



The State Bar *of California*

OPEN SESSION AGENDA ITEM O-403 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 Consideration of Termination of Probation for John F. Kennedy School of Law at Northcentral University Regarding Noncompliance with the MPR Requirement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Committee of Bar Examiners (CBE) is asked to determine today whether John F. Kennedy School of Law at Northcentral University has sufficiently met the conditions of its probation to allow the Committee to end the law school's probation. The CBE imposed probation after the law school reported a 2020 Minimum, Cumulative Five-Year Bar Exam Pass Rate (MPR) of 39.7 percent, below the 40 percent minimum. (Rule 4.160(N)). This year, the law school's MPR has increased above the 40 percent minimum to 41.9 percent.

BACKGROUND

In January 2021, the CBE placed John F. Kennedy School of Law at Northcentral University on probation through July 1, 2022 when its 2020 MPR was 39.7 percent, below the 40 percent minimum, after declining for a number of years.

Under the terms of the probationary order issued on January 28, 2021, the CBE explained that "[c]ompliance is demonstrated by a 2021 or 2022 MPR, calculated after the release of results from the respective February bar exam, of 40 percent or greater, after which probation will be concluded."

The termination is not, however, automatic. Instead, “At least thirty days before probation expires, the Committee will notify the law school of its determination that (1) it will end the accredited law school’s probation” if the Committee finds that the law school has met the terms of its probation. (Rule 4.172(D)2).

DISCUSSION

Under its probationary order, the CBE directed the law school to earn an MPR of 40 percent or more by the July 2022 reporting deadline. Here, JFK law school has earned and reported a 2021 MPR of 41.9 percent, fulfilling the conditions of its probation.

Therefore, it is appropriate for the CBE to find that the law school has met the conditions of its probation and, therefore, its probation should be ended.

It is hoped that the law school will continue to prioritize the improvement of its MPR. While compliant, this MPR value is just above the minimum, and increasing for the first time after several years of decline.

FISCAL/PERSONNEL IMPACT

None

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the CBE find that the law school has met its terms of probation and its probation can be ended immediately.

PROPOSED MOTION

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

MOVE, that the Committee of Bar Examiners finds that John F. Kennedy School of Law at Northcentral University has met its terms of probation and, therefore, the Committee acts to end the law school’s probation effective immediately.