

MEMORANDUM

TO: Gerald E. Lang
Provost and Vice President
Academic Affairs

Professor Larry Hornak

FROM: Dean John W. Fisher, II

DATE: August 22, 2008

SUBJECT: Alignment of Unit Strategic Plan with the 2010 Plan

Pursuant to your memorandum of February 5, 2007, concerning the alignment of the individual unit's strategic plans with the University's 2010 Plan, please be advised as follows. Law schools that are approved by the American Bar Association are reaccredited every seven years. (During the last reaccreditation cycle, the ABA attempted to equalize the number of site visits each year and in a transition period have moved some site visits to six years, some remain at seven year, and some will be eight years.) We have recently learned that the next site visit for the purpose of reaccreditation will be scheduled for the spring semester of the 2008-09 academic year.

In anticipation of the reaccreditation visit, one of the committees I appointed at the start of the 2006-07 academic year was the Self Study Committee. This committee is chaired by Professor Marjorie McDiarmid and has as its members Professors Gerald Ashdown, Charles DiSalvo, Joyce McConnell, Kevin Outterson, Camille Riley, Caprice Roberts, and John Taylor. The committee was selected to provide broad representation of various viewpoints and various amounts of experience in legal education and as members of our faculty. During the course of this academic year, it has met a number of times, collected a variety of information, and made plans for a survey of our alumni, which will occur during the summer of 2007.

I note that as the University began its strategic planning process, I discussed with Provost Lang the fact that we would be scheduled for a reaccreditation visit in the 2008-09 academic year and, as part of the ABA Standards, we would be required to prepare the self study report. (A copy of Standard 202 of the ABA concerning self study is attached.) Provost Lang is aware of the substantial amount of material that is collected as part of the reaccreditation visit in addition to a lengthy self study since he was Provost at the time of the last reaccreditation visit.

As I indicated above, the time frame for our self study, began with the commencement of the 2006-07 academic year. During this academic year, the committee has been collecting information necessary for the faculty to discuss several threshold issues as it relates to planning for the next decade at our College of Law, such as is it feasible to seek approval to offer an

LL.M. program and, if so, what is the particular market niche that we should pursue? Should we consider certificates of “specialization” for our students? What do we anticipate will be the developments in the area of skills training and the use of technology? What changes, if any, should we make in our Legal Research and Writing program? What new course offerings should we offer to our students and what courses, if any, should we teach less frequently or not at all?

With the completion of the surveys planned for the summer of 2007, we should be well-positioned for the Self Study Committee to articulate issues, present factual information, and to lead discussions with the faculty necessary to complete the self study during the 2007-08 academic year. It is anticipated that an initial draft of the self study will be completed in the summer of 2008.

Please let me know if additional information is necessary to supplement the material provided herein.