compliance Report.

The University operates as a tax-exempt California non-profit corporation. (Guideline 2.4(A).)

The law school does not compensate individuals based on the number of law students enrolled, applying for admission, or registering. (Guideline 2.5.)

Discipline may be imposed under a Student Code of Conduct that defines prohibited conduct. Sanctions range from warning to dismissal. A student charged with misconduct is given written notice, an opportunity to be heard by an impartial three-person panel of faculty or staff members, and a written decision. After the State Bar's inspection visit, the law school revised its policy to provide that the written decision must include a statement of facts, conclusions, and, if applicable, sanctions. Student complaints arising out of the ABA approved program were discussed with administrators, including policy changes made to address certain concerns as they arose under that policy. Complaints are handled by the appropriate Associate Dean, depending on whether the complaint is "academic" or "social" in nature. (Guideline 2.6(B)(3).)

Academic standards are clearly stated in the Manual of Academic Policies and Procedures. (Guideline 2.7) Most courses, including all subjects tested on the California Bar Exam, are graded on a 12-increment numeric scale of 0.0 to 4.0, with each increment indicating a level of achievement as required. Some courses are graded on a Credit/No Credit basis.

Students are informed that anonymous grading is used for exams and papers written in lieu of exams, but not for skills courses, projects, presentations, or other papers. (Guideline 2.7(A)(5).)

Course repetition policies comply with Guideline 2.7(A)(3), as detailed below.

The Manual of Academic Policies and Procedures effectively communicates requirements for good standing, probation, dismissal, and graduation. To graduate, students must complete 88 semester units; achieve a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0, defined as "minimally adequate;" satisfy an upper-level, two-unit writing requirement; complete the required curriculum and co-curricular requirements; and satisfy financial obligations to the school. All students are expected to graduate within five years, except that transfer students must graduate within 84 months of starting law study elsewhere. (Guideline 2.7(A)(4).)

Probation and dismissal conditions are detailed below. A student with a GPA below 1.7 after the first semester will be disqualified. After later semesters, disqualification is based on the

cumulative GPA, semester GPA, and course grades below 2.0. Academic standing is calculated at the end of each semester with the summer term being calculated as part of fall semester. (Guideline 2.7(A).)

The law school requires that each student receive a course syllabus on the first day of each course. Syllabi consistently state the weight to be assigned to each component of course grades. (Guideline 2.7(B).)

A Student Code of Conduct prohibits misconduct such as plagiarism and misappropriation of materials and informs students that each professor is required to verify the authenticity of student work. (Guideline 2.7(C).)

Generally, students receive notice of their grades within a reasonable time. (Guideline 2.7(D)) After the site visit, the law school amended its exam-review policy to meet all requirements of Guideline 2.7(E). Grade challenges are handled by a five-member faculty Academic Standards and Exams and Grading Committee. (Guideline 2.7(A)(8) and (F).)

The University and law school have implemented appropriate policies and procedures to protect the confidentiality of student information, records, and communication, including disability records. Reasonable security and backup protocols are in place to protect computer systems, communications, and records against corruption, destruction, or loss. (Guidelines 2.8-2.9.)

Students may participate in a dual degree program, earning a JD and a Master's degree in either Business Administration or Public Administration through the University's College of Business & Public Management (College). The law school accepts six units of College coursework from its students in the ABA approved JD track, but will accept only law school credits for its students in the California accredited JD track. The College accepts ten to twelve units of law school coursework.

Finally, La Verne students are provided with services, experiences, and activities appropriate for a school with a full-time JD program. Opportunities include academic counseling, career development services, clinical and externship experiences, law review, advocacy competition teams, student organizations, certificate of achievement in legal research, access to the Center for Academic and Bar Readiness, and a post-graduation bar preparation program. (Guideline 2.10.)

Rule 4.160 (C): Governance. The law school must be governed, organized, and administered so as to provide a sound educational program. (Guidelines 3.1-3.3; 4.1-4.2.)

The law school is governed by the University's Board of Trustees, composed of 39 members, including community leaders with diverse expertise in business, education, and law. The University's Board of Trustees meets at least three times each year and consists of community leaders with diverse expertise in business, education, and law. Several trustees are alumni of the University and two are practicing attorneys. The current chair is Luis F. Faura, president of a local corporation. The University's Board of Trustees meets three times each year.

Board minutes show that the trustees exercise appropriate oversight responsibility for the institution's finances, policies, and strategic direction. The trustees' 2019 action to resign the law

school's ABA approval, for example, in part reflected concerns that the University was regularly required to subsidize the law school and that raising the law school's tuition to cover its direct expenses under the ABA model would make a legal education inaccessible to many students the University was committed to serve. After three years, the Board intends to reevaluate its decision to maintain La Verne exclusively as a California accredited law school. (Guideline 3.2.)

In late 2017, Dean Kevin Marshall, then a tenured professor, was promoted to serve as Interim Dean. He led successful efforts to secure the Committee's reaffirmation of La Verne as a California accredited law school and the ABA's approval of a teach-out plan. Following a national search, Dean Marshall was named permanent dean in May 2020. He serves on several key University committees, has direct access to the University's leaders, and has been given the authority necessary to discharge his responsibilities. (Guideline 3.2.)

A Board of Advisors consisting of twelve members meets monthly to counsel Dean Marshall on a variety of curricular and other matters at the law school, such as trends in the legal profession. All members of this board hold law degrees, including two members who also serve as University trustees. (Guideline 3.3.)

The trustees and leaders of the University appear to work effectively with La Verne's administrators and advisors for the benefit of the law school and its students. (Guideline 3.1.)

Rule 4.160(D): Dean and Faculty. The law school must have at each campus, including any approved branch campus, a competent dean, a qualified administrator, an adequate administrative staff, and a competent faculty that devote adequate time to administration, instruction, and student counseling. (Guidelines 4.1-4.9.)

Dean Marshall graduated from Emory University School of Law and holds a Master's Degree in Public Affairs and a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Political Economy from the University of Texas. He is a licensee of the State Bar of Texas who has practiced commercial litigation. He has also taught law, economics, and business and conducted social science research.

Dean Marshall joined the La Verne faculty in 2004 and became a full Professor in 2010. Before becoming Interim Dean, he taught in other colleges at the University and served as La Verne's Associate Dean. Now, he works for the law school full-time. Dean Marshall teaches various law courses. His curriculum vitae includes books, publications, and presentations, and his scholarship has been widely cited by courts, litigants, and other scholars. Based upon his professional and academic credentials, Dean Marshall is qualified for his position. (Guidelines 4.1(A)-(B).)

The administration includes eight other full-time employees, a staffing level that is expected to continue through the ABA teach-out period. Evelyn De Anda, Registrar and Director of Academic Affairs, maintains law school records. (Guideline 4.1(C).) Associate Dean of Student and Faculty Development Jendayi Saada heads the Center for Academic and Bar Readiness while Associate Dean Placido Gomez oversees the ABA teach-out program; both also teach JD courses.

Law school personnel handle student affairs and facility and operations issues while University personnel oversee enrollment management, library, information technology, and business functions. All administrators interviewed during the visit appeared to understand their primary roles and to be knowledgeable about the Committee's requirements.

The faculty includes 44 professors, including 16 who work full-time. All instructors graduated from ABA approved law schools except one who earned a JD from a registered, unaccredited school and one who is not a law graduate. Twenty-seven percent of the instructors graduated from La Verne. To offer students a broad range of perspectives and teaching methods, the law school is encouraged to hire faculty from a wide variety of law schools. (Guideline 4.5.)

Instructors have successful teaching and/or relevant professional experience in the subjects they are assigned to teach. The number of full-time faculty members is expected to decrease after the ABA teach-out program ends, primarily through attrition, but part-time faculty will be hired as needed based on enrollment going forward. The faculty shares governance responsibility with the Dean, who presides over monthly meetings of the full-time faculty and appoints members to committees on academic standards, admissions, curriculum, diversity, library, technology, and faculty personnel matters. Committee recommendations are made to the Dean, directly or through the faculty as a body. (Guideline 4.2.) La Verne has taken steps to include adjunct instructors in faculty governance and development and will review those efforts to see if additional changes should be made as the ratio of full-time to part-time faculty changes. (Guideline 4.5.)

The ratio of JD students to instructors is adequate at 6:1. Generally, doctrinal courses enroll about 30 students and rarely exceed 50 students, while writing courses typically enroll about 20 students. (Guideline 4.3.) When a course is offered in multiple sections, generally different instructors are appointed for each section and they are encouraged to collaborate with each other.

A compliant faculty teaching load policy is stated in the Faculty Handbook. (Guideline 4.4.) In the State Bar-accredited program it is anticipated that full-time faculty will teach up to the maximum allowed load and part-time faculty will teach one course per term.

The law school has adopted a “proactive advising” model that defines steps that professors and faculty mentors should take to counsel and otherwise assist students. As La Verne shifts toward a faculty model that emphasizes the primacy of teaching-related duties over academic scholarship, instructors will take on mentoring duties previously handled by La Verne’s Center for Academic and Bar Readiness (Center), since they will have more time to do so than in the past. Though the Center may be reduced in size, it will continue to maintain a focus on bar exam preparation and faculty development. To ensure the teaching effectiveness of all instructors, La Verne will continue to draw upon the resources available through its own Center, as well as the University’s Center for Teaching and Learning. (Guideline 4.4.)

Professors are hired for their subject matter expertise and ability to teach creatively. To support faculty development, La Verne budgets training funds for full-time faculty, holds training workshops, and promotes teaching excellence through evaluations, peer review, mentoring, and Faculty Personnel Committee activities. Adjunct instructors attend a separate orientation and are provided with administrative assistance; mentoring with respect to course syllabi, exams, and teaching methods; and, in some cases, teaching assistants. (Guideline 4.6.)

Full-time faculty members have been evaluated by the Dean and other faculty members, using combinations of student evaluations, classroom observations, and faculty-authored growth and

development plans. Following the State Bar inspection visit, La Verne adopted a faculty evaluation process that includes adjunct faculty and complies with Guidelines 4.7 and 4.8. The law school should report on the implementation of this process in the next Annual Compliance Report.

A policy protecting Faculty Academic Freedom is found in the University's Faculty Handbook. (Guideline 4.10.)

Rule 4.160(E): Educational Program. The law school must maintain a sound program of legal education. (Guidelines 1.8, 6.1-6.14.)

La Verne admitted its first students into the State Bar-accredited JD program in fall 2020 and spring 2021. Students attend classes full- or part-time during the day, or part-time in the evening. They advance through the required courses with a class-year cohort but may take electives with students at other class levels. (Guideline 6.5(D).) Until the pandemic, all courses other than externships were taught on campus. Since mid-March 2020, those courses have been temporarily delivered online through synchronous Zoom sessions except for a few clinical activities that have been held at the law school's campus.

The JD curriculum requires completion of 88 semester units and is designed to be completed in three or four academic years. An academic year consists of two semesters, each including 14 weeks of instruction and designated days for final exams. Part-time students are also required to enroll in a 7-week summer session, and most full-time students also choose to enroll in that session in order to lighten their academic-year course loads.

The California accredited JD curriculum consists of 74 units of required courses covering all subjects tested on the bar exam, including Professional Responsibility, together with four practical skills courses: Writing I, Trial Advocacy, Transactional Workshop, and Writing II. A Capstone course, completed in the last semester, is designed to help prepare students for the bar exam. Students also fulfill an upper-level writing requirement. (Guidelines 6.7 and 6.9.)

Students must complete 14 elective units. La Verne offers a range of elective courses, from advanced study in bar-tested subjects to seminars in topics such as Law and Terrorism and Video Game Law. The website is being revised to give notice that not all elective courses are offered each year. (Guidelines 6.8 and 2.3.)

To earn a JD, students at an accredited school must complete at least 1,200 hours of verified academic engagement (VAE) over no fewer than 80 semester units. (Guideline 6.5(A).) Students who complete La Verne's program earn 1,320 hours of VAE, 120 more than required. Each unit of credit represents 15 clock hours of verified engagement and 30 hours of untracked homework and preparation.

VAE may be earned by attendance in a physical classroom, participation in synchronous distance learning, or a combination of those modalities. (Guideline 6.5(B).) La Verne tracks attendance by requiring professors to take attendance in all class sessions, whether on campus or online, and by requiring students in experiential courses to submit time logs that are reviewed by law school personnel.

Under Guideline 6.5(C), a school must require students to complete “not less than eighty percent of the academic engagement in regularly scheduled class hours or not less than eighty percent of the minimum hours of other types of academic engagement” La Verne’s policy is compliant, providing that failure to attend 80 percent of class sessions will result in automatic withdrawal, ineligibility to take the final exam, and a grade of F in a course. The Registrar reviews attendance rosters and enforces the attendance requirements.

La Verne’s course load policy complies with Guideline 6.5. Full-time students take 11 to 15 units per semester while part-time students take 8 to 10 units. Students are not permitted to carry excess or reduced loads except under extraordinary circumstances as determined by the Dean. (Guideline 6.5(J).) The curriculum cannot be completed in less than 38 months and must be completed within 5 years of enrollment at La Verne or, for transfer students, no more than 84 months after commencing law studies elsewhere. (Guideline 6.5(A).)

Faculty members use The West Education Network (TWEN), to post course materials and communicate with students. Based upon a sample review of course materials and class sessions, the team confirmed the use of recognized texts, informative syllabi, and appropriate instructional formats. Class sizes are reasonable. (Guideline 6.5(K)-(N).)

La Verne offers numerous experiential learning opportunities. Students may earn externship credits for work in government, non-profit, and private law offices, and participate in clinics focusing on immigration, disability rights, or misdemeanor appellate advocacy. Qualified students may participate in either of the law review publications or join their choice of 3 competition teams for oral advocacy.

Subsequent to the inspection, the law school initiated revisions to bring its experiential learning policy into full compliance with Guideline 6.6 by clearly defining which courses are experiential under the guideline, informing students of the current total cumulative and per-term limits applied to such experiential courses, and stating with consistency the academic expectations and hours of work required for each unit in various experiential courses. Although students in La Verne’s ABA approved program have been allowed to earn more than the eight units of cumulative experiential credit now allowed by the Committee, students in the State Bar-accredited program have not yet had the opportunity to earn experiential units, and effective January 1, 2022 the limit will increase to 12.5 units. Further, La Verne has required students to complete a reasonable number of work hours to earn experiential credit, ranging between 45 and 52 hours per unit of credit, and Guideline 6.6(A) has been satisfied.

During a meeting with the team, students expressed substantial satisfaction with the support they receive from the faculty, including counseling, feedback, and timely return of exam papers. Instructors provide their contact information and are available to meet during and outside of office hours. Students also cited the general responsiveness of the University, administration, and faculty in shifting to online instruction due to the pandemic. (Guideline 6.10.)

Guideline 6.14 requires grading standards that ensure “accuracy, validity, reliability, and consistency.” Grading policies are addressed in the Manual of Academic Policies and Procedures and Faculty Handbook. Most courses are evaluated through performance on midterm and final exams; final exams must count for 80 percent of the course grade. Typically, final exams consist

of essay questions, but may consist of up to 50 percent objective questions with the Associate Dean's approval. Exams are one hour in length for each course unit. Instructors are expected to draft original exam questions and may not use previously circulated or published questions.

La Verne intends to implement computer proctoring of examinations using ExamSoft beginning with the 2021 Summer term. During the pandemic, students have taken closed-books exams from home and the grading scale has not been adjusted. (Guidelines 6.11-6.14.)

The Office of the Dean reviews exam questions before they are administered and evaluates grades before they are posted to determine whether grade ranges are within normal expectations for the class and subject. (Guideline 6.14.) Upon review, a sample of exams and writing assignments were found to be well-drafted and to fairly test the subjects at hand. Most instructors provided useful feedback to students through rubrics, issue outlines, grading sheets, and marginal comments.

La Verne has researched the relationship between bar exam pass rates and the JD program, including its free, ten-week Bar Exam Strategic Training (BEST) program for graduates. Based on 2017-2018 data, law school GPAs and participation in BEST were found to be statistically predictive of bar exam passage. La Verne will continue its institutional research efforts in collaboration with the University.

Rule 4.160(F): Competency Training. The law school must require that each student enrolled in its Juris Doctor degree program satisfactorily complete a minimum of six semester units (or their equivalent) of course work designed to teach practice-based skills and competency training and have the opportunity to take up to fifteen semester units. Such competency training must teach and develop those skills needed by a licensed attorney to practice law in an ethical and competent manner. (Guideline 6.9.)

La Verne exceeds the Committee's practice-based training requirements. Students must complete at least 9 semester units of training coursework, 3 units more than mandated, in Legal Writing I (3 units) Legal Writing II (2) Trial Advocacy (2) and Transactional Workshop (2).

Students are given the opportunity to take at least 6 additional units of practice-based training when completing the 14-unit elective curriculum. The school offers many more than 6 credits as possible options. Qualifying courses include Advanced Appellate Advocacy (3 units), Advanced Legal Research (1), Advanced Trial Techniques (2), Adversarial Evidence (1), Discovery Techniques and Practices (3), Law Practice Management (2), several team advocacy competition courses (1 or 2), and several clinical courses (1-6).

La Verne is revising its externship policy to require that all externships must be supervised by attorneys with at least 2 years of law practice experience. This change is not necessary for compliance but will qualify externship units as practice-based training under Guideline 6.9. The law school is encouraged to publish course descriptions indicating which courses qualify as practical skills training and how many units of academic credit and practical skills training each course offers.

Rule 4.160(G): Scholastic Standards. The law school must maintain sound scholastic standards and must as soon as possible identify and disqualify those students who lack the capability to satisfactorily complete the law school's JD degree program. (Guidelines 7.1-7.11.)

La Verne has sound scholastic standards defining academic standing, disqualification, advancement in good standing and on probation, retention, and graduation requirements. Standards are explained in the Manual of Academic Policies and Procedure and conveyed to students at orientation, annual academic advisement sessions, meetings with advisers, and graduation preparation meetings with the Registrar. (Guidelines 7.1 and 7.2.)

A cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 is required to graduate and, in most cases, to advance in the JD program. Standing is calculated after each regular fall and spring semester, with the summer term being considered part of fall semester. (Guideline 7.4.)

Students are disqualified after the first semester if their GPA is below 1.7; after the second semester if either their cumulative GPA is below 2.0 or the GPA is below 2.5 with two more grades below a 2.0 in that semester; or after subsequent semesters when either a semester GPA is below 2.0, a cumulative GPA is below 2.0, or a cumulative GPA is below 2.5 with two more grades below a 2.0. However, a graduating senior who has met other requirements and who earns a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 will be allowed to graduate.

Individuals disqualified after the first semester may petition to restart the program, while others may petition for readmission on probation. Petitions are decided on a case-by-case basis by the Academic Standards Committee and decisions are properly documented. Students on probation must meet appropriate conditions. Terms of probation are in effect for two semesters, with summer session included in a subsequent fall semester, and students on probation are academically disqualified if they do not achieve good standing after one year. (Guideline 7.3)

All students receive academic support. First-year students complete an Introduction to Legal Skills (Legal Writing I) program to learn analytical skills. A component of this program includes the Writing for Success Workshop, which offers a writing diagnostic, as well as grammar and usage labs, and one-on-one conferences. A student who has a GPA between 1.7 and 1.99 at the end of the first semester, is required to take a series of academic support workshops during their second semester. (Guideline 7.3.)

La Verne has not admitted special students but has admitted students pursuant to the Committee's Policy on Starting First-Year Law Studies Over. (Guideline 7.5 and 7.6.)

Course repetition policies comply with Guidelines 7.7 and 7.8. Duplicate credit is not awarded, but when a student repeats a course, the grades on both attempts will appear on the student's transcript and will be used in computing the GPA.

La Verne adheres to sound grading policies and practices. The law school uses a numerical grade scale as described above. Grade curves are not used in the California accredited program, although grades are reviewed for general conformity with grading expectations. The law school's assessments, assignments, and examinations were well-designed. (Guideline 7.9.)

The law school has complied with the record-keeping requirements of Guideline 7.10.

Under Guideline 7.11, a school offering distance learning must verify the minimum required academic engagement for the JD degree. At La Verne, the use of distance learning has been limited to courses taught through synchronous class sessions pursuant to a pandemic-related waiver. Hours of academic engagement are verified by attendance records. (Guideline 7.11(2).)

La Verne has a policy addressing the enrollment of auditors and visitors but has not yet admitted such individuals to enroll in courses in the State Bar-accredited program. (Guideline 7.12.)

Attrition in La Verne's ABA-approved program was six percent for the 2019-2020 academic year. It is too early to assess results for the California accredited JD program, since enrollment began in fall 2020, but attrition was tracked at 12 percent for the first semester which is favorable when compared to other California accredited schools.

Rule 4.160(H): Admissions. The law school must maintain a sound admissions policy. The law school must not admit any student who is obviously unqualified or who does not appear to have a reasonable prospect of completing the degree program. (Guidelines 5.1-5.9.)

La Verne's admissions process is explained on the website. Applicants are considered only if their credentials satisfy the pre-legal education requirements of California Business and Professions Code section 6060(c) and they have completed at least 60 units of college course work and earned a GPA adequate for graduation or hold an associate's degree or higher from an accredited institution. Special students, those seeking admission based on qualifying test scores alone, have not been admitted. Students with prior law school history are considered for admission. (Guidelines 5.1 and 5.2.)

Applicants must submit an online application, personal statement, resume, recommendation letter, addenda addressing any issues of concern, and transcripts. As revised following the State Bar inspection visit, the application form asks all applicants whether they have previously attended law school and, if so, to state their standing upon departure. (Guideline 5.4.) Students are encouraged, but not required, to submit official LSAT or other graduate-level standardized test scores.

Admissions functions are handled largely by the University's Enrollment Management staff. Adequate processes appear to be in place to ensure that the applicants' official transcripts are received timely, and that documents showing fulfillment of pre-legal education requirements are on file within 45 days of the start of a student's first term. According to the Registrar one student was dismissed for failure to timely submit official transcripts. To bring itself fully into compliance, La Verne must establish that its Registrar has ongoing access to digital records as needed to fulfill her duty to establish applicants' qualifications for law study and to track and enforce timely compliance with the 45-day rule. (Guidelines 5.3 and 11.1(B)-(C).) A sample file review confirmed that official transcripts of all prior education are maintained.

The Admissions Committee, consisting of Dean Marshall and two other tenured professors, evaluates each applicant's academic proficiency, intent and capacity to complete law school and be admitted to the bar, and motivation to study law, based upon the applicant's academic record, test scores, work experience, and personal characteristics. The Admissions Committee convenes

weekly to interview applicants. At least two members must agree on decisions to admit, deny, or wait list an applicant. To encourage strong applicants to enroll, the school now offers several renewable scholarships.

Some applicants are admitted without Admissions Committee review, based on an admissions matrix that considers undergraduate GPA and scores on the LSAT or other graduate-level exams. Individual review is not conducted, for example, on an applicant with an LSAT score of 146 and an undergraduate GPA of 3.5 or higher, and applicants with higher test scores may be admitted presumptively with somewhat lower GPA's.

In fall 2020, the school admitted 63 percent of first-year applicants with completed files and enrolled 43 percent of those admitted. For enrolled first-year students, the 75th, 50th, and 25th percentile undergraduate GPAs were 3.31, 3.08, and 2.79, respectively. Of those submitting LSAT scores, their 75th, 50th, and 25th percentile LSAT scores were 148, 145, and 142, respectively.

La Verne has compliant policies for the admission of applicants with prior law school history. In fall 2020, the law school admitted several such students, including one from La Verne. Previously disqualified applicants must have an official LSAT score on file before an admissions decision is made, and the Admissions Committee properly documents its reasons for admitting previously dismissed students. (Guideline 5.6.)

Policies on the award of transfer credit are stated on the website. La Verne will consider granting transfer credit of up to 44 units from an ABA-approved school and up to 29 credits from a California accredited law school. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs evaluates course descriptions and grades to determine whether credit is allowed. (Guidelines 5.6-5.8.) La Verne's transcripts include details about transfer students' prior law school history. (Guideline 11.1(D)(4).)

Rule 4.160(I): Multiple Locations. Accreditation is granted to a law school as an institution. If a law school receives approval to open a branch campus or a satellite campus, the branch or satellite campus must be operated in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines, subject to all site-specific operational requirements and any waivers approved by the Committee. The new campus must be in substantial compliance with the Standards and all operational requirements no less than one month prior to the start of classes, and in full compliance within two years. The Dean of the law school will certify the substantial compliance of each new branch or satellite campus, by a letter to the Committee, no later than 30 days prior to the start of classes. If a law school conducts seminars or classes other than at its principal facility, satellite or branch campuses, the seminars and classes must be conducted in compliance with the Standards, except the Library Standard. (Guidelines 15.1-15.4.)

This section is inapplicable to La Verne, which operates only one location in Ontario, California.

Rule 4.160(J): Library. The law school must maintain a library consistent with the minimum requirements set by the Committee. (Guidelines 8.1-8.6.)

La Verne administers the law library in collaboration with the University's Wilson Library. The facility is the largest law library in San Bernardino and Riverside counties, and the only academic law library in Inland Southern California. It is open to La Verne's students, faculty, and staff, and

to the wider University community, State Bar licensees, and the public.

The library is overseen by Assistant Director for Collection Management Jennifer Argueta, who holds a Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) and works full-time. The staff includes a reference and faculty services librarian with a JD and MLIS, a circulation supervisor, and several assistants. Except during the pandemic, the library is open at least 41 hours per week with additional study hall hours during study and exam periods.

The facility occupies 24,000 square feet on the ground floor of law school, with additional space in an adjacent computer lab, restrooms, and atrium. A main library entrance is located through an atrium tower off the main parking lot, and three alarmed emergency exits provide security for the collection and staff. A freight entrance opens directly into a technical services area.

Seating capacity is 209 persons. Private spaces include nine offices, a conference room, and group study rooms. Internet access is provided throughout the law school by a wireless network while the library offers 32 wired connections. University students have access to four public terminals and a computer lab with 31 terminals. Other technology includes a networked laser printer, two photocopy machines, and a microfiche/film reader/printer. (Guideline 8.1.)

The library provides electronic access to all resources required by Guideline 8.2 through subscriptions to Lexis Advance, Westlaw Edge, and Checkpoint. Students receive individual passwords to access to these resources during their time in the JD program. (Guideline 8.5.) The law library maintains print subscriptions to certain primary and secondary sources, including California case reports and annotated codes, and other resources are available through the law and University libraries.

Legal research is taught by librarians in the first year as part of the required Legal Writing I course and in the Advanced Legal Research elective each spring semester. In the first-year, students have been required to complete numerous graded exercises using both print and electronic resources, although print-based research has not been required during the pandemic. (Guideline 8.3.)

Students may earn a Certificate of Achievement in legal research by completing a total of 12 free workshops. Each workshop is taught by a law librarian with a JD degree and consists of one to two hours of instruction, provided in a single session, and an hour of skills assessment.

Records of library expenditures are properly maintained. The law library's most recent collection development plan, completed in fall 2018, codified the library's primary reliance on digital, rather than print, materials. Though this transition happened prior to the time that it was otherwise allowed for California accredited law schools, the school operated under ABA approval at the time and those steps were allowed and are now currently allowed for California accredited law schools since May 2019. Through the reduction in print resources, substantial savings have been achieved and the library budget has remained relatively stable in recent years. (Guideline 8.6.)

Rule 4.160(K): Physical Resources. The law school must have physical resources and an infrastructure adequate for its programs and operations offered at each campus. (Guidelines 9.1-9.3.)

La Verne relocated to its current campus in 2001 as part of an effort to secure ABA approval for the school. The building, a modern, 60,000 square-foot, two-story structure, sits on seven acres of property given to the University by the City of Ontario together with \$1.3 million for the property's rehabilitation. The University raised an additional \$5 million to complete the renovation. Located next to City Hall, the campus is ADA-compliant and equipped with appropriate security features. (Guideline 9.1.)

La Verne has exclusive use of the campus, except that each week the University's Legal Studies Program uses a law school classroom and the library on a specific evening. The law school serves as a hub for activities of the local legal community and as a host site for the administration of the LSAT and MPRE exams several times each year.

Classes take place in 11 medium-to-large classrooms, seminar rooms, and the Bidart Moot Courtroom, which seats up to 28 people. Classrooms are equipped with podiums, seating, and smart classroom technology that allows faculty to record, broadcast, and archive their lectures. Wireless internet access is available on campus and in the adjacent park area. (Guideline 9.1.)

Clinical programs, based in the library, have offices, a private interview room, and spaces for file storage, workstations, and meetings. Separate lounge facilities are provided for students and faculty and staff. (Guideline 9.1.) Comfortable seating is scattered throughout the building.

Office areas for faculty and staff are adequate, conveniently located, and appropriately equipped. Senior administrators and full-time and visiting faculty members have private offices, while some staff members share open workspaces. Part-time instructors have the use of a designated office for student conferences and class preparation and additional offices may be designated soon. Spaces dedicated to records and equipment storage are found on both floors. (Guideline 9.2.) Parking is ample, convenient, and free in two adjacent lots.

The information technology infrastructure appears to be up-to-date, secure, and adequate to La Verne's needs. Resources include a Manager of Information Services employed by the law school as well as personnel working in the University's Center for Teaching and Learning and Office of Information Technology. Help Desk functions are available at any hour. Several platforms are used for record-keeping, including Banner, a widely used student information system, and access is appropriately controlled. Law school instructors use The West Education Network (TWEN) to exchange materials and communicate with students and hold online synchronous class sessions using the Zoom videoconference platform. Authorized personnel can produce all school records at the Ontario campus. (Guideline 9.1.)

The law school takes precautions to protect La Verne's computer systems, communication systems, and written and electronic records against corruption, misuse, or destruction. Competent information technology personnel are employed by the University and sufficient resources have been allocated to maintain the school's technology infrastructure and to effectively address any service issues that may arise. Service outages are rare but are carefully tracked and resolved.

Rule 4.160(L): Financial Resources. The law school must have adequate present and anticipated financial resources to support its programs and operations. (Guidelines 10.1-10.3.)

La Verne has adequate financial resources to comply with Rule 4.160(L) and related guidelines. Audited financial statements for the University were submitted with the Self-study for fiscal years 2017 through 2020, together with the law school's budget for 2020-2021 and four-year projections. Audits have been conducted annually by an independent certified public accounting firm, Grant Thornton LLP of Los Angeles, which has issued unmodified audit opinions for all years reviewed since 2016.

WASC recently commended the University for "[d]emonstrating strong financial discipline with consistent annual operating surpluses, bolstered by the completion of a \$125 million campaign and endowment growth." The University's most significant sources of revenue, student tuition and fees and gifts and grants, generally have been stable over the past four years and in 2020, total net assets exceeded \$277 million with an endowment of over \$43 million. The institution is on track to achieve a substantial surplus this year.

The law school's budget is developed through the University's multi-year budget process. Generally, the University increases La Verne's budgeted expenditures by a fixed percentage if warranted. The school projects enrollment and proposes tuition and, after a budget is established, the Dean can allocate expenses so long as expenditures remain within budgeted revenue.

The University has subsidized the law school regularly and has committed to do so in the future, as necessary. La Verne met its direct expenses in 2019-20 and it is projected that the law school will achieve net positive revenues beginning in 2020-2021, particularly after the ABA teach-out ends. As anticipated, the shift away from an ABA model has allowed substantial savings in labor costs and the pandemic has lowered operating costs.

Although the long-range impacts of the pandemic and the school's voluntary change of accreditation status to California accreditation are unknown, enrollment in the California accredited JD program exceeded projections for both fall 2020 and spring 2021. The fall entering class was the school's larger, at 96 students, although total enrollment was 7 percent below recent ABA-program fall enrollments. An additional 31 students enrolled in January 2021.

Students who entered the California accredited JD program in fall 2020 will pay total program tuition of \$85,800 at per-unit tuition of \$975 and total fees of \$5,000. Total tuition will rise to \$88,000 for the 2021-2022 school year.

Rule 4.160(M): Records. The law school must maintain adequate records for its programs and operations. (Guideline 11.1.)

Responsibility for maintaining law school records in compliance with Committee requirements lies with the Registrar, Ms. De Anda, although some law school records are held by other University departments. Student files are maintained in both hard copy and digital format. Hard copy files are under Ms. De Anda's immediate control while electronic records are protected against unauthorized use, corruption, and destruction by adequate computer security and backup protocols established by the University. As noted above, it is important that the law

school's Registrar to have access to enrollment management software to track receipt of transcripts and other records. (Guideline 11.1.)

Admissions files are maintained by the University's Enrollment Management staff and documents related to requests for accommodations are secured in the Office of Student Affairs. Permanent student files, maintained by the Registrar's Office pursuant to the law school's records retention policy, include matriculants' applications and other required records. Transcripts issued by La Verne set forth all required information, including grade information for transfer students, and transcript changes are governed by a written policy. (Guideline 11.1(A-D).)

The Office of Human Resources maintains files for faculty members with all information required by Guideline 11.1(H), including official transcripts of legal education. The Registrar's Office is responsible for verifying each instructor's bar licensure status during the hiring process and periodically thereafter and reporting any changes to the Dean.

Based upon a sample review of electronic documents, the team found that La Verne has complied with the record-keeping requirements of Guideline 11.1. Among the records reviewed were applicant files and admissions records (Guidelines 11.1(A)-(B)); student files and transcripts (Guidelines 11.1(C)-(D)); class records, examinations, student responses, and grade tabulations (Guidelines 11.1(E)-(F)); and administrative and faculty files (Guideline 11.1(G)-(H)).

The team also reviewed, and found to be in order, a sample of other records required by Guidelines 11.1(I) through 11.1(O), including faculty meeting minutes, Board minutes, the 2020 Annual Compliance Report, and Committee correspondence.

Rule 4.160(N): Minimum, Cumulative Bar Pass Rate. The law school must maintain a minimum, cumulative bar examination pass rate as determined and used by the Committee in the evaluation of the qualitative soundness of a law school's program of legal education. The minimum, cumulative bar examination pass rate for a law school with one or more branch campus is to be calculated and reported as the combined rate of all such campuses. (Guidelines 12.1-12.2.)

An accredited school must maintain a minimum cumulative five-year bar exam pass rate (MPR) of at least 40 percent among its graduates who take the exam. La Verne has done so, having achieved an MPR of 69.0 percent in 2019, 66.0 percent in 2020, and 75.1 percent in 2021. Prior to its current California accreditation, La Verne was compliant with the ABA Ultimate Pass Rate rules, which required each individual annual graduating cohort to achieve a 75 percent pass rate within two years after graduation.

Rule 4.160(O): Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination. Consistent with sound educational policy and these rules, a law school must operate in accordance with policies and procedures that comply with the Constitutions and all applicable laws of both the United States and the State of California to provide both equality of opportunity and to prohibit unlawful discrimination. (Guideline 14.1.)

The law school operates pursuant to policies and practices that comply with federal and state laws with respect to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination. (Guideline 14.1.) A

nondiscrimination policy, published in the University Handbook, satisfies Guideline 14.1. It provides, in pertinent part:

[T]he University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ethnic origin, ancestry, citizenship, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and expression), marital status, age, physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic characteristics, military and veteran status, or any other characteristic or status protected by applicable law as to the admission or enrollment of any student, or its educational programs and activities; the employment of any member of the faculty or staff; the selection and treatment of volunteers or unpaid interns; or to the elections of any officer or trustee of the University.

The La Verne educational community is diverse. According to the 2020 Annual Compliance Report, 59 percent of the 266 students are women. Students self-identified as belonging to racial or ethnic groups as follows: African American or Black (6 percent); Hispanic/Latino of any race (40 percent); American Indian or Alaska Native (1 percent); and white (27 percent). Five percent of students declined to identify their race or ethnicity.

Thirty-four percent of the law school's faculty members are women. Ethnic and racial groups are represented on the faculty as follows: Black or African American (11 percent), Latinx (11 percent), White (36 percent), American Indian or Alaska Native (2 percent), Asian (2 percent), and two or more races (2 percent). Thirty-four percent of professors declined to identify themselves by race or ethnicity. Pursuant to Guideline 14.1, the law school is encouraged to foster diversity and inclusion in the recruitment, development, and retention of faculty.

Rule 4.160(P): Compliance with Committee Requirements. The law school must demonstrate its compliance with these rules by submitting required reports and otherwise complying with the rules. (Guideline 11.1 (O).)

La Verne has established standard operating procedures to ensure compliance with State Bar filing requirements. The school has submitted an Annual Compliance Report and Admission Certifications as required. All other required submissions and responses to State Bar requests have been timely addressed.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The team recommends that the Committee receive and file this Periodic Inspection Report, approve the team's recommended and suggested actions, continue the accreditation of the University of La Verne College of Law, and schedule its next periodic inspection in spring 2026, unless an earlier visitation is deemed necessary by the Committee. The school should provide an update on the completion of the recommendations in its 2021 Annual Compliance Report.



College of Law
Office of the Dean

August 4, 2021

Natalie Leonard, Principle Program Analyst, Educational Standards
Office of Admissions
The State Bar of California
180 Howard Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Ms. Leonard,

La Verne has reviewed and agrees with the University of La Verne College of Law Periodic Inspection Report dated April 19, 2021.

Recommended, Mandatory Actions:

- 1) La Verne has implemented and completed the website revisions regarding potential disclosure confusion relating to CalBar and ABA disclosures. We have removed, with approval of the ABA, any reference to ABA disclosures. La Verne has also instructed its webpage administrator to clarify La Verne's reference to WASC that "La Verne's degree-granting authority is based on its accreditation by the Committee."
- 2) La Verne will report on its implementation of the faculty evaluation process in compliance with the guidelines in our 2021 Annual Compliance Report.
- 3) Since the inspection, the University has provided the law school registrar ongoing access to all records needed to perform her duties, including monitoring of applicant files for timely receipt of documents showing eligibility for law study.
- 4) La Verne is in the process of implementing changes to its policies designed to clearly inform students of applicable credit limits for experiential courses, the cumulative nature of these limits, the course to which such limits apply, and the hours of work required for each unit of credit and will report on such implementation in its next Annual Compliance Report.

Suggestions for Enhanced Compliance:

- 1) La Verne acknowledges the recommendation to hire faculty from a variety of law schools.
- 2) La Verne is in the process of drafting for publication course descriptions indicating which courses qualify toward practical skills training and how many units of academic credit and, as applicable, practical skills training credit, each course offers.

- 3) La Verne is committed and will continue to foster diversity and inclusion in the recruitment, development, and retention of faculty.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin S. Marshall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "K" and "M".

Kevin S. Marshall

JD, MPA, PHD

The Frank Lizarraga Endowed Dean and Professor of Law