

**Section on Legal Education & Admission to the Bar
American Bar Association
Council Meeting, Open Session
Friday, May 11, 2018
Washington, D.C.**

Report to ALWD Membership
Attendee: Wanda M. Temm

Standard 205—Non-Discrimination and Equality of Opportunity

The Council unanimously approved the Standards Review Committee’s recommendations. One change is to rephrase the standard into a positive instead of a negative. The standard was that “[a] law school shall not use admission policies or take other actions to preclude admission of applicants. . . .” The recommendation changes the language to a positive, “[a] law school shall adopt, publish, and adhere to a policy of non-discrimination that prohibits the use of admission policies. . . .”

The other change adds “ethnicity” and “gender identity” to the bases of non-discrimination.

An interpretation was also added:

Interpretation 205-6

The requirements stated in Standards 205(a) and 205(b) that a law school adopt and publish policies regarding non-discrimination and equality of opportunity may be satisfied through the adoption and publication of appropriate policies by a parent institution.

Standard 206—Diversity and Inclusion

The Council unanimously approved the Standards Review Committee’s recommendations.

A law school shall demonstrate by concrete action a commitment to:

- (a) ~~Providing full opportunities for the study of law and entry to the profession by members of underrepresented groups, particularly racial and ethnic minorities.~~
- (b) ~~Having a student body, faculty, and staff that are diverse with respect to gender, race, and ethnicity, and~~
- (c) ~~Providing an environment that is inclusive with respect to race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, and disability.~~

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Standard 501—Admissions; Standard 503—Admissions Test

The Council debated the Standards Review Committee recommendation that an admissions test should no longer be required. The Council approved the change by a vote of 9 to 8. Apparently, this change

was a split-vote at the Standards Review Committee as well. Chair Maureen O'Rourke noted that a close split vote, such as this, is not normally sent on to the ABA House of Delegates for approval. However, she elected to send to the House of Delegates any way because this standard had been studied and reviewed for a considerable time.

Standard 303 Curriculum; Standard 304 Simulation Courses, Clinics, and Field Placements

The Council approved the Standards Review Committee's recommendation to move the definition of what an experiential course from Standard 303(a)(3) to Standard 304(a).

Standard 306—Distance Education

The Council approved the Standards Review Committee's recommendation to allow distance education for up to one-third of the credit hours required for a J.D. and that up to 10 of those credits could be during the first year.

Standard 307—Studies, Activities, and Field Placements Outside the United States

The Council approved the Standards Review Committee's recommendation to allow up to two-thirds of the credits required for the J.D. degree to be completed outside of the United States if obtained in a program sponsored by an ABA-approved law school.

Standard 601—Library and Information Resources, General Provisions

The Standards Review Committee reported that it did not recommend any changes in the standard. Some discussion had occurred about whether the assessment of the effectiveness of the library had to be in writing. The SRC recommended to leave as is.

Reorganization of the Council, SRC, and Accreditation Committees

Barry Currier reported that the reorganization is moving forward as planned. The reorganization of the Council and Committees will merge them into one body. This body would meet four times a year. This would save considerably staff time (and the budget is tight) and travel time for members with its resultant expenses.

Several changes will be needed in the operating rules, internal operating procedures, and the Section's Bylaws as the merger goes through. Mr. Currier noted that not all schools will immediately be placed on a ten-year site visit cycle. Moving from seven to ten years will be staggered.

NOTES: Next year, Brad Clary will be serving his second year on the Accreditation Committee. Pam Lysaght has finished her two-year term as chair of the Standards Review Committee. She is moving to the Council next year.