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*Via Federal Express*

March 15, 2023

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

Re: ***Final Status Report re ICOL Distance Learning Curriculum***

Dear Ms. Leonard:

Pursuant to the action taken by the Committee of Bar Examiners (CBE) on June 17, 2022, finding Irvine College of Law (ICOL) “to be in substantial compliance sufficient to continue its transition to being an unaccredited distance category law school,” I am pleased to submit ICOL’s final status report confirming its most recent efforts to complete the transformation of its distance learning curriculum. Toward that goal, and as required by the Committee, I am also pleased to submit the course syllabi for courses that were not complete when ICOL’s status report of November 14, 2022 was submitted, and one being taught in its 2023 Winter/Spring semester.

**A. Status of the ICOL’s Effort to Recruit Better Qualified Students and Faculty.**

The most important factor that motivated ICOL’s ownership to transform it into a distance learning law school, after offering a fixed-facility program for over 45 years, was to offer the law school an effective means to attract and enroll applicants from a far larger geographic area. In operating from a fixed location, the stark reality was that applicants were willing and able to drive only so far through notoriously slow Los Angeles rush hour traffic to sit in a classroom. This obvious geographic limitation created a natural barrier for many well qualified students who were simply unwilling to take on an additional, significant commute two or three times a week.

The same limitation affected who the law school was able to recruit and hire for its faculty.

With the benefit of teaching and learning online, ICOL’s faculty and students are now able to attend class sessions from their home or office, saving all many hours of weekly commuting. The direct benefit has been an increase in the number of applications from those living in locations far more distant than in the past, while ICOL is now better able to recruit new faculty.

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To capitalize on the benefits of its now-permanent distance learning program, ICOL has significantly increased the resources it spends to attract and enroll more and better-qualified students. ICOL's ownership has invested many thousands of dollars into a new logo, a new and better website ([www.irvine.edu](http://www.irvine.edu)) and the use of an outside marketing consultant to optimize its use of Google to increase the number of potential applicants who find ICOL on the Internet.

The new website is more functional, far easier to navigate and is compliant with all Guideline requirements (Guideline 2.3(D) and California Business & Professions Code sec. 60601.7 regarding the mandatory disclosures to potential applicants, actual applicants, and students.

With these new and better marketing tools, ICOL has increased its efforts to establish working relationships with various sources of potential applicants such universities and community colleges throughout Southern California and with various law enforcement agencies.

For many years, ICOL has been fortunate to maintain a close relationship with the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) by offering its personnel a significant discount in tuition for those who wish to earn their J.D. degree while working in law enforcement. A number of the law school's most successful students and graduates have come from LASD who have gone on to careers with the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office or in forms of law enforcement. One such graduate is now a well-respected member of the ICOL faculty.

Given its history of recruiting applicants from LASD, the law school is now able to expand its efforts to find and attract applicants from other law enforcement agencies in addition to LASD. To do that, the law school holds online "information sessions" aimed at active law enforcement personnel. One such session is scheduled for March 23<sup>rd</sup> which has been posted by the police departments of the cities of Torrance, Anaheim and Newport Beach. *See*, Attachment A.

As noted, the benefits of offering an online curriculum have made it easier to recruit and hire new faculty members. Over the past six months, the law school has been fortunate hire two new professors, each of whom started to teach this past January, each of whom confirmed that they would not be able to teach for ICOL if they needed to commute to Cerritos from where they live and work. An additional new faculty member has recently been hired and will begin teaching next semester.

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**B. Status of ICOL's Distance Learning Curriculum.**

As of the date of this report, I am pleased to confirm that almost eighty percent of ICOL's entire course curriculum (24 of the 31 courses currently offered) have been fully revised (and strengthen) to meet the metrics needed for student to earn academic credit in a distance learning program. Of those now being taught or those that will be taught next semester and thereafter, a total of 18 required courses (out of 22) and six electives (out of nine) have been already submitted to the CBE with prior reports or are attached to this report as identified below.

The reason not all courses currently offered in ICOL's curriculum have been revised is due to the practical realities of operating a small academic entity, the turnover of its faculty. Over the past year since the CBE approved ICOL's redesignation, two members of its faculty are no longer teaching, a third is on medical leave while a fourth, a partner in a national litigation firm, has taken a year-long leave of absence due to his current trial calendar. As a result, to redesign the courses each of these faculty members have taught, has required the need for new faculty.

Once new faculty members are hired, the following required courses will be revised and taught: Real Property I & II; Agency & Partnership; Advanced Legal Writing; along with the following electives: Family Law; Law Office Management and Bankruptcy.

Toward that goal a recently hired professor is currently revising and will teach Family Law, while another, who is closing his law practice, will be able to revise other courses, such as Advanced Legal Writing, and has also committed to create at least one new elective (Civil Discovery) that will further strengthen and increase the number of ICOL's courses teaching "competency training" as required by Rule 4.240(F) of the *Unaccredited Law School Rules*.

Recently, the law school's ownership created a new administrative position to help complete the revision of all remaining courses and to work on an ongoing basis to improve, strengthen and expand ICOL's practical skills curriculum. I am pleased to confirm that the new position, academic dean, was filled in January with the promotion of one of its existing faculty members, Ms. Melissa Petrofsky. With Dean Petrofsky's very able assistance planning has begun to review, revise and improve ICOL's courses teaching practice-ready legal research and writing.

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**C. ICOL's Revised Course Curriculum and Syllabi.**

In continuing compliance with the CBE's request that ICOL "provide the course syllabi for the remaining courses in the law school's distance learning JD program," the following course syllabi are attached as indicated: B: Wills (2023 Winter/Spring); C: Evidence II (2023 Summer/Fall Spring); D: Constitutional Law II (2023 Summer/Fall); E: Workers' Compensation (2023 Summer/Fall); F: Professional Responsibility (2023 Summer/Fall); G: Business Associations (2023 Summer/Fall); H: FYLSX Review and Prep Course (2023 Winter/Spring).

As noted, with new faculty, the work needed to complete the conversion of ICOL's remaining course curriculum continues. Work is currently, or will soon begin, to revise and redesign the following courses that will be taught in ICOL's 2023 Summer/Fall semester (due to start early July 2023): Real Property I and Family Law. Over the next six months, it is expected that the remaining courses (to be taught in 2024) will be completed: Real Property II; Advanced Legal Writing; Agency & Partnership; Law Office Management; and Bankruptcy.

Finally, as noted above, with the assistance of Dean Petrofsky and current or new members of the faculty, it is expected that additional electives, such as Civil Discovery and Immigration Law (among others) will be created and added to ICOL's curriculum over the next year or two.

Finally, with the lessons learned from its first distance learning semester (which ended last December), revisions to several completed course syllabi will soon be made to improve each when each again taught. Since use of ICOL's online academic support resources (CALI, CasebookPlus and Adaptibar) have been both well received by students and found to be effective teaching tools by faculty, greater use of all will become the norm throughout the curriculum.

I hope my comments above provide a complete report of the current and future status of ICOL's program. As always, please let me know if you have any questions or comments about anything discussed above and, again, my sincere thanks to you for your very able assistance throughout ICOL's transformation into the distance learning program it is today and will be tomorrow.

Sincerely,



George C. Leal, Dean

Attachments A - H