



**OPEN SESSION
AGENDA ITEM II.A
JUNE 2024
COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS**

DATE: June 21, 2024

TO: Members, Committee of Bar Examiners

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

SUBJECT: Report of Administrative Updates Regarding Law Schools

I. UPDATES REGARDING ACCREDITED AND UNACCREDITED LAW SCHOOLS

The following administrative updates were provided by accredited and unaccredited law schools since the last meeting of the Committee of Bar Examiners (committee).

1. Irvine College of Law (Unaccredited Law School) is on schedule to voluntarily close effective July 31, 2024. The law school has identified Westcliff University as the custodian of records for its students and graduates. The law school worked with all students to create transition plans to allow them to complete their legal education. The law school has set forth full details set forth in its letter included as Attachment A.
2. Peoples College of Law (Unaccredited, Fixed-Facility Law School) has closed and its degree-granting authority concluded effective May 31, 2024. The law school identified Dean Ana Maria Lobos as the temporary custodian of records through June 16, 2024, as the school continues to work to identify a permanent custodian of records. The law school worked with all students to create transition plans to allow them to complete their legal education.

PROPOSED MOTION

If the committee accepts the report provided above, the following motion should be made:

MOVE, that the Committee of Bar Examiners receive and file the Report of Administrative Updates Regarding Law Schools.

ATTACHMENT LIST

- A. Letter of Status of Efforts to Close Irvine College of Law



Via Email

May 29, 2024

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

Re: Status of Efforts to Close Irvine College of Law

Dear Ms. Leonard:

I am writing to provide you and the Committee of Bar Examiners (CBE) with a status report of the ongoing efforts to close Irvine College of Law (ICOL) by July 31st. As you know, the CBE approved ICOL's voluntary resignation of its registration and its closure as a registered, unaccredited, distance learning law school at its meeting held on January 26, 2024.

A. Status of ICOL's Students

As of last January 5th, the date of ICOL's announced closing, the law school had an enrollment of thirty-two students given the absence of an incoming first year class. As reported earlier, within days of the announcement, ICOL students (primarily 2L–3L students) began the process of transferring to other law schools. As a result, and as such transfers continued, ICOL's enrollment eventually stabilized at a total of the twelve students who remain enrolled this semester: Seven first year students; two second year students; two third year students; and one fourth year student who will graduate at the end of the current semester on June 30th.

Of the twenty students who did not enroll in ICOL's final semester, nine successfully transferred and are enrolled at another registered or California accredited law school. Of the remaining eleven who did not transfer but chose not to enroll in ICOL this semester, six are first year students preparing to take or retake the June administration of the First Year Law Students' Examination, one was academically dismissed, while the remaining four have apparently decided to suspend their law studies to decide whether to take the FYLSX, or whether to apply for admission as a "start over" student at another law school of their choosing.

As for the two 2L and two 3L enrolled students who will transfer after ICOL closes, I have been counseling each as they consider which law schools to apply to. As for the five first year students who will complete their first year of law study and will then be eligible to take the October administration of the FYLSX, I intend to work with the Eligibility Department to expedite their eligibility certifications before the law school's last day of operation on July 31st.

B. ICOL's Custodian of Records

Westcliff University will assume the role of ICOL's permanent custodian of its student and graduates' records, both electronic and hard copy. Arrangements will be made to have all such records and files physically moved to the designated storage space at Westcliff before July 31st.

We are currently in the process of reviewing all ICOL's hard copy student and graduate files to ensure that all transcripts they contain have been (or soon will be) scanned and then uploaded into ICOL's legacy electronic database. Given that almost all requests received from former students and graduates are for to their academic transcripts, having all stored and maintained in a searchable database will make responding to all such requests quickly remarkably easy, often within 24 hours.

To provide a convenient and effective means for former students and graduates to submit their records requests, the current email address used by ICOL's registrar's office (registrar@irvine.edu) will be kept active for the foreseeable future. Moreover, instructions of who to contact and how to request records and transcripts once ICOL is closed will be posted on ICOL's legacy homepage.

C. ICOL's Current Operations

As promised, despite its planned closure, ICOL continues to operate compliantly during its final semester. All first-year courses needed by those working to complete their first-year studies are currently being taught while, with only one exception, all 3L or 4L courses are also being taught and completed. As a result, ICOL continues to provide all enrolled students with all academic and administrative support they need as they complete their current course work. Moreover, when each seeks to transfer to another law school, ICOL's registrar and I will provide all assistance needed for the timely preparation of their transcripts in support of their applications to their new law school.

Thus, based upon the time and effort taken since January 5th, along with the upcoming completion of all of the remaining tasks as described above, I am pleased to report that ICOL will complete each element of its approved teach-out plan as it continues to support its remaining students and that it will cease its operations in orderly and business-like manner on or before July 31st.

Please let me know if you or the CBE have any questions or comments regarding any of the issues discussed above, or as to anything else of interest as ICOL's operations as its closing draws near. In the event there are any questions, I will be more than pleased to attend and appear before the Committee during its meeting on June 21st. As always, thanks for your support throughout this process and during the remaining time that ICOL remains open and operational.

Sincerely yours,



George C. Leal, Dean
Irvine College of Law

cc: Edward Trent, Esq.