



**OPEN SESSION
AGENDA ITEM O-400
AUGUST 2022
COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS**

DATE: August 19, 2022

TO: Members, Committee of Bar Examiners

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

SUBJECT: Action on Voluntary Termination of Registration as an Unaccredited Law School – California Southern University School of Law

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

California Southern University School of Law (CSUSOL) seeks permission and ratification from the Committee of Bar Examiners (Committee) to voluntarily terminate its registration as an unaccredited correspondence law school, retroactive to June 30, 2022. (Attachment A). The law school stopped enrolling new students in 2018. Since that time, all JD students have completed their degrees, and the remaining student enrolled in the Master of Science in Laws program has transferred to another institution to complete their degree. In July 2022, the remaining part of the university was acquired by the American InterContinental University System; it will continue to operate under its current name, but relocate to Chandler, Arizona and will continue to serve as custodian of records for those who attended or graduated from the law school.

BACKGROUND

Under Rule 4.268 of the Rules for Unaccredited Law Schools, “[t]he Committee will terminate a law school’s registration on a specific date, at which time it will also terminate its degree-granting authority.”

California Southern University School of Law has been registered with the Committee as an unaccredited correspondence law school. Its parent university, including the law school, was

accredited by the [Western Association of Schools and Colleges](#) (WASC) until it became a part of the American InterContinental University system and earned accreditation from the [Higher Learning Commission](#).

DISCUSSION

CSUSOL voluntarily requests termination of its registration as a registered, unaccredited correspondence law school effective retroactive to June 30, 2022. The law school closed completely as of that date after graduating all JD students and graduating all but one master's degree candidate who chose to transfer to another law school to complete that degree.

The law school conducted an orderly closure. All students enrolled at CSUSOL had the opportunity to complete their degree. CSUSOL began planning for a voluntary closure in 2018, when it stopped admitting new students to its JD program and made plans for all enrolled students to have the option to complete their degree at the law school before it closed. In spring 2022, the final JD student and nearly all the remaining students in the Master of Science in Law program completed their degrees. The one remaining Master of Science in Law student has transferred to a nearby law school where they will complete their degree.

The law school's parent, California Southern University, [has been acquired by the American InterContinental University system](#). The University will continue to operate under that name and will be the custodian of records for the law school's students and graduates. As part of that acquisition, the university's headquarters will move from California to Arizona. The University will now be regulated by the State of Arizona, State Board of Private Post-Secondary Education. The University also voluntarily terminated its accreditation by WASC and will instead operate under the institutional accreditation of the Higher Learning Commission along with its acquiring parent, but it will not continue to offer programs in the field of law.

CSUSOL will submit a final annual report for statistical purposes.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that California Southern University School of Law's notice of voluntary termination of registration as an unaccredited law school be received, filed, and accepted retroactive to June 30, 2022, and that the Committee terminates the law school's degree granting authority retroactive to June 30, 2022, pursuant to Rule 4.268, and that California Southern University, a part of the American InterContinental University system, be accepted as the custodian of records for former students and graduates of California Southern University School of Law. It is further recommended that the University contact its former law students and graduates to advise them how to obtain copies of their records in the future.

PROPOSED MOTION

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

MOVE that the Committee of Bar Examiners receives, files and accepts California Southern University School of Law's voluntary termination of its registration as an unaccredited law school and its notice that California Southern University, now a part of American InterContinental University System, is the custodian of records for all students and graduates of the law school, and terminates the law school's degree granting authority effective June 30, 2022, pursuant to Rule 4.268. The Committee further directs the University to contact former students and graduates to advise them how to obtain copies of their records in the future.

ATTACHMENT

- A. Letter from California Southern University School of Law Voluntarily Terminating Registration as an Unaccredited Law School



July , 2022

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Natalie Leonard
Principal Program Analyst
California Bar Association
180 Howard St
San Francisco, CA 9410

Dear Ms. Leonard:

As a follow up to my letter dated June 1 , 2022, I am writing to provide the California Bar Association important information regarding California Southern University's School of Law (CalSouthern). Please note, CalSouthern is providing this letter to inform the California Bar Association of its formal notification that we are voluntarily relinquishing our approval/status as a non-accredited law school.

This past week, the enrollment status of our five remaining learners in the Master of Science in Law (MSL) program changed. These status changes are as follows:

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1. Four learners enrolled in the final capstone course completed their final academic requirements on June 27 and June 28, 2022. These learners have now graduated with their MSL degrees.
2. CalSouthern established a teach out agreement with Abraham Lincoln University (ALU) which will allow the last learner to complete her MSL degree program at ALU.

With these changes, we no longer have any learners enrolled in the School of Law. As a result, California Southern University's School of Law was officially closed on June 30, 2022.

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Lastly, CalSouthern will provide its final report to the California Bar Association during the required submission period in fall 2022.

Please feel free to contact me, or any member of our team, should you have any questions.

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Sincerely yours, 5

Clinton D. Gardner, Ph.D.
President and CEO

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Cc: James Rieger
Zina Gleason
Ellie Shefi