

University of Arkansas School of Law

2016 Program Report

(J.D. Program, Criminal Law Certificate Program, Business Law Certificate Program)

May 18, 2016

Part One: Report of the School of Law Strategic Planning Committee

Part Two: Supplemental Information

Part One: Strategic Planning Committee Report

2016 Report of the Strategic Planning Committee
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OVERVIEW

This report approaches the strategic planning process using the standards for accreditation of American Law Schools as a template for evaluating the University of Arkansas School of Law's performance. (In this report, "our" or "we" will refer to this Law School.) Pursuant to direction from the faculty, the committee has focused on:

- * proposing programmatic outcomes, and initiating curriculum mapping with a goal of improving our curriculum and program of legal education in the future to address any areas where our current offerings do not fully meet our desired programmatic outcomes;
- * monitoring compliance with our accreditation standards;
- * updating the list of strengths and weaknesses of our program of legal education;
- * providing an end of year report to the faculty and administration evaluating our program of legal education, learning outcomes, and assessment methods, and, in cooperation with the curriculum committee, how the past year's report has been used to monitor and improve the curriculum; and
- * providing language to the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs to enable completion of the University-required Academic Program Assessment for the J.D. program.

As was the case with last year's document, this report is organized along the same lines as the standards of approval for American Law Schools, starting with a condensed explanation of each standard that we deem to be relevant to our programs, followed by documentation of how we have assessed our performance with regard to that standard, a listing of our strengths and weaknesses in that area, and finally reporting any changes in that area made during the current year as well as identifying possible modifications for the future. Because some Standards are not applicable to us (for example we made no requests for acquiescence in any major change to our program; we have no part time program, etc.), not every Standard is referenced here. In addition, for many of the provisions that are relevant, the strategic planning committee suggests that our current program and direction is appropriate and requires no action at this time.

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Mission Statement and Programmatic Outcomes

The Mission of the Law School was approved by the faculty as part of the Strategic Planning Process undertaken prior to the last sabbatical inspection by the ABA and AALS. As approved in 2010, the mission of the University of Arkansas School of Law is as follows:

The University of Arkansas School of Law is a nationally competitive, students-first learning community devoted to scholarly activity, to service, and to teaching the knowledge, skills, and core values needed for success in an increasingly diverse legal profession serving Arkansas and the world.

In March of 2016, the faculty adopted the following programmatic outcomes which we intend to assess in future semesters, beginning with a curriculum mapping project that is currently underway:

1. **We train our students in ethics.** Graduates should demonstrate a fundamental understanding of the ethical responsibilities of an attorney as a client representative, officer of the court, and member of society.
2. **We train our students to understand the law.** Graduates should demonstrate a fundamental understanding of the basic elements of substantive law, procedure, and legal theory.
3. **We train our students to communicate the law.** Graduates should demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills in the context of predictive, persuasive, and prescriptive application of the law.
4. **We train our students to use the law.** Graduates should demonstrate a reasonable array of legal practice skills, including the ability to conduct legal research, to engage in problem solving, to interact with clients, and to advocate on their behalf.
5. **We train our students to be professionals.** Graduates should demonstrate professionalism by conducting themselves in a professional manner, including by participating in opportunities to increase their professional knowledge and skills.

Chapter 2 Organization and Administration

Standard 201 Law School Governance

This standard states that: (1) the dean and faculty shall have primary authority over curriculum, instruction, evaluation, admissions, and standards; (2) the dean and faculty should have the ability to make recommendations regarding hiring, promotion, and tenure; (3) the dean and faculty shall each have a significant role in determining educational policy; and (4) university policies applicable to the law school must be consistent with the ABA standards.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of faculty policies manual
 - review of faculty minutes from the last two years
 - meetings with the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
 - conversations with the chair of the curriculum committee
 - review of University policies

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - our dean and faculty retain authority over curriculum, instruction, and admissions
 - the dean and faculty, through our committee on promotion and tenure procedures, have the ability to make recommendations regarding hiring, promotion, and tenure
 - there is no apparent conflict between university policies and the ABA standards

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - none are apparent

- * Current Year changes include:
 - faculty recommendation for a change in our promotion and tenure documents to reflect that all of our tenure and tenure track faculty be able to vote on all matters, rather than removing certain hiring, reappointment and promotion matters from tenured or tenure track faculty whose locus of tenure was within the legal writing or clinical programs
 - other than a variety of routine revisions to the law school curriculum (new hires, new promotions and the granting of tenure to some of the faculty, approval of new classes; approval of skills and upper-level writing certification for various courses; etc), we have not made any substantial changes in recent years in the way the law school is governed aside from the new programmatic objectives adopted March 4, 2016

- * Possible modifications:
 - we will need to pursue approval from the University Board of Trustees to the proposed changes in our tenure standards relating to voting rights for all law faculty

Standard 202 Resources for Program

This standard essentially requires an accredited law school to have current and anticipated financial resources “sufficient for it to operate in compliance with the Standards and to carry out its program of legal education.” We are also required to have an annual accounting from the University.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - discussion with Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
 - discussion with the Budget and Human Resources Director

- * Our strengths in this area are
 - we have policies and practices in place for both short and long-term financial planning
 - we have an active development staff and the support of the University
 - we are designated as a Best Value, which makes our student recruiting easier and helps support our tuition revenues
 - we have a modest operating reserve
 - University costs are posted daily, and our budget director can access current information about how the University treats our resources and costs. In addition, books are closed out monthly to allow regular reports about our financial situation.

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - the general economic climate for law schools is a challenging one
 - while state funding is generally stable, the continued decline in court fees funds as a source of state revenue is an ongoing concern

- * Current Year changes include:
 - none

- * Possible modifications:
 - none suggested

Standard 203 Dean

The Dean should be a tenured member of the faculty with authority to fulfill the obligations of the position.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of University policies
 - review of our faculty policies manual and personnel document
 - annual evaluation of the Dean by the faculty, and participation by the faculty in the decision of the University to pursue an extension of her initial 5-year term

- * We believe our policies and practice in this regard are adequate; no changes have been made the past year; none are recommended or contemplated.

Standard 205 Non-Discrimination and Equality of Opportunity

Three of the subsections in Standard 205 apply to us:

- (a) A law school shall not use admission policies or take other action to preclude admission of applicants or retention of students on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability.
- (b) A law school shall foster and maintain equality of opportunity for students, faculty, and staff, without discrimination or segregation on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability.
- (d) Non-discrimination and equality of opportunity in legal education includes equal employment opportunity. A law school shall communicate to every employer to whom it furnishes assistance and facilities for interviewing and other placement services the school's firm expectation that the employer will observe the principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age and disability in regard to hiring, promotion, retention and conditions of employment.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - meetings with the Associate Dean of Students, and the Director of Career Services
 - a review of the Law School's "Discrimination Policy;" Fall 2016 Application for Admission Instructions and Admission Policy; and ABA Required Disclosures (Standard 509 Information Report)
 - conversation with the Assistant Director of Admissions

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - with regard to admissions we do not discriminate in admissions; the use of index admission ensures that all qualified applicants who meet a certain threshold are admitted based on their undergraduate grade point averages and performance on the LSAT
 - the use of some non-index admissions allows the law school to admit some applicants who do not qualify for index admission but who otherwise contribute to our goal of admitting a diverse student body (with diversity being broadly defined to consider a range of factors including: age; gender; cultural, ethnic and racial background; etc.
 - our policy also provides that "no applicant shall be admitted ... unless the admissions committee determines that the applicant has a reasonable likelihood of graduating"
 - with regard to subsection(b), we provide opportunities for diverse student groups including BALSAs, APALSAs, HLSAs, and others
 - with regard to employment opportunities, our career services office provides all prospective employers with a copy of our non-discrimination statement, all of whom must sign and return a copy indicating that they agree to abide by it

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - when overall application numbers are down, as in the current economic climate, it becomes more challenging to recruit and retain a diverse student body

- * Current year changes
 - the law school has received funding to host an annual program designed to expand diversity in law schools and in the legal profession by providing a pipeline for under-represented population groups to enter law school. During the in-residence program, rising college juniors and seniors from under-represented population groups are introduced to the legal profession and trained in strategies for taking the law school entrance exam, known as the LSAT. Funding from the Walmart Legal Department will enable the law school to continue this program for the next three years. The primary goal is to increase diversity in the legal profession by encouraging under-represented populations to consider careers in law and prepare them for admission to law school.

- * Suggested Modifications
 - none at this time

Standard 206 Diversity and Inclusion

"(a) Consistent with sound legal education policy and the Standards, a law school shall demonstrate by concrete action a commitment to diversity and inclusion by providing full opportunities for the study of law and entry into the profession by members of underrepresented groups, particularly racial and ethnic minorities, and a commitment to having a student body that is diverse with respect to gender, race, and ethnicity. (b) Consistent with sound educational policy and the Standards, a law school shall demonstrate by concrete action a commitment to diversity and inclusion by having a faculty and staff that are diverse with respect to gender, race, and ethnicity."

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - meetings with the Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, the Associate Dean of Students, and the Director of Career Services
 - review of Law School faculty and staff directories
 - review of 2012 Diversity Report submitted to Charles F. Robinson, Vice Provost for Diversity Affairs; Faculty composition tables from the Law School's Annual ABA Report

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we comply with University Academic Policy 1405.15G, addressing diversity in hiring
 - in recruiting faculty, we advertise in a range of publications and on listservs that are likely to reach potential faculty of color
 - we also comply with the AALS Statement of Good Practices for the Recruitment and Retention of Minority Law Faculty Members
 - of the 33 tenured or tenure-track faculty as of Spring 2016, 15 are female and 18 male
 - 9 of these 33 - five women and four men - are currently untenured. Women comprise 45% of the tenured or tenure-track faculty overall and 41% of the tenured faculty.
 - 24% of the faculty are racially diverse: 8 of the 33 (6 women and 2 men) - self-identify as people of color.
 - women comprise about 80% of staff listed on the Law School webpage as of April 2016
 - our student body also reflects considerable diversity: in 2015, the student body of 350 students was approximately 80% white, 18% other races (7% Hispanic, 2.5% American Indian or Alaska Native, 1.7% Asian, 4.5% Black, and 2.5% two or more races). One percent of students did not report race/ethnicity.
 - the use of non-index admission allows the admission of some applicants who do not qualify for index admission but who otherwise contribute to our goal of a diverse student body. We may consider a range of factors including, but not limited to, age, gender, and cultural, ethnic and racial background. However, "no applicant shall be admitted under this section unless the Admissions Committee determines that the applicant has a reasonable likelihood of graduating from law school."

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - our staff, in particular, is not as diverse with respect to race or ethnicity as we would like

- * We have no recent changes to report or modification to suggest at this time

Standard 207 Reasonable Accommodation for Qualified Individuals With Disabilities

- * The law school must provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. The law school must adhere to written policies and procedures for assessing and handling requests for reasonable accommodations made by qualified individuals with disabilities.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - meetings with the Associate Dean of Students, the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities and Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.
 - review of our website and the University disability policy.

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we have a written policy on accommodations for disabled students in Section 6-301-305 of the faculty policies manual. This information is also posted on our website: <http://law.uark.edu/academics/jd/students-with-disabilities/>.
 - requests for reasonable accommodations for students are made through the University's Center for Education Excellence (CEA), which works with the Associate Dean of Students and our Coordinator for Students with Disabilities to approve and implement reasonable accommodations. These requests are nearly always granted..
 - the CEA makes available to faculty a range of materials that give guidance in making classes more accessible for students with disabilities:
<http://cea.uark.edu/faculty/index.php>
 - the University's Policies and Procedures detail the disability accommodation policy for all University employees and applicants. These policies and procedures conform to the ABA requirements to provide reasonable accommodation to persons with disabilities and are available at <http://vcfa.uark.edu/policies/fayetteville/oeoc/2031.php>.

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - at the current time, we do not clearly articulate the “essential eligibility requirements” for participation in our J.D. program. In the past, these were embedded within the Fundamental Lawyering Skills and Educational Goals of the Program, as included in Faculty Policies 3-702 and 3-703, which also included certain programmatic outcomes. We will need to amend these policies to clearly articulate the minimum eligibility requirements as distinct from minimum acceptable competencies that must be achieved for successful completion of the J.D. Program.

- * Current Year changes include:
 - none

- * Possible modifications:
 - we recommend revision to faculty policies 3-702 and 3-703 to clearly articulate the essential eligibility requirements for our program

Chapter 3 Program of Legal Education

Standard 301 Objectives of Program of Legal Education

We must maintain a rigorous program that prepares students for legal practice that is effective, ethical, and responsible, and must establish and publish learning outcomes to achieve these objectives.

NOTE—Although Standard 301 appears to address both the program of legal education and learning outcomes, this report will defer consideration of our work on learning outcomes until the discussion of Standard 302, which deals specifically with this issue.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - information from the curriculum mapping project by the strategic planning committee
 - review of faculty policies manual
 - review of our webpage
 - review of the faculty minutes from the last year
 - employment data
 - feedback from Arkansas Bar Association Law Schools Committee

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - our curriculum is flexible with a wide range of options
 - our graduates obtain superior employment rates
 - our graduates achieve good to excellent bar pass rates most years
 - we have very high student/alumni/bar satisfaction with program

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - students do not self-report our academic program as being rigorous
 - pass rates on the February bar exam have been disappointing in the past two years
 - in the past we have had insufficient and inconsistent data collection and reporting of information so obtained

- * Current Year changes include:
 - several changes to class credits, certification, offerings
 - approval of a new, on-line Multistate Substance and Strategies Course designed to improve bar examination performance and a one-week boot camp to be held after the spring, 2016 semester
 - adoption of a new policy setting a 1-credit hour maximum for intersession courses and a maximum 6-credit hour load in the primary summer sessions
 - Dean Leeds has indicated preliminary funding for a new position to address both academic enhancement and bar pass issues

- * Possible modifications:
 - it is anticipated that the strategic planning committee will report on areas in which the curriculum might need reform or adjustment as part of the ongoing assessment of our programs in light of the recently adopted programmatic outcomes approved by the faculty on March 4, 2016.

Standard 302 Learning Outcomes

We must have and publish outcomes that include:

- Knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law;
- Legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem-solving, and written and oral communication in the legal context;
- Exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system; and
- Other professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of faculty policies & faculty meeting minutes
 - discussion with the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
 - review of the webpage and the on-line course catalog
 - review of individual syllabi from faculty

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - recent discussion of the programmatic goals by the faculty, with virtually unanimous support for the specific outcomes identified as programmatic goals
 - a standing strategic planning committee specifically charged with working with the programmatic outcomes, assessment, and programmatic change over time

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - our programmatic goals are new, so we have not fully decided on the particular competencies that will be used to assess compliance with each goal
 - we are still in the process of mapping our curriculum to determine where we might have gaps in seeing that all students are given what we regard as the basic training necessary to enter the legal profession
 - while some faculty include their individual course objectives on their syllabi, not all faculty do so, and the programmatic goals are currently not as visible on the webpage as might be ideal

- * Current year changes include:
 - adoption of five programmatic objectives by the faculty on March 4, 2016
 - we have a major upgrade to our website planned for May of 2016. Revisions to the substantive sections of our website are deferred until after the new site is operating, but we have procedures in place to ensure that before the end of the summer sessions, the programmatic objectives will be included in our online materials

- * Possible modifications:
 - the strategic planning committee is currently in the process of preparing a proposed amendment to articulate the essential requirements to participate in the J.D. program, including revising faculty policies 3-702 and 3-703, and then to include a fuller explanation of our programmatic outcomes in the online catalog

Standard 303 Curriculum

NOTE: Most of this report examines the general requirements of each relevant standard. Because standard 303 has multiple subsections with discrete requirements, each of those subsections is dealt with separately. With regard to changes made during the current year applicable to this entire section, the strategic planning committee is currently conducting a detailed curriculum mapping project that is intended to provide the basis for future curricular modifications as we identify areas where our programmatic objectives are not being as well met as we desire.

Standard 303(a)(1) Professional responsibility

We are required to see that our students successfully complete at least one course of at least two credit hours in professional responsibility that includes substantial instruction in the history, goals, structure, values, and responsibilities of the legal profession and its members.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of our faculty policies manual
 - curriculum mapping project that includes the extent to which professional responsibility issues are taught and assessed within our current curriculum

- * Our strengths in the area are:
 - Not only does our program require all students to successfully complete a class in Professional responsibility, but preliminary results for the curriculum mapping project indicates the aspects of professional responsibility are taught and often assessed in many law school classes
 - preliminary data (from a mapping of 49 classes regularly taught by full time faculty) indicates that full time faculty teach aspects of professional responsibility in 45 of those 49 classes and that the material is included in at least some of the course assessments in 18 of those courses.

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - we have not yet finished curriculum mapping, so although we have a very large number of classes in which professional responsibility is both taught and assessed, we do not yet know how many of those classes (other than our required class) cover professional responsibility at more than a very basic, or introductory level.

- * Current year changes include:
 - specific identification of the following programmatic outcome: **“We train our students in ethics.** Graduates should demonstrate a fundamental understanding of the ethical responsibilities of an attorney as a client representative, officer of the court, and member of society.”

- * Possible modifications
 - when we undertake further assessment of this particular outcome, we will need to determine the extent to which we teach and assess professional ethics at more than a basic or introductory level

Standard 303(a) (2) Legal Writing

We are required to see that students successfully complete at least one writing experience in the first year and at least one additional writing experience after the first year, both of which are faculty supervised.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of our faculty policies manual
 - curriculum mapping project which includes the extent to which predictive, persuasive and prescriptive writing experiences and evaluation now permeate the curriculum

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - Our program requires students to complete 6 credits of LRW instruction in the first year, and at least 2 credits in a faculty supervised certified upper level legal writing class prior to graduation. LRW I focuses on predictive writing; LRW II focuses on persuasive writing.
 - in addition to our two required first year writing classes, our current curricular offerings include a variety of upper level writing classes that teach a wide range of writing skills
 - in addition, preliminary results for the curriculum mapping project that has been started by the strategic planning committee indicates that legal writing is taught and assessed in most law school classes
 - preliminary data from the mapping of 41 classes that are not specifically designated as LRW classes, indicates that full time faculty teach and assess aspects of legal writing in most courses. In the 41 non-LRW courses mapped to date, 35 covered predictive writing and 34 assessed it; 25 covered persuasive writing and 17 assessed it; and 22 covered prescriptive writing and 16 assessed it. In the 8 LRW courses(both first year and upper level) mapped to date, 7 covered predictive writing and all 7 assessed it; 3 covered persuasive writing and 3 assessed it; and 2 covered prescriptive writing and 2 assessed it.

- * Our weaknesses in this area are:
 - while we have a very significant number of classes that teach predictive and persuasive written communication, there are far fewer examples of classes that cover or assess prescriptive writing ability
 - in addition, while we know that writing skills are regularly assessed, we have not specifically ascertained the extent to which written communication is taught or assessed at more than a very basic or introductory level, or how many opportunities there are for a student to actually develop mastery of these skills

- * Current year changes include:
 - specific identification of the following programmatic outcome: **“We train our students to communicate the law.** Graduates should demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills in the context of predictive, persuasive, and prescriptive application of the law.”

- * Suggested modifications include:
 - when we undertake further assessment of this particular outcome, we will need to determine the extent to which we teach and assess written communication skills (including predictive, persuasive and prescriptive writing) at more than a basic or introductory level

Standard 303(a) (3) & (b) Experiential Learning

Effective with the class entering in the fall of 2016, we are required to insure that students successfully complete at least one or more experiential course(s) totaling at least six credit hours. An experiential course must be a simulation course, a law clinic, or a field placement. While we are not required to have all students take a clinic or field placement, we are required to offer substantial opportunities for students to engage in law clinics or field placements

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - consultation with faculty who teach our clinics
 - meeting with Director of Externship Programs and Academic Support
 - review of course catalogue and on-line course descriptions
 - review of faculty policies manual

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we have numerous offerings that qualify as experiential learning classes
 - existing offerings include five clinics regularly offered (32-40 positions/semester) for 3-4 credits/semester with the possibility of enrolling in an advanced clinic for a second semester for 2-3 credits
 - most clinics have included a seminar component for some time, along with readings and live client representation, combined to teach doctrine, theory, skills and ethics, and effective with the 2016-17 academic year advanced clinic students will also have a classroom component
 - the clinics already all give students numerous opportunities for performance, subject to on-going faculty supervision and feedback, with self-evaluation incorporated throughout the semester
 - we have nine types of externships, offering approximately 40 positions each semester, generally offering from two to four credits (although the capstone is up to 12 credits), including: Capstone, Corporate Counsel, Criminal Defense, Criminal Prosecution, Government, International, Judicial, Legislative, and Public Interest
 - the director of externships and the chair of the curriculum committee have been working together to insure that externships will meet the new standards concerning teaching of doctrine, theory, skills and ethics under the on-going supervision of field supervisors, and to see that all students write self-reflection papers
 - we also offer a range of simulation-based experiential learning classes, including Trial Advocacy; Mediation; Child Welfare Practice; Conflict Resolution; Interviewing, Counseling & Negotiation; and Business Lawyering Skills among others

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - our faculty policies still speak in terms of “skills” classes (see faculty policy 2-601 to 2-604), when it would definitely be clearer to have language which tracks the fact that these are designed to be the same thing as experiential learning courses
 - with regard to judicial externships, there are still barriers to students providing sufficient hands-on work, including the fact that filings are now on-line, and access is severely restricted for security reasons
 - the limited number of hearings and trials also limit the experiences that some of our students obtain in certain judicial externships
 - students in certain judicial externships have not been sufficiently proactive in interacting

with the judges

-sometimes students fail to turn in revised work product to the judges after projects receive initial feedback

-one of the legislative externship positions has not consistently provided students with enough hands-on work, but because there were no students in that placement in the spring of 2016 and no student applied for the fall of 2016, there has been no direct communication with the field supervisor as to the requirements for externship credit to be awarded

* Current year changes include:

In November of 2015, the faculty amended its policies to explicitly require that “before graduation” every student is required to take “[a]ny combination of courses which total at least a minimum of six credit hours of experiential learning as designated from time to time by the dean.”

-specific identification of the following programmatic outcome: “**We train our students to use the law.** Graduates should demonstrate a reasonable array of legal practice skills, including the ability to conduct legal research, to engage in problem solving, to interact with clients, and to advocate on their behalf.”

-the curriculum committee individually reassessed all of our skills offerings to insure that they meet the requirements of standard 303

-the faculty increased the authorized credit for the international externship to up to 5 credits

-the director of externships specifically met with judges in the judicial externship to make sure that they were all aware of the minimum expectations and requirements for hands-on work

* suggested modifications include:

-when we undertake further assessment of this particular outcome, we will need to determine the extent to which we teach and assess experiential skills at more than a basic or introductory level

-we will probably want to amend our faculty policies so that we certify experiential learning courses rather than calling them “skills” classes, to clarify and simplify our requirements

-when we move to the new webpage, we will want to make sure that students can easily locate the practice rules associated with externships and clinics

-with regard to judicial externships, the director of externships plans to experiment in the fall of 2016 with additional class components, and to follow up with the judges to make sure that students are receiving sufficient hands-on experience in their placements

-with regard to the legislative externship, prior to the enrollment of any student in the legislative externship, the director of externships will speak with the local chief of staff/field supervisor to insure clear communications about minimum expectations for the award of credit. No placements should be made unless the director is satisfied that the placement will meet these standards

Standard 303(b)(2) Pro Bono

We are required to offer substantial opportunities for student participation in pro bono legal services, including law-related public service activities.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - discussion with the Dean
 - discussion with Dean Emeritus and Professor Cynthia Nance, who will be working to catalog and improve our pro bono program over the next two years

- * Our strengths in this area are
 - faculty initiatives and interests (such as the Habitat Wills Project and the Wills for Hero's projects)

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - we have not had a dedicated person working with the pro bono programs
 - historically, we have not actively promoted available pro bono options to students
 - failure to report or publicize pro bono participation within the Law School

- * Current year changes include:
 - In the spring of 2016, Dean Leeds announced the appointment of Professor Cynthia Nance, who beginning with the fall 2016 semester, will be assigned the role of "assessor" for our pro bono offerings. In this position, she will work on documenting the pro bono opportunities we already have in place and considering what processes should be put in place to improve participation in pro bono projects. She will also consider how best to document and publicize the time spent by members of the law school community on pro bono projects, as well as working to identify new projects and opportunities, and helping the Law School capitalize on opportunities and impact. Finally, she will also work on developing policies and procedures that will help us communicate developments in this area.

- * Possible modifications:
 - Professor Nance has a one-half time appointment in this role, with the expectation that her responsibilities will continue for two years, beginning in the fall of 2016. We will need to consider how to continue funding and support for pro bono opportunities at the end of her time in the position. We may also need to devote additional resources in order to accommodate suggestions that she might make to expand participation in pro bono. At the current time, her priorities (which are subject to change) are to:
 - Solicit pro bono opportunities/ build relationships
 - Solicit student participation
 - Perform "matching" between student interest and pro bono opportunities
 - Track outcomes/ evaluate both student performance, experiences and obtain feedback from entities
 - Create publicity/ generate excitement
 - Recognize service

Standard 304 Simulation Courses and Law Clinics

"(a) A simulation course provides substantial experience not involving an actual client, that (1) is reasonably similar to the experience of a lawyer advising or representing a client or engaging in other lawyering tasks in a set of facts and circumstances devised or adopted by a faculty member, and (2) includes the following: (i) direct supervision of the student's performance by the faculty member; (ii) opportunities for performance, feedback from a faculty member, and self-evaluation; and (iii) a classroom instructional component. (b) A law clinic provides substantial lawyering experience that (1) involves one or more actual clients, and (2) includes the following: (i) direct supervision of the student's performance by a faculty member; (ii) opportunities for performance, feedback from a faculty member, and self-evaluation; and (iii) a classroom instructional component."

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - consultation with faculty who teach the our clinical offerings
 - meetings with the Director of Externship Programs and Academic Support

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - Our legal clinics already meet these standards, in that as of 2016-17 each student in all of our clinics:
 - will have one or more actual clients
 - will advise or represent one or more clients
 - will have work that is directly supervised by a full-time, tenured or tenure-track faculty member
 - will have opportunities for performance and will receive regular feedback from faculty as well as the opportunity to engage in self-evaluation
 - will participate in a classroom instructional component

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - not all skills are taught and assessed in all of our simulation courses, and it might be necessary to further specify what skills courses a student must take prior to graduation in order to insure exposure to the full range of skills that the faculty has determined to be an essential component of the program of legal education at this law school

- * Current year changes include:
 - the curriculum committee independently reviewed each skills class to assure that they were all in compliance with standard 304
 - in prior years, it was possible that students in the advanced versions of some of our clinics did not have to participate in the classroom instructional component of the course, but this will change effective with clinic students in 2016-17.

- * Possible modifications:
 - we are in the midst of mapping our curriculum, and the results of that might require us to adjust some of our offerings or requirements

Standard 305 Field Placements and Other Study Outside the Classroom

“A law school may grant credit toward the J.D. degree for courses that involve student participation in studies or activities in a format that does not involve attendance at regularly scheduled class sessions, including courses approved as part of a field placement program, moot court, law review, and directed research” so long as: (1) credit is commensurate with the work; (2) a faculty member evaluates the work; (3) the activity is periodically reviewed by the faculty; and if it is a field placement a number of additional requirements are imposed. [NOTE: Our policies speak in terms of externships rather than field placements; this is not a compliance issue.]

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - meetings with Director of Externship Programs and Academic Support, and the Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
 - review of faculty policies manual

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - with regard to our board of advocates and credit earned in that program, students who receive credit perform numerous hours of work for the limited credit received
 - the director of competitions determines whether credit will be awarded; students are not assigned a letter grade
 - the board of advocates' revised by-laws were approved by the faculty in April 2013. Any future changes will also be brought before the faculty
 - with regard to externships, the director of externship programs periodically assesses the credits given for work performed, and she individually grades all students enrolled in an externship
 - there is a clear statement of the externship program's goals and methods, and a demonstrated relationship between those goals and methods and the program in operation, included in the faculty policy and the externship program handbook (located on the registrar's MyLaw page and provided to each student and field supervisor)
 - the externship program handbook articulates the method of evaluating each student's academic performance involving both the director of externship programs and the site supervisor, complete with an assessment rubric and evaluation form completed by all site supervisors and used by the director for grading
 - we require 30 hours of credit before a student may participate in an externship
 - there are three meetings with the director and each student, as well as six written reflection memo assignments

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - we do not conduct a formal or regularly scheduled periodic reviews of all of these studies or activities
 - with regard to externships, our program would benefit from additional instructional resources because at the current time the director of the externship program is responsible for all externships as well as our academic support program

- * Current year changes include:
 - the Dean has made significant efforts to find funding for a person to remove the burden of academic enhancement and support from the job responsibilities currently assigned to our director of externships
 - the field supervisor's handbook was updated in December of 2015.
 - a review of similar positions elsewhere was conducted by the strategic planning committee, and a preliminary job description is being considered by the administration. The law school's budget committee is also investigating whether the financial resources are adequate to support this new position, with the corresponding amendment to job responsibilities for the director of externships
 - amendment to the policies pursuant to which credit is awarded to students participating in the Arkansas Law Notes
 - the director of externships is in the process of creating and implementing a formal evaluation process pursuant to which students will be able to review their field supervisors. While this may not be in place by the end of the spring 2016 semester, plans are in place to make sure it is operational by the summer of 2016 and thereafter

- * Possible modifications:
 - have the law school registrar maintain an updated list of courses that involve student participation in studies or activities in a format that does not involve attendance at regularly scheduled class sessions, including courses approved as part of a field placement program, moot court, law review, and directed research, with the requirement that the list be shared each year with the curriculum committee
 - the curriculum committee should specifically undertake a periodic review of these offerings to ensure continuing compliance with this standard
 - with regard to the board of advocates, while the director of competitions already relies informally on team coaches to decide whether to award credit, it may be beneficial to formalize the process; this should be referred to the curriculum committee
 - continue work on hiring a separate person to assume responsibility for academic excellence and enhancement rather than having the director of externship do this as well
 - the strategic planning committee may want to follow up with the director of externships to make sure that field supervisors are being evaluated by students
 - once the new website is functioning (currently scheduled for May, 2016), someone will need to make sure that students are provided with sufficient access to information about the availability of and requirements for participation in these offerings

Standard 306 Distance Education

Subject to numerous specific requirements, a law school may include distance education offerings (ie, classes in which “students are separated from the faculty member or each other for more than one-third of the instruction” and faculty-student interaction is facilitated through technology. Requirements include (1) an opportunity for regular and substantive interaction between faculty member and student and among students; (2) there is regular monitoring of student effort by the faculty member and opportunity for communication about that effort; and (3) an effective process for verifying the identity of students taking distance education courses and that also protects student privacy

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - meeting with the Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
 - review of faculty resource materials available from Global Campus on their website

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we already meet or exceed the requirements of this standard.
 - the University of Arkansas Global Campus approval process is required for Law School distance learning courses and brings substantial expertise and support to our distance learning courses
 - the University subscribes to the Quality Matters rubric for all distance learning courses.
 - we have invested substantial resources in our L.L.M. program's distance learning component and these resources also benefit our J.D. program
 - we have staff and technology to support quality distance learning
 - these courses have carefully developed lessons that students proceed through on their own. Course materials are housed within the secured learning management system Blackboard. Students are granted access to course materials and video conferencing systems via University issued credentials (UARK Credentials).
 - online lessons include readings, video presentations, podcasts, and/or other learning tools to present the course material effectively. There may be periodic written assignments or projects to enhance the learning process. Most courses (all but one) include regular synchronous class meetings. Distance candidates join these lessons via video conference. Recorded lectures are available for all students via the course Blackboard site. Instructors’ contact information and virtual meeting preferences are posted to the course Blackboard sites.
 - regular communication via email, teleconference, and Blackboard communication tools are incorporated into each course at mutually agreeable times between students and the instructor.
 - distance courses are supported by the professionals at Global Campus to ensure excellence. Support includes instructional design, Blackboard support, and education & training in course delivery tools. Live synchronous discussions are offered via video conference.
 - students receive individualized instruction and technological support from a dedicated Distance Education AV Coordinator.
 - J.D. enrollment is tracked by the Law School Registrar to ensure that candidates do not exceed the credit limitation on distance enrollment.

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - we still offer relatively few distance learning opportunities
 - these programs are still new and the technology is developing; some of our partners (particularly on an international stage) have less sophisticated equipment

- * Current year changes include:
 - we offered an online bar preparation class to J.D. students from a nationally recognized specialist in both the fall of 2015 and spring of 2016
 - we offered a total of 7 courses to J.D. Candidates via distance throughout the fall 2015 and spring 2016 semesters. Of the 7 classes offered, 5 courses ultimately saw J.D. distance enrollment. We hope to increase these numbers in the future.
 - we hired a new staff member to serve as Distance Education AV Coordinator

- * Possible modifications:
 - next year's strategic planning committee should specifically meet with a representative of global campus to obtain specific information about how each of the requirements of standard 306 are met with the Global Campus policies
 - next year's strategic planning committee should consider preparing a short, standardized form to give to faculty who teach distance education courses so that we can assure ourselves that such classes continue to be taught in compliance with this standard

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

(a) A law school may grant credit for (1) studies or activities outside the United States that are approved in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and Criteria as adopted by the Council and (2) field placements outside the United States that meet the requirements of Standard 305 and are not held in conjunction with studies or activities that are approved in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and Criteria as adopted by the Council.

(b) The total credits for student participation in such studies or activities may not exceed one-third of the credits required for the J.D. degree.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - meetings with faculty who regularly teach or supervise offerings outside the United States

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we offer a limited number of classes with an international component such as transnational negotiation and Russian law, but these classes fall within the ambit of Interpretation 307-2, as these classes are based primarily here and are approved through the school's regular curriculum approval process
 - we offer one externship in China, and it is in compliance with 307(a)(2) because it meets the requirements of Standard 305
 - we do not offer any studies or activities outside the United States or field placements other than the one externship mentioned above, although we participate in a consortium of law schools to support a summer program in Cambridge, United Kingdom, which is ABA accredited and which is administered by the University of Mississippi

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - none identified (in terms of compliance with accreditation standards for the programs that we do offer)

- * Current year changes include:
 - none

- * Possible modifications:
 - none suggested

Standard 308 Academic Standards

We are required to “adopt, publish, and adhere to sound academic standards, including those for good standing, academic integrity, graduation, and dismissal” and “shall adopt, publish and adhere to written due process policies with regard to taking any action that adversely affects the good standing or graduation of a student.”

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of the webpage
 - reviewed faculty policies manual
 - reviewed faculty minutes from the last two years
 - meetings with the Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we have various policies in place regarding “good standing, academic integrity, graduation, and dismissal,” including:
 - faculty policies manual §§ 3-601 through 3-603 provide our law school’s good standing, dismissal, and readmission policies
 - sections 4.01-4.07 of Appendix Two of the faculty policies manual (which outlines “Principles of Academic Responsibility” within the Student Code of Conduct for J.D. students)
 - similar policies exist for law school graduate students; see Sections 4.01-4.07 of Appendix Three of the faculty policies manual
 - we have “due process policies” in place for an action that “adversely affects the good standing or graduation of a student,” including:
 - faculty policies manual § 3-603 outlines due process safeguards for dismissed students, including readmission petition procedures with an opportunity for full faculty review
 - sections 6.01-7.08 and 9.01-9.06 of Appendix Two of the faculty policies manual (which outline procedures for “Reporting and Investigating Violations,” procedures for the Student Conduct Council, and appellate review procedures for adverse determinations)
 - similar policies exist for law school graduate students; see sections 5.01-9.07 of Appendix Three of the faculty policies manual
 - the recently amended student complaint policy also addresses procedures for submitting complaints, including complaints based on “any action that adversely affects the good standing or graduation of the student”

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - we are still waiting for the new webpage, which is a function of working with the University administration. Installation is now scheduled for May, 2016.

- * Current year changes and possible modifications:
 - we did not make substantive modifications this year, nor do we have anything to recommend other than upgrading our webpage, as planned

Standard 309 Academic Advising and Support

We are required to “provide academic advising for students that communicates effectively the school’s academic standards and graduation requirements, and that provides guidance on course selection.” We must also “provide academic support designed to afford students a reasonable opportunity to complete the program of legal education, graduate, and become members of the legal profession.”

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - a detailed faculty survey conducted by the strategic planning committee
 - review of faculty meeting minutes
 - meetings with the Designated Academic Advisor, the Associate Dean of Students; our Director of Externships; and professionals in the Career Services Office

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - involvement of the entire faculty in the advising process pursuant to a policy which specifies that “all students [must] be advised by a member of the faculty before each registration period;” faculty policies manual § 3-101A(a)
 - the faculty member selected by each student “shall provide the student with advice regarding course selection and sequencing” and “all students must have their faculty advisor approve and sign their advising card;” in addition to an accompanying sheet with graduation and course requirements which is provided to students as part of the process
 - a very experienced, insightful and dedicated associate dean of students
 - talented and committed professionals in the career services office
 - explicit policies in our faculty policies manual which outline a multi-tiered advising process:
 - First, all students must go through an academic advising process with a faculty member prior to selecting classes for their second and third years; see faculty policies manual § 3-101A(a)
 - Second, “[a]ny student who earns more than 8 credit hours of grades lower than a ‘C,’ or a cumulative G.P.A. below a 2.15 in any given semester” must meet with the Associate Dean of Students and a designated academic advisor; § 3-101A(b).
 - Third, a “special advising program” exists for “[a]ny student who earns more than 15 credit hours of grades lower than a ‘C,’ or has a cumulative G.P.A. below 2.05”; § 3-101A(c)
 - a very talented and hard-working designated academic advisor, who is the only faculty member who can sign advising cards for students in the special advising program; faculty policies manual § 3-101A(c)
 - the designated academic advisor has an initial advising session with each such student which usually lasts from thirty to forty minutes, and she asks each student about their background and career goals, and offers counseling not only on course selection but also on time management and study techniques
 - although our bar-passage programs are evolving, in recent years we have made efforts to increase the likelihood that our students will be prepared for the bar exam by offering an online, semester-long course focused on the substance of the bar exam and exam-taking strategies. We are also experimenting with a week-long boot camp to increase bar passage rates. Our efforts in this regard are described more fully under Standard 316.

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - for this year, our designated academic advisor has continued to serve as director of our externship programs, and almost certainly has insufficient time to devote to fully meeting the needs of students in academic distress
 - our academic advising is not uniform—although the faculty survey indicated that a very small minority of our faculty was unhappy with the workload that they personally experienced

- * Current year changes include:
 - we offered an online bar preparation class taught by a nationally known expert, entitled Multistate Substance and Strategies
 - we will be offering a one week bar skills boot camp the week after spring, 2016 finals and before graduation. Current plans call for this to include 1 day of essay, 2 days of MPT and 2 days of MBE practice and preparation
 - the faculty agreed to experiment with an expanded advising system, available through the University's UASuccess program, which is supported by BlackBoard. This advising system allows the advisor to post notes that the next advisor can also see, as well as allowing access to the student's academic program to date.

- * Possible modifications:
 - assuming a determination is made that we have sufficient resources, and further assuming faculty approval and final administrative assessment that this is the optimal use of those resources, we are considering the possibility of hiring a new faculty member to take on the role of academic excellence and bar preparation
 - continued monitoring and consideration of faculty advising through the UASuccess program

Standard 310 Determination of Credit Hours for Coursework

Standard 310(a) states: “A law school shall adopt, publish, and adhere to written policies and procedures for determining the credit hours that it awards for coursework.”and Standard 310(b) defines a “credit hour” as “an amount of work that reasonably approximates ... not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work per week” during a given semester and “an equivalent amount of work” for “other academic activities ..., including simulation, field placement, clinical, co-curricular, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.”

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - discussion with various senior faculty members concerning possible interpretations of the ABA standard, review of information and policies from other schools, and adoption of a new policy on credit hour determination, at the March 31, 2016 faculty meeting.

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - flexibility in allowing faculty to structure their classes so as to best accommodate the academic goals of each course

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - we have no formalized way of assessing how much time our students are putting into their academic work outside of class time

- * Current year changes include:
 - adoption of the following policy on credit hour determination, at the March 31, 2016 faculty meeting:
“In accordance with ABA Standard 310, the School of Law awards one credit hour for 50 minutes of classroom or direct faculty instruction and the reasonable expectation of two hours of out-of-class student work per week for 14 weeks, or at least the equivalent amount of work for academic activities including simulation, field placement, clinical, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours. In addition to the 14 weeks of class session, our semester includes two weeks for review and examinations. We award credit hours for coursework that extends over any period of time (e.g., summer session and intersession courses) that meets the minimum total amount of classroom or direct faculty instruction and out-of-class student work.”

- * Possible Modifications
 - we may want to suggest that faculty class syllabi address minimum work expectations
 - such a disclaimer could be along the lines of: “The ABA requires students to complete an average of at least two hours of out-of-class work each week for each credit hour awarded. Class assignments have been designed with this expectation in mind.”

Standard 311 Academic Program and Academic Calendar

This standards mandates that law schools:

- (1) “shall have an academic year of not fewer than 140 days on which classes and examinations are regularly scheduled in the law school, extending into not fewer than eight calendar months” and “shall provide adequate time for reading periods and breaks, but such time does not count toward the 140-day academic requirement”
- (2) “shall require, as a condition for graduation, successful completion of a course of study of not fewer than 83 credit hours”; at least “64 of these credit hours shall be in courses that require attendance in regularly scheduled classroom sessions or direct faculty instruction.”
- (3) “shall require that the course of study for the J.D. degree be completed in no earlier than 24 months and, except in extraordinary circumstances, no later than 84 months after a student has commenced law study . . .”
- (4) “shall not permit a student to be enrolled at any time in coursework that exceeds 20 percent of the total credit hours required by that school for graduation”
- (5) shall only give credit “for course work taken after the student has matriculated in a law school”
- (6) “shall adopt, publish, and adhere to a written policy requiring regular class attendance.”

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of our class and exam schedules for recent semesters
 - review of faculty policies manual
 - review of faculty minutes from the last few years
 - meeting with the Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we have faculty policies that address all of these requirements

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - none identified

- * Current year changes include:
 - In April, 2015, we amended our faculty policies manual so that § 3-106(b) now reads: “At least 64 of a student’s credit hours shall be in courses that require attendance in regularly scheduled classroom sessions or direct faculty instruction.”
 - On April 24, 2015, the faculty amended faculty policy 3-105 so that it now explicitly states that “Credits toward the J.D. degree may only be awarded for course work taken after the student has matriculated as a law student in a law school.”
 - In November of 2015, we amended our policy on maximum loads that may be taken by students, so that § 3-202 of the faculty policies manual now reads as follows:
§ 3-202. Maximum Loads.
 - (a) In a semester, except when the dean otherwise permits, no student shall take courses totaling more than sixteen semester hours of credit. No student may be enrolled in course work that accounts for more than 18 credits during a single semester.

- (b) No student shall take more than six (6) credit hours in each of the two primary summer sessions. The treatment, for purposes of this limitation, of Clinic courses and externships that extend over both primary summer sessions will be determined each summer by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs after consultation with the faculty member or members responsible for the Clinic courses or externships involved.
- (c) In an intersession, except when the Dean otherwise permits, no student shall take more than one credit hour.

-the law school registrar now keeps track of the 64 credit requirement through her graduation check worksheet. She has a column that lists the credit hours each student has taken that do not count toward the 64 credits. This "excluded hours" column includes credits from: out-of-career courses; externships; journals; board of advocates; independent research; interschool competitions; and student coordinating attorney.

*

Possible modifications:

–Faculty policy 3-105 is entitled “Residence Requirements,” which does not really put a student on notice that it will include a requirement that credit may only be awarded for course work taken after matriculation as a law student. It might be preferable if this requirement could be relocated to a section that is more intuitive for someone trying to find the requirement

Standard 313 Degree Programs in Addition to J.D.

We can offer “a degree program other than [a] J.D. degree” only if the ABA “has granted acquiescence in the program.”

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of faculty minutes from the last few years

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we appear to be in compliance since we have obtained acquiescence for our non-J.D. programs, including the LL.M. in Agricultural and Food Law and all certificate programs open to non-J.D. students
 - the LL.M. program sought and received acquiescence decades ago when the program first opened, and when we launched our distance component, we submitted a ‘Notice of Change’ and asked the ABA to confirm that we did not need acquiescence for that change on the grounds that it did not in any way present a risk of detracting from the J.D. program; we received such confirmation in April 2014
 - we have ABA acquiescence for our Criminal Law and Business Law certificate programs

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - none are apparent

- * Current year changes include:
 - none last year

- * Possible modifications:
 - we are currently considering revisions to the J.D./M.B.A. program which, if offered as a joint degree, might require such acquiescence

Standard 314 Assessment of Student Learning

We must use both formative and summative assessment methods to measure and improve student learning and provide meaningful feedback to students.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of faculty policies governing assessment including:
 - feedback for LRW courses
 - assessment measures required in skills classes
 - requirements governing examinations in general
 - a variety of faculty surveys and discussions conducted by the strategic planning committee with members of the law faculty

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - a faculty deeply committed to positive student outcomes
 - active and ongoing consideration, review and revision to our curriculum and teaching methods
 - midterms in first-semester first year courses, with feedback before the first-semester final exams
 - low student-faculty ratio, which allows for individualizes faculty-student interactions and feedback
 - requirement of formative and summative assessment in all LRW and skills classes
 - all students are exposed to a range of assessment techniques

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - insufficient resources dedicated to academic enhancement, and an inability to identify students who may have difficulties early in their time at the law school
 - we are in the very early stage of mapping which courses are designed to achieve the different learning outcomes that we have identified for our students

- * Current year changes include:
 - the strategic planning committee began collecting data on assessment methods from full time faculty, as well as attitudes towards different assessment alternatives
 - the committee also initiated curriculum mapping to identify which courses are designed to achieve which of the various learning outcomes that we identified as being critical components of our program; when this is done we will go back and gather additional information on each of the items being mapped, including more detailed assessment information

- * Possible modifications:
 - we will need to conduct the assessment of each of the programmatic outcomes adopted by the faculty, and to obtain information about how teachers are currently assessing each of those objectives
 - that information may require consideration of possible changes in our policies to explicitly encourage varied and multiple assessment techniques and to ensure that all students are exposed to all kinds of assessments
 - we may also need to seek ways in which to expand the use of formative assessment in various courses and summative assessment in the programmatic outcomes

Standard 315 Evaluation of Program of Legal Education, Learning Outcomes and Assessment Methods

We must engage in ongoing evaluation of our programs, learning outcomes and assessment and make changes for improvement

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of faculty meeting minutes
 - discussion with chairs of curriculum committee
 - meetings with the faculty to determine which courses cover which of the recently adopted programmatic outcomes

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - active and dynamic faculty governance
 - very active and committed curriculum committee
 - active strategic planning committee
 - supportive administration

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - we have not yet had time to adapt to new accreditation requirements and formalize some of the data collection and utilization methods
 - our efforts at staying current and relevant take a lot of faculty time

- * Current year changes include:
 - the faculty adopted five specific programmatic outcomes
 - members of the faculty attended two national conferences dealing with these topics, and reported back to the strategic planning committee
 - representatives from the global campus with experience in programmatic assessment and curriculum mapping began participating in the strategic planning committee
 - the strategic planning committee initiated data collective efforts designed to map which programmatic objectives are being taught in which classes, and where and how those objectives are being assessed

- * Possible modifications:
 - the strategic planning committee needs to finish the current curriculum mapping project, and then will need to identify which of the outcomes to evaluate more comprehensively first. Efforts next year will need to focus on gathering detailed information about the extent to which each course covers that outcome, and determine with some particularity how it is assessed. This information may lead to modification of course requirements, curriculum requirements, advising, or other changes to our program of legal education

Standard 316 Bar Passage

We must demonstrate average bar pass rate of 75% or more, or a pass rate not significantly lower than the overall pass rate of the applicable jurisdictions where our students take bar exams, or fit within various exceptions and explanations. Beginning in the fall of 2016, we begin reporting 2 years of data.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - consideration of reports from the Arkansas Bar, Board of Bar Examiners
 - review of our posted bar passage data to ensure accuracy and compliance
 - meeting with the Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - the administration pays very close attention to bar pass rates, and communicates this information promptly to the faculty for consideration and discussion
 - an average in excess of the minimum required, and higher than average pass rates in the state
 - we tend to have a higher than average pass rate in relation to Arkansas bar exam takers generally
 - a solid relationship with the Arkansas Board of Bar Examiners, which is where most of our graduates take the bar exam

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - when overall pass rates decline, we are also subject to declining pass rates
 - As is true nation-wide, we have seen declining average pass rates in the last few years. Our pass rates for recent administrations of the bar exam, for first time takers, has been as follows:

	<u>Feb</u>	<u>July</u>
2013	70.6%	88.9%
2014	90%	68.9%
2015	75%	78.8%
2016	50%	

- * Current year changes include:
 - a nationally recognized expert on the bar exam began offering an online bar preparation course entitled Multistate Substance and Strategies Course in both the fall and spring semesters
 - at the end of the spring, 2016 semester (in the week after the final examinations but before graduation), we will be offering a one week bar skills boot camp, with current plans calling for 1 day of essay, 2 days of MPT and 2 days of MBE preparation and practice. All graduating students are encouraged to participate in this opportunity
 - members of the administration have met with Barbri to discuss the possibility of an expanded collaboration
 - the Dean has also been working on funding for a position to be devoted to both academic excellence and bar passage, with the expectation that this position would involve regular teaching of bar passage skills and information

- * Possible modifications:
 - the hiring of a dedicated faculty member to offer a comprehensive program of academic excellence and bar passage skills and information
 - the administration may continue to explore the possibility of an extended collaboration with Barbri
 - if our bar pass rates do decline, we may want to form a specific faculty committee charged with the task of working on this issue

Chapter 4 The Faculty

Standard 401 Qualifications

“A law school shall have a faculty whose qualifications and experience enable the law school to operate in compliance with the Standards and carry out its program of legal education. The faculty shall possess a high degree of competence, as demonstrated by academic qualification, experience in teaching or practice, teaching effectiveness, and scholarship.”

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of the faculty policies manual
 - review of aggregated, mean average scores for our faculty from student evaluations
 - review of faculty biography pages on our website

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - even a cursory glance at the faculty biographies on our website indicates that our faculty possesses more than adequate qualifications and experience to ensure that the law school operates in compliance with the ABA Standards
 - our faculty possesses impressive academic qualifications from a variety of institutions.
 - we have been extremely successful in recent recruiting efforts, attracting new faculty with exemplary qualifications
 - the mean average scores for law school faculty on recent student evaluations demonstrate our faculty’s teaching effectiveness

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - none are apparent

- * Current year changes include:
 - the Dean has dedicated a significant portion of a faculty meeting near the end of the academic year to specifically consider the curricular needs for the next year’s hiring cycle. This allows the hiring committee to focus on specific areas where the faculty believes our program would most benefit from additional coverage

- * Possible modifications:
 - it might be desirable to regularly include at least one luncheon presentation on teaching, outcomes, or assessments as part of each semester’s enrichment program

Standard 402 Size of Full-Time Faculty

We must have a “sufficient number of full-time faculty to enable the law school to operate in compliance with the Standards,” relative to the size of the student body and the faculty’s teaching, scholarship and service obligations.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of faculty policies manual
 - review list of faculty members
 - review faculty-student ratio numbers from U.S. News & World Report reporting

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we have nearly forty full-time faculty members (counting full-time visiting faculty members).
 - the size of our full-time faculty is sufficient when compared with our student population; for example, in 2014 our student to faculty ratio was 11.5 to 1, and in 2015 it was 11.6 to 1. which was comparable to the student/faculty ratios at peer institutions
 - the size of our full-time faculty allows us to maintain reasonable teaching loads (the normal teaching load for full-time faculty members is twelve credits per academic year, per § 7-201 of our faculty policies manual) which allows faculty members adequate time to pursue scholarship, service, and other professional interests

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - to further improve our ability to offer specialized training and to enrich our certificate programs, it would be nice to add additional faculty lines; funding for such initiatives is expected to be difficult to come by
 - this is not an accreditation issue, merely an observation

- * Current year changes include:
 - none

- * Possible modifications:
 - none suggested at this time

Standard 403 Instructional Role of Faculty

(1) full-time faculty “shall teach substantially all of the first one-third of each student’s coursework”; (2) full-time faculty shall teach either “more than half of all of the credit hours actually offered by the law school, or . . . two-thirds of the student contact hours generated by student enrollment at the law school”; and (3) law schools “shall ensure effective teaching by all persons providing instruction to its students.”

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of faculty policies manual
 - review of our recent academic course schedules
 - meeting with Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - full-time faculty teach all of our first-year courses (with occasional visiting roles during sabbaticals or other situations when full-time faculty are on leave)
 - full-time faculty teach the vast majority of credit hours offered at our law school; for example, full-time faculty members taught 175 of the 223 credit hours offered during Spring 2015 (nearly 80% of the total credit hours offered that semester)
 - our policies ensure effective teaching by all persons providing instruction to students:
 - Section III(A)(2) of the Personnel Document states that the Committee on Promotion and Tenure “shall conduct a peer evaluation of each tenured and tenure-track faculty member’s teaching” on an annual basis, based in part on personal observations and student evaluations; part of the criteria for this peer evaluation is “proficiency in teaching” (Id. § III(B)(1)) (in practice, COPT subcommittee members often sit in on classes, review recorded class sessions or otherwise review classroom teaching)
 - Section III(D) of the Personnel Document states that “[e]ach year COPT shall conduct a peer evaluation of all other individuals teaching within the School of Law, including visitors and adjuncts,” using the teaching criteria set forth for tenured and tenure-track faculty in § III(B)(1); and we have a three-person committee that meets twice each semester to review adjunct teaching (faculty policies manual § 7-502—with practice being that the committee reviews student evaluations for each adjunct-taught course, and also views recordings of classes)

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - we have had some leaves of absence and changes in job assignments that have resulted in a number of first year and bar courses needing new coverage; faculty retirements have also necessitated some changes.

- * Current year changes include:
 - we have hired a new full time faculty member to cover domestic relations related classes and we have hired experienced faculty from other accredited law schools as full time visitors to meet our curricular needs in the first year and in bar subjects

- * Possible modifications:
 - faculty hiring to replace departures may need to focus on first year and bar classes

Standard 404 Responsibilities of Full-Time Faculty

This policy requires us to “publish, and adhere to written policies” that “require that the full-time faculty, as a collective body” to fulfill several “core responsibilities”:

- * Teaching, preparing for classes, assessing student performance in those classes, and remaining current in the subjects being taught”;
- * Participating in academic advising, creating an atmosphere in which students and faculty may voice opinions and exchange ideas, and assessing student learning;
- * Engaging in scholarship, as defined by the law school;
- * Service to the law school and university community, including participation in the governance of the law school, curriculum development, and other institutional responsibilities;
- * Service to the profession, including working with judges and practicing lawyers to improve the profession; and
- * Service to the public, including participation in pro bono activities.

The policy also states that the law school “shall periodically evaluate the extent to which the faculty discharges its core responsibilities under the law school’s policies and the contributions of each full-time faculty member to meeting the core responsibilities of the faculty.”

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of the faculty policies manual and personnel document

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we have adopted, published, and adhere to several written policies governing the responsibilities of full-time faculty:
 - Teaching: Section III(B)(1) of the Personnel Document sets forth the criteria used to evaluate the teaching effectiveness of our tenured and tenure-track faculty, and this section mandates proficiency in teaching, class preparation, accessibility to and advising of students, and mastery of subjects taught
 - Advising, learning atmosphere, and student assessment: Section III(B)(1) of the Personnel Document states that faculty members must demonstrate their “willingness to advise students on educational and professional objectives”
 - Scholarship: Section III(B)(2) of the Personnel Document addresses scholarship obligations in depth
 - Service: Section III(B)(3) of the Personnel Document requires faculty to perform service to the benefit of the law school and university community, the legal profession, and the public
 - we have adopted, published, and adheres to written policies that mandate periodic evaluation of each faculty member’s performance of his/her responsibilities (Personnel Document § III(A)(1) (setting forth the annual review process for tenured and tenure-track faculty))

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - none identified

- * Current year changes include:
 - in April of 2015, the faculty adopted language, which now appears as § 7-211 of the faculty policies manual, providing that the faculty, “as a collective body,” is responsible for “creating an atmosphere ... in which students and faculty may voice opinions and exchange ideas freely. Such an atmosphere may be promoted by, among other things, maintaining regular communications between the faculty, the School of Law administration, and student organizations and by involving committees in decision-making process as appropriate.”
 - the faculty has recommended changes to the law school’s tenure standards (which still requires approval from various authorities outside the law school, including the board of trustees), which would give all law faculty additional voting rights on certain matters, rather than segregating our faculty into programmatic and doctrinal law faculty

- * Possible modifications:
 - we will need to seek further approval for the recommended changes to our tenure policies

Standard 405 Professional Environment

States that a law school (1) “shall establish and maintain conditions adequate to attract and retain a competent faculty”; (2) “shall have an established and announced policy with respect to academic freedom and tenure”; (3) “shall afford to full-time clinical faculty members a form of security of position reasonably similar to tenure”; and (4) “shall afford legal writing teachers such security of position and other rights and privileges” necessary to attract and retain faculty, while safeguarding academic freedom.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of faculty policies manual
 - review of faculty meeting minutes from past few years
 - meeting with the Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

- * Our strengths in this area are
 - with regard to conditions for attracting / retaining faculty, our policies provide detailed guidance on faculty hiring, see Personnel Document § II, and reappointment, promotion, and tenure, see id. § V
 - our recent entry-level and lateral hires certainly serve as evidence that the atmosphere here is conducive to the attraction and retention of quality faculty
 - with regard to academic freedom, we rely on the University Board of Trustee’s Policy on academic freedom and have never had issues with regard to this
 - with regard to our clinical and legal writing faculty, the clinical and legal writing faculty positions at our law school are tenured or tenure-track, offering a form of security that allows us to attract and retain quality faculty, while safeguarding academic freedom (Personnel Document § V)

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - none identified

- * Current year changes include:
 - we have recommended changes to our tenure standards (which still requires approval from various authorities outside the law school, including the board of trustees), which would give all law faculty additional voting rights on certain matters, rather than segregating our faculty into programmatic and doctrinal law faculty.

- * Possible modifications:
 - none suggested at this time

Chapter 5 Admissions and Student Services

Standard 501 Admissions

We must maintain sound admission policies and practices and shall not admit applicants who do not appear to be capable of satisfactorily graduating and being admitted to the bar

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
–meetings with Associate Dean of Students

- * Our strengths in this area are:
–our use of Index Admissions enables us to fulfill this standard, as demonstrated by our bar passage rates

- * Our weaknesses are:
–none identified

- * Current year changes include:
–none

- * Possible modifications:
–none suggested at this time

Standard 502 Educational Requirements

In general, applicants admitted to law school must hold a bachelor's degree. However, we may admit certain candidates who do not, including (a) students in a bachelor's degree/J.D. program at the University and (b) graduates from an institution outside the U.S. if that institution's program of legal education is equivalent to that of U.S.-accredited programs. In an extraordinary case, the Law School may admit an applicant who does not meet any of the above criteria if the applicant's experience, ability, and other qualifications clearly demonstrate an aptitude for the study of law.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
-meeting with Associate Dean of Students

- * Our strengths in this area are:
-we occasionally admit a student without a bachelor's degree through our 3-3 program; These students have only come from Fulbright or from Bumpers College, and they have typically done well

- * Our weaknesses are:
-none identified

- * Current year changes include:
-none

- * Possible modifications:
-none suggested at this time

Standard 503 Admission Test

We must require each applicant for admission to take a valid and reliable admission test as part of the application process. This standard allows a test other than the LSAT to be used, but the Law School would have to demonstrate that such other test is valid and reliable. This standard also allows up to 10% of an entering class to be admitted without taking the LSAT. This exception would only apply in certain circumstances, such as when a student is in an undergraduate program at the same institution

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - meeting with Associate Dean of Students
 - review of our website and application forms

- * Our strengths in this area are
 - we require the LSAT for admission (other than for the small number of foreign-trained lawyers admitted with transfer credit under the Accelerated J.D. program), so compliance with this standard is not an issue

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - none

- * Current year changes include:
 - none

- * Possible modifications:
 - we are watching the experiences that other schools are having with accepting the GMAT in lieu of LSAT scores for at least a part of their entering classes. While we have no immediate plans to adjust our admissions criteria, this is a possible change that we might consider in the future.

Standard 504 Qualifications for Admission to the Bar

- * We must include on the application for admission and on the website a statement indicating that there are character and fitness qualifications for admission to the bar in every U.S. jurisdiction. The Law School also must take additional steps as soon as possible after matriculation to apprise entering students of the importance of these qualifications.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - meeting with Associate Dean of Students Jim Miller.
 - review of the Law School webpage

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - the required statement currently appears on the Law School website at the following link: <http://law.uark.edu/academics/jd/>
 - we provide further information about character and fitness requirements during 1L Orientation Week; this has included presentations from current faculty and from the Executive Director of the Arkansas Bar Association
 - the vast majority of the our applicants use the LSAC application process rather than using the Law School's application

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - none noted

- * Current year changes include:
 - our Application for Admission now consistently includes the required statement, regardless of where an applicant might access the forms

- * Possible modifications:
 - none at this time

Standard 505 Granting of J.D. Degree Credit for Prior Law Study

- * We may grant credit for prior law study under certain circumstances, including: (1) courses completed at another law school approved by the ABA; (2) courses completed at another law school not approved by the ABA if the graduates of that law school are allowed to sit for the bar exam in the jurisdiction where the school is located; or (3) courses completed at a law school outside the U.S. under particular circumstances. Credit hours granted pursuant to this section may not exceed one-third of the total required for graduation.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - meetings with the Associate Dean of Students and Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
 - conferences with assorted faculty who have had classes with some of these students

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we have a policy in place concerning the transfer of credits from ABA-accredited law schools
 - we do not allow credits to transfer from law schools not accredited by the ABA, and there is no plan to change this policy
 - our Accelerated J.D. option allows students from law schools outside the United States to receive credit for up to thirty credit hours earned at a law school outside of the United States where those credits led to the completion of a law degree at the foreign institution; this program is in compliance with 505(c).

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - some faculty members have expressed concern about the ability of some of the participants in the program to communicate effectively in English. We do not yet have enough data to ascertain the ability of these students to pass the bar or succeed in the practice of law

- * Current year changes include:
 - we have accepted a limited number of students under the recently approved Advanced J.D. program. We have a special advisor for these students, but even though we have a limited sample size, results appear to be mixed.

- * Possible modifications:
 - carefully review admissions criteria for students in these programs, particularly with regard to ability to produce effective written communication in English
 - we also need to track bar performance for these students, as some faculty members have expressed concern about the performance of some of these students

Standard 506 Enrollment of Non-degree Candidates

We may enroll individuals in a limited number of courses as auditors or non-degree candidates only if such enrollment does not interfere with the ability of the law school to operate in compliance with the standards and to carry out its program of legal education.

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - meetings with the Associate Dean of Students and Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we have a policy on non-degree candidates, and the availability of classes to them is highly restricted
 - sections 5-901 and 5-902 of the faculty policies manual specify that graduate students may take law electives with the consent of the instructor, but non-J.D. students may not take 1L courses, except for students enrolled in a certificate program
 - University policy requires permission for students from other programs to take law classes for credit in their programs, and that process requires approval of the Deans' offices of the student's department and the law school

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - none identified

- * Current year changes include:
 - none

- * Possible modifications:
 - none suggested at this time

Standard 507 Student Loan Programs

This standard specifies that we “shall demonstrate reasonable steps to minimize student loan defaults, including provision of debt counseling at the inception of a student’s loan obligations and again before graduation.” Interpretation 507-3 states: “A law school has complied with this Standard if the university of which the law school is a part takes the steps described in this Standard.”

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - meetings with the Associate Dean of Students and the Assistant Director of Admissions
 - conversation with the Executive Director of the Financial Aid and Academic Scholarships Office at the University

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - the University provides debt counseling at the inception of student’s loan obligations and again before graduation
 - according to University officials “[i]f a law student borrowed from the Federal Direct Stafford Loan program as an undergraduate, she would not be required to complete entrance counseling if borrowing another Federal Direct Stafford Loan in law school. However, if she has never borrowed a Federal Direct Stafford Loan she would be required to complete entrance counseling before borrowing in law school. In addition, if a law student takes out a PLUS Loan, she would need to complete counseling specific to the PLUS program prior to receiving the loan funds. The counseling for the PLUS program will satisfy the requirements for the Federal Direct Stafford Loan as well. We also require exit counseling when the student graduates or drops below half-time enrollment.”

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - none are known or apparent

- * Current year changes include:
 - none noted

- * Possible modifications:
 - none suggested

Standard 508 Student Support Services

This standard states that the law school and/or the university of which it is a part shall provide its students “with basic student services, including maintenance of accurate student records, academic advising and counseling, financial aid and debt counseling, and career counseling . . .”

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - review of faculty policies manual
 - review of faculty meeting minutes from past few years
 - meetings with the Associate Dean of Students and the Assistant Director of Admissions
 - meeting with the Director of Externship Programs and Coordinator of Academic Success
 - conversation with the Executive Director of the Financial Aid and Academic Scholarships Office at the University

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we appear to be in compliance because students have access to student records on ISIS and other university platforms, receive academic advising and counseling by faculty members prior to class selection, receive financial aid and debt counseling through the University’s Financial Aid and Academic Scholarships office, and receive career counseling through our Career Services Office.

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - none identified

- * Current year changes include:
 - none

- * Possible modifications:
 - none suggested

Standard 509 Required Disclosures

This standard states that all information that a law school reports must be complete, accurate, and not misleading; also explicitly requires certain mandatory information “publicly disclose[d] on [the law school’s] website . . .”

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - careful review of the enumerated disclosure categories and our current Standard 509 disclosures on our website

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 - we appear to be in compliance
 - on our main webpage (on the left-hand side), there is a link to “ABA Required Disclosures” and the first link on that page is to a PDF document titled “ABA Standard 509 Information Report for University of Arkansas School of Law”
 - that report fully discloses all information required under Standard 509, and undergoes regular review and updating as needed

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - occasionally the University will change links and this will result in non-functional links on our webpage, but we are working to limit this. We are scheduled for an upgrade in our website in May of 2016, which might further improve our ability to monitor and correct any such issue

- * Current year changes include:
 - the Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs has been proactive in seeing that the website is updated and disclosures are appropriately provided

- * Possible modifications:
 - none suggested other than the planned May 2016 upgrade to our website

Standard 510 Student Complaints Implicating Compliance with the Standards

We are required to “establish, publish, and comply with policies for addressing student complaints” and should “maintain a record of student complaints submitted during the most recent accreditation period.”

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
-discussion with senior law school administration and review of faculty policies manual as well as an examination of our webpage
- * Our strengths in this area are:
-our faculty policies include faculty-adopted policies that specifically address Standard 510; see faculty policies manual § 8-801 et seq
- * Our weaknesses are:
-we have had very few complaints made. While confidential records are kept, the fact that we have had so few issues means that we do not have sufficient information to determine whether this requirement has had or will have any significant impact on us
- * Current year changes include:
-none noted
- * Possible modifications:
-none are contemplated at this time

Chapter 6 Library and Information Resources

Standard 601 General Provisions

"(a) A law school shall maintain a law library that: (1) provides support through expertise, resources, and services adequate to enable the law school to carry out its program of legal education, accomplish its mission, and support scholarship and research; (2) develops and maintains a direct, informed, and responsive relationship with the faculty, students, and administration of the law school; (3) working with the dean and faculty, engages in a regular planning and assessment process, including written assessment of the effectiveness of the library in achieving its mission and realizing its established goals; and (4) remains informed on and implements, as appropriate, technological and other developments affecting the library's support for the law school's program of legal education. (b) A law school shall provide on a consistent basis sufficient financial resources to the law library to enable it to fulfill its responsibilities of support to the law school and realize its established goals."

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 - meeting with Director of Young Law Library and Information Technology Services

- * Our strengths in this area are
 - the constituents who use the law library typically report high to very high levels of satisfaction
 - while informal, it is very easy for faculty to request that certain resources be made available
 - whenever a service is being contemplated, or changes are being considered (particularly if a service or resource is being considered for phase-out) the faculty is consulted via e-mail in advance

- * Our weaknesses are:
 - regarding (a)(3), we do not currently regularly produce a written assessment of the library's effectiveness and after extensive reflection and consultation, are still not sure what this requires given that the law library is a support unit with the school of law

- * Current year changes include:
 - our Director of Young Law Library and Information Technology Services attended two conferences during the summer of 2015 that had specific sessions designed to address the ABA Standards and best practices for compliance; he has also been active in discussing compliance with a number of other directors

- * Possible modifications:
 - our Director of Young Law Library and Information Technology Services will be attending additional conferences this summer that will also address the ABA Standards and best practices for compliance, with the goal of developing standards and policies pursuant to which we will regularly produce a written assessment of the effectiveness of the library in achieving its mission and realizing its established goals

Standard 602 Administration

- * "(a) A law school shall have sufficient administrative autonomy to direct the growth and development of the law library and to control the use of its resources. (b) The director of the law library and the dean, in consultation with the faculty, shall determine library policy. (c) The director of the law library and the dean are responsible for the selection and retention of personnel, the provision of library services, and collection development and maintenance. (d) The budget for the law library shall be determined as part of, and administered in the same manner as, the law school budget."

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
-meeting with Director of Young Law Library and Information Technology Services

- * Our strengths in this area are:
-we appear to meet the requirements of the standard and no serious concerns were identified. The Dean of University Library consults with the Director of Young Law Library when making decisions that will impact law library. In addition, the Law School librarians are on University library committees and able to stay abreast of any changes that might impact the Law Library.

- * Our weaknesses are:
-none identified

- * Current year changes include:
-none identified

- * Possible modifications:
-none identified

Standard 603 Director of the Law Library

- * "(a) A law school shall have a full-time director of the law library whose principal responsibilities are managing the law library and providing information resources in appropriate formats to faculty and students. (b) The selection and retention of the director of the law library shall be determined by the law school. (c) A director of a law library shall have appropriate academic qualifications and shall have knowledge of and experience in law library administration sufficient to support the program of legal education and to enable the law school to operate in compliance with the Standards. (d) Except in extraordinary circumstances, a law library director shall hold a law faculty appointment with security of faculty position."

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 -meeting with Director of Young Law Library and Information Technology Services

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 -we appear to meet this standard with no issues

- * Our weaknesses are:
 -none identified

- * Current year changes include:
 -none identified

- * Possible modifications:
 -none identified

Standard 604 Personnel

- * "The law library shall have a staff sufficient in expertise and number to provide the appropriate library and information resources services to the school."

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 -meeting with Director of Young Law Library and Information Technology Services

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 -we have seven librarians, five para-professionals, and have five information technology staff, a size and composition suitable to meet our needs and the accreditation standards

- * Our weaknesses are:
 -none identified

- * Current year changes include:
 -none identified

- * Possible modifications:
 -none identified

Standard 605 Services

- * "A law library shall provide the appropriate range and depth of reference, instructional, bibliographic, and other services to meet the needs of the law school's teaching, scholarship, research, and service programs."

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
 -meeting with Director of Young Law Library and Information Technology Services

- * Our strengths in this area are:
 -our law library provides all of the services listed in the standard and Interpretation 605-1

- * Our Weaknesses are:
 -none identified

- * Current year changes include:
 -none identified

- * Possible modifications:
 -none identified

Standard 606 Collection

- * "(a) The law library shall provide a core collection of essential materials through ownership or reliable access. The choice of format and of ownership in the library or a particular means of reliable access for any type of material in the collection, including the core collection, shall effectively support the law school's curricular, scholarly, and service programs and objectives, and the role of the library in preparing students for effective, ethical, and responsible participation in the legal profession.
(b) A law library core collection shall include the following: (1) all reported federal court decisions and reported decisions of the highest appellate court of each state and U.S. territory; (2) all federal codes and session laws, and at least one current annotated code for each state and U.S. territory; (3) all current published treaties and international agreements of the United States; (4) all current published regulations (codified and uncodified) of the federal government and the codified regulations of the state or U.S. territory in which the law school is located; (5) those federal and state administrative decisions appropriate to the programs of the law school; (6) U.S. Congressional materials appropriate to the programs of the law school; (7) significant secondary works necessary to support the programs of the law school; and (8) those tools necessary to identify primary and secondary legal information and update primary legal information.
(c) In addition to the core collection of essential materials, a law library shall also provide a collection that, through ownership or reliable access, (1) meets the research needs of the law school's students, satisfies the demands of the law school curriculum, and facilitates the education of its students; (2) supports the teaching, scholarship, research, and service interests of the faculty; (3) serves the law school's special teaching, scholarship, research, and service objectives; and (4) is complete, current, and in sufficient quantity or with sufficient continuing access to meet faculty and student needs.
(d) The law library shall formulate and periodically update a written plan for development of the collection.
(e) The law library shall provide suitable space and adequate equipment to access and use all information in whatever formats are represented in the collection."

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
-meeting with Director of Young Law Library and Information Technology Services

- * Our strengths in this area are:
-we appear to meet this standard; and regarding (d), we have a written policy originally prepared in 2012, and updated since that time
-we are currently in the process of updating it again, with the goal of having updates on an annual basis although past practice has not led to a new report every year

- * Our weaknesses are:
-none identified

- * Current year changes include:
-none identified

- * Possible modifications:
-the law library would like to have its policy updated annually

Chapter 7 Facilities, Equipment, and Technology

Standard 701 General Requirements

"(a) A law school shall have facilities, equipment, technology, and technology support that enable it to operate in compliance with the Standards and carry out its program of legal education. (b) A law school is not in compliance with the Standards if its facilities, equipment, technology, or technology support have a negative and material effect on the school's ability to operate in compliance with the Standards; or to carry out its program of legal education."

- * Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
-meeting with Director of Young Law Library and Information Technology Services

- * Our strengths in this area are:
-regarding (a), we upgraded our classroom technology in 2013 and it is functioning well, and to the extent that assistance with technology is needed, we have four staff available to provide technological support.

- * Our weaknesses are:
-none identified

- * Current year changes include:
-none identified

- * Possible modifications:
-none identified

Standard 702 Facilities

* "(a) A law school's facilities shall include: (1) suitable class and seminar rooms in sufficient number to permit reasonable scheduling of all classes, skills offerings, and seminars; (2) a law library that is suitable and sufficient in size, location, and design in relation to the law school's programs and enrollment to accommodate the needs of the law school's students and faculty and the law library's services, collections, staff, operations, and equipment; (3) suitable and sufficient space for staff providing support services, including student support services, to the program of legal education; (4) office space for full-time faculty members that is suitable and sufficient for faculty research, class preparation, and faculty-student conferences; and suitable and sufficient space for part-time faculty members to conduct faculty-student conferences; (5) facilities and equipment that meet all applicable health and safety codes; (6) suitable and sufficient space for equipment and records; (7) suitable and sufficient space appropriate for conducting any in-house clinical programs in a manner that assures competent and ethical representation of clients and meaningful instruction and supervision of students, including confidential space for (i) client interviewing, (ii) working on and discussing client cases, and (iii) security for client files; (8) suitable and sufficient space for its students and faculty for quiet study and research; and (9) suitable and sufficient space for group study and other forms of collaborative work. (b) A law school shall provide reasonable access and accommodations to persons with disabilities, consistent with applicable law."

* Compliance with this standard was assessed by:
-meeting with Director of Young Law Library and Information Technology Services

* Our strengths in this area are:
-regarding (a)(1), we have sufficient classrooms to schedule our classes and seminars and although we might benefit from additional rooms that could serve as trial courtrooms, we have an existing courtroom and a classroom adaptable to serve as a courtroom
-regarding (a)(2), our library meets the standard
-regarding (a)(3), we have sufficient space for staff (we have one more administrative assistant than offices, but have a temporary space for that person and plans to create another office should we receive funding; we could benefit from additional student support services space, but we are able to meet demands in our current space)
-regarding (a)(4), we have offices for each full-time faculty member and a room set aside for adjunct faculty members to use as needed so that our existing space meets current demand for faculty offices, including part-time faculty
-regarding (a)(5) and (b), in the library and computer lab, there are height-adjustable tables to increase wheelchair accessibility, and the primary entrances to the building are accessible and have touchpads and ramps. Drinking fountains and restroom facilities in the library have also been designed to be accessible.
-regarding (a)(6), we have sufficient space for equipment and records
-regarding (a)(7), while our Legal Clinic would benefit from increased and improved space, including the ability to record client meetings, our current space meets the standard
-regarding (a)(8), there is ample space available in the Law Library for quiet study and research

-regarding (a)(9), we meet the standard, but we might benefit from additional group study space even though we never have a waitlist for the reserved spaces we do have available

* Our weaknesses are:

-there are some doors in the Law School that might not meet ADA requirements (we received a waiver for ADA compliance on those doors when doing building renovations because without the waiver, demolition would have been required)

* Current year changes include:

-we discussed the doors and ADA compliance issues with the University facilities management, including meetings with Mike Johnson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities. After review of our facilities, we were informed that the official position of the University at this time is that there is no ADA compliance issue. We did meet with the one disabled student who needs access to certain areas, including the law school legal clinic, and he indicated that he had no problems at all with accessibility.

* Possible modifications:

-we seem to meet virtually all of this standard, but should funding become available, we could: (1) add a space that can serve as a more realistic trial courtroom; (2) add additional space for staff; (3) renovate the legal clinic; (4) create additional options for group study space.

Part Two: Supplemental Information

This part of the report provides information reflecting developments and data that were not available at the time the Strategic Planning Committee prepared its report.

New Website

At the beginning of May, the School of Law rolled out the new website that is referred to in the Committee report. The new site is now in use, with several updates and improvements in progress.

New Director of Academic Excellence and Bar Passage

We have hired Visiting Associate Professor Susannah Pollvogt to serve in this roll. She will be on board full-time in the fall, but has already started to work with our May graduates who will be taking the July bar exam. She has taken time to observe at least portions of the Spring, 2016 bar boot camp, and she will be working with our bar applicants on a one-to-one basis in June.

Bar Passage Data

As noted in the Committee report, beginning in fall 2016, under our accreditation standards, we will begin reporting bar passage data on a two-year basis rather than for a single year. Our bar passage data for the years 2013 and 2014 is attached and exceeds the rates required under the standards.

Certificate Program Data

Our two certificate programs are new. The Criminal Law Certificate program first accepted students in the 2014-2015 year, and the Business Law Certificate program was just launched this year. Attached are data on certificates awarded and in progress.

Two-Year Bar Passage Rate

Calendar Year 2013

May 2013: N=119

Pass	109
Fail	6
DNT	2
Unknown	2

Dec. 2013: N=17

Pass	15
Fail	1
DNT	1

Total # of 2013 takers = 131

Total # who passed = 124

% passing within two years = 94.7%

Calendar Year 2014

May 2014: N=112

Pass	93
Fail	14
DNT	5

Dec. 2014: N=5

Pass	4
Fail	0
DNT	1*

Total # of 2014 takers = 111

Total # who passed = 97

% passing within two years = 87.4%

*This student still has one remaining opportunity to take the bar.

Supplemental Data on School of Law Certificate Programs

Criminal Law Certificate (established commencing with the 2014-2015 year)

1 certificate awarded in May, 2015.

10 students are currently in the program and expect to earn the certificate by May 2017.

Business Law Certificate (established commencing with the 2015-2016 year)

6 certificates anticipated to be awarded in May 2016.

1 student is currently in the program and expected to earn the certificate by May 2017. *

* The May 2017 number is anticipated to increase for this certificate because students currently enrolled in our J.D. program may apply for the Business Law Certificate during their final year as J.D. candidates.