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Educational Policy Committee Meeting - Minutes 08/10/2017

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**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
HASTINGS COLLEGE OF THE LAW**

EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE

MINUTES SUMMARY

Thursday, August 10, 2017 – 9:00 a.m.

UC Hastings College of the Law
A. Frank Bray Board Room
198 McAllister Street, 1-Mezzanine
San Francisco, California 94102

1. Roll Call

Committee Members Present:

Chair Marci Dragun
Director Claes Lewenhaupt
Director Mary Noel Pepys
Director Chip Robertson
Director Tom Gede

Staff Present:

Chancellor & Dean David Faigman
General Counsel Elise Traynum
CFO David Seward
Interim Provost & Academic Dean Evan Lee
Academic Dean Designate Morris Ratner

Chair Marci Dragun called the meeting to order and the Secretary called the roll for the Educational Policy Committee meeting.

2. Public Comment
None.

- *3. Approval of Minutes – May 11, 2017
Chair Dragun called for approval of the May 11, 2017 minutes. Director Pepys requested that the minutes be amended to include her suggestion to consider revamping online advertising for the LLM program. Director Pepys expressed that engaging online advertising could draw on an expansive international market and increase LLM program admissions. Chair Dragun, Director Pepys and Dean Faigman agreed that this item regarding the LLM program should be added to a future agenda for appropriate discussion.

Director Pepys requested that more detail be added to the minutes in general, particularly where Directors may explain their differences in opinion. Director Gede stated a preference to keep the minutes concise, and he suggested that Directors could explicitly state where they would like a specific opinion noted in the minutes.

The minutes were approved with this addition from Director Pepys.

4. Overview of Academic Programs and Initiatives
Presented by Interim Provost & Academic Dean Evan Lee and
Academic Dean Designate Morris Ratner

4.1 LEOP

Academic Dean Designate Morris Ratner began his report on the status of LEOP. He reported that the former Director of LEOP, Jan Jemison, resigned unexpectedly on June 29th. Debbie Myers, a former LEOP grad fellow and academic skills instructor, was quickly hired as Acting Assistant Director of LEOP. Ms. Myers and Assistant Dean Stefano Moscato have kept LEOP programming running smoothly in the interim. Academic Dean Ratner noted that the LEOP orientation is running successfully this week, and the LEOP TA program will be operational when Fall classes begin.

Currently, there are 336 1Ls enrolled for Fall semester, 49 (14.6%) of whom are LEOP admissions. Last year 43/346 (12.4%) of 1Ls were LEOP admissions.

Academic Dean Morris Ratner discussed some of the dynamic issues with regards to the future of LEOP. Firstly, a statistician is evaluating student-specific outcomes from the July 2016 bar exam. This will shed further light on LEOP's successfulness in advancing first-time bar passage success. Secondly, faculty is engaged in a review of the role of LEOP admissions on quantitative figures, specifically the role of LSAT in the admission process. Currently the College is using a "soft floor" of 150 for LEOP admissions. Thirdly, the programmatic structure of LEOP is undergoing a shift from a separate immersion program toward an integrated piece of the College's academic support infrastructure. As an example, LEOP admits used to have a LEOP TA support system for every 1L class, whereas now academic skills instruction has been so intensively streamlined into many 1L classes that LEOP students no longer have to choose between LEOP and non-LEOP academic support programming.

The LEOP Director job posting is active. Academic Dean Ratner explained that candidates will be assessed on their open-mindedness and willingness to experiment with different design and management options of the LEOP program in the future.

4.2 Implementation of Bar Success Reforms

Academic Dean Designate Morris Ratner discussed some differences anticipated between outcomes for 2016 and 2017 bar takers. He explained that one big difference is that in 2017, the exam duration shortened from three days to two days. Also, the MBE portion of the exam now comprises 50% of the score. While the shorter test duration seemed to be less exhausting for students, the metrics of the students who sat for the July 2017 bar exam are the lowest in recent years. The greatest decay was seen in the 75th and 90th percentile for this group. Academic Dean Ratner speculated that some of this decay may be a result of the “transfer-out problem,” which was particularly sharp in the class of 2017.

According to Academic Dean Ratner, students taking the bar exam in 2017 were more prepared than the July 2016 test takers in 2 key dimensions. First, the average number of upper division bar classes increased to 2013-2014 levels, a time when the bar pass rate was much higher. Secondly, while Hastings students have been outliers in terms of their lack of focus on commercial bar prep courses, Hastings’ state averages have improved significantly with regards to course completion. This accomplishment is explained in greater detail in Margaret Greer’s memo in the August 10 Educational Policy Committee meeting materials.

A discussion began regarding the reasons why students may not complete the commercial bar preparation courses. Academic Dean Ratner explained that the College is adapting to evolving student needs, which involves increased support around skills like time management, writing, and even the mechanisms by which they feel comfortable communicating. The academic challenges are pervasive across the bottom three quartiles, and thus the College is embarking on explicit skills instruction across all curriculum.

Two factors may influence the decline in upper division bar classes taken by students: firstly, the number of rich offerings at Hastings, and secondly, the increased experiential unit minimum required by the ABA. Additionally, Academic Dean Ratner observed that Hastings students may ‘shy away’ from more difficult classes in an effort to protect their GPAs. Academic Dean Ratner described the challenge of encouraging students to make curricular choices that are in their long-term best interests.

*5. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Educational Policy Committee, the meeting was adjourned.