



Texas Southern University
Thurgood Marshall School of Law
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Sunny E Ohia, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research

FROM: Dannye Holley, Dean and Professor of Law

DATE: March 2, 2012

RE: BOARD OF REGENTS 2012 – Law School Presentation re
Programs & Progress **2010-2013 PRIORITY GOALS**

I. Vision Statement

The 2010-2013 vision for the law school includes working to maintain and enact programs and policies that will sustain Thurgood Marshall's position as among the most diverse and historically important law schools - fostering "a legacy of empowerment" throughout the Houston community, state of Texas, and the nation. The vision is to work with the university, alumni, faculty, students, and other constituencies to promote and create a "brand" for the law school with key outside constituencies, including the media. The greater recognition of the quality of the law school should further our accreditation goal of retaining required ABA accreditation in 2014 when it comes up for renewal, and to enhance our chances of gaining membership in the American Association of Law Schools. The vision is to gain greater recognition of the contribution the law school makes to the legal profession, and the current quality of the program and people who attend and work at the law school.

The vision also includes working with all university stakeholders to improve, adopt, and implement programs and policies that will be the basis for measurable institutional progress. The vision reflects a major investment in intentional teaching throughout the academic program, and promoting meaningful assessment of improvements in student learning outcomes, including proficiency in competently drafting an array of standard legal documents. To these ends, in 2010-2011 the law

school created an Academic and Administrative Assessment Department and hired an Executive Director and Coordinator of Assessment.

The vision also includes measurably improving the academic readiness of our student cohort as well as key student organizations such as our law review. This improvement in skill acquisition will be measured by performance on first year uniform exams, sequential course skills assessments, licensing exams, and inter-law school student skill competitions. The law school currently has adopted or has underway the development of 17 academic program components or teaching initiatives. The vision this year includes marketing these initiatives in a Teaching Excellence Brochure. Ultimately the goal is to document that the law school is among the best teaching law schools in the country. The vision also includes expanding the professional opportunities and recognition of our students and their organizations.

The vision includes continuing the upward arc in the quality and quantity of our faculty's teaching and scholarship. This Fall we completed our first major publication touting our Faculty's scholarship. The brochure celebrated our wide ranging scholarly contribution to the local, state, national, and international conversations concerning the evolution of legal doctrine and policy.

The vision also includes a full throttle effort to establish major institutional components to improve and sustain our outside fund raising efforts. We have worked with the university to establish a permanent endowment fund for the law school. We have promoted this fund by crafting and implementing a three year giving campaign which we have promoted throughout the state and country to our alumni. We have worked with the university to approve the hiring of an assistant dean for institutional development. This hire can serve as the cornerstone of significantly improving fund raising and positive branding of the law school.

Ultimately the vision is to foster excellence throughout the law school's academic and administrative program. The achievement of this goal should produce better student outcomes during their attendance and upon their graduation.

II. Accreditation & Bar Passage - Summary re Accreditation

The law school is fully accredited by the ABA through 2014. It is currently enjoying its greatest level of financial support by the university in its history. The funding is a foundation for significantly improving the academic program and administrative services as outlined in other elements of this report. The stable and strong level of funding and these improvements will greatly increase the likelihood of retaining our ABA accreditation. The school has achieved its best and third best first time July Texas Bar passage rates in 2010 and 2011.

This year the law school is working with the American Association of Law Schools to establish a process for ultimately gaining membership in that organization. Approximately ninety percent of the 200 ABA accredited law schools are members of

the AALS. Membership is further recognition of a sustained commitment to excellence and is an important element in our Faculty's ability to play a leadership role with respect to teaching and scholarship in the legal academy.

III. Fund Raising

During 2010-2011, the law school raised between \$160,000 and \$185,000 in gifts and pledges. There is some level of imprecision in the annual total because of issues with respect to accounting for payroll deduction gifts and documentation of pledges. In September we received a major gift and pledge of \$100,000 from one of our alumni - Domingo Garcia. In October 2011, the law school launched a formal national law school alumni organization. A primary purpose for this launch was to further engage and energize alumni, and to eventually systematically increase alumni giving.

We have worked with the university to establish a permanent endowment fund for the law school. We have promoted this fund by crafting and implementing a three year giving campaign which we have promoted throughout the state and country to our alumni. We have worked with the university to approve the hiring of an assistant dean for institutional development. This person will work with Wendy Adair's advancement team with the goal of significantly enhancing the law school's system for seeking and receiving major gifts.

The Earl Carl Institute has sought and obtained several small and one major grant to fund some of its projects. The major grant funds activities and personnel for the Institute's "Innocence" Project. Major additional Grant Proposals were recently submitted.

IV. Advising & Mentoring of Students

In 2010-2011, the law school began a mentoring program pairing alumni volunteers with a second year law student. Faculty volunteers have also served as advisors-mentors for first year students. In 2011-2012, The Leadership Council on Legal Diversity has partnered with the law school on their formal mentoring program that has placed fifteen of our first year students with a lawyer mentor-working at some of the more prestigious law firms, corporations, and government sector legal departments.

In 2010-2011 we reviewed our registration advisement protocol to provide greater assurance that the pre-registration "auction" was fair, and to assure compliance by students with our course of study rules and regulations. In 2010-2011, the Faculty amended the second year required course grade curve. The amendment increased the grade range to a maximum average of 2.75; between a B- and a B. Our Faculty also adopted a more formal and detailed protocol for our Joint Degree Programs with the Schools of Business and Public Affairs. This action was taken after consultation and agreement on the new Joint Degree Plan was sought and obtained from the Offices of The Dean of the other schools.

In 2011-2012 the law school awarded total scholarships of approximately 1.1 million dollars. This scholarship level exceeded most of our peer law schools. The goals of the awards were to improve the median entry admission index of our in-coming first year class, and to increase the likelihood that most of our best performing first year students would return for their second year rather than transfer.

The law school also purchased “Turning Point” licenses for its first and second year classes. This software permits instant and continuing feedback on the achievement of student learning outcomes. Last year we also completed the build-up of our academic support instructional team by hiring a third academic support instructor. These instructors serve as mentors for our graduates in preparing for the bar. They also teach and assist in teaching two of our exit courses, and conduct the IL learning academy.

V. Marketing & Public Relations

In 2010-2011, the law school completed redesigning and updating its unit webpage. The webpage now serves as a significant marketing tool for the school with respect to touting alumni, faculty, student, and institutional accomplishments. In 2010-2011, the law school began or enhanced several initiatives to market the school to potential applicants. These initiatives included “Prep for Law” an Academic Headstart Pre-Enrollment Program offered to every accepted applicant, and the placement of a national ad in the CLEO(Council on Legal Opportunity) magazine. The magazine is a major resource for minority students who are considering a legal education.

In 2010-2011 the law school also completed a major brochure touting our Faculty’s Scholarship between 2007-2011, and distributed hard and electronic copies to pertinent university stakeholders and to key members of the academy and our alumni. Finally, the law school has sought and obtained approval to hire its first Assistant Dean for Institutional Advancement who will have two major responsibilities. The second of these responsibilities is to spearhead institutional efforts to effectively market all noteworthy accomplishments of the school of law.

VI. Mock Trial Program & Collaborative Relations with Other Law Schools

Led by Jerry Galow and a dynamic husband and wife team(the Sullivans) the school has instituted intensive training of approximately forty volunteer students per year in trial skills and behaviors. The training has produced several competitive mock trial teams, and those teams have competed and performed in outstanding fashion in several inter-law school competitions. Recently, the team won the BALSAs Regional Moot Trial Competition in Oklahoma. Steps are underway to institutionalize this program.

In 2011-2012, the law school is collaborating with South Texas College of Law to launch a scholars’ exchange program. During this academic year, six South Texas faculty members will present their current research papers to the Thurgood Marshall faculty, and six of our Faculty will make similar presentations at South Texas.

In 2010-2011, the Law School hosted a national African-American women law professors scholarship conference - the Lutie Lytle Workshop. This annual workshop brought to campus approximately 40 scholars from across the country to present, discuss, and critique their current works in progress. This workshop was previously hosted by four other law schools located across the entire breadth of the country, and our hosting represented the first time the workshop came to Texas and to an HBCU.

Our Faculty also participated and played leadership roles in several annual scholarship conferences around the country. At conferences such as SEALS (Southeast Association of Law Schools) annual scholarship conference, our Faculty has frequently served as mentors and were mentored in sessions designed to improve works in progress. Finally, in 2010-2011 the law school engaged in collaborative work with Dr. Claudette Ligons of the School of Education. Dr. Ligons lead and participated in multiple law school teaching enhancement forums designed to further the effective teaching of student learning outcomes.

VII. Texas Southern University's Thurgood Marshall School of Law 2010-2012 Initiatives & Their Current Status

1. Formal Law School Alumni Association Begun.
2. AALS Membership Initiative Begun & Has Reached Visit by Readiness AALS Consultant stage – visit March 19-21, 2012.
3. Law School Webpage Redesign completed.
4. Faculty Scholarship 2007-2011 Marketing Brochure completed.
5. Permanent Endowment Fund Established & Related Giving Campaign Plan Created and Implemented.
6. University Approval of Assistant Dean for Institutional Advancement.
7. Commenced Program of Meetings with Law Firms & Government Employer Agents to Enhance Stronger Contacts/Interactions with Students.
8. Hired first three academic support instructors – assigned to teach and assist in teaching capstone bar preparation courses as well as provide additional academic support to first year students, and serve as bar exam preparation coaches for graduates preparing for the bar exam.
9. Hired Executive Director & Coordinator of Institutional Assessment and completion of multiple Academic and Administrative Assessment Projects.

10. Overall Law School Administrative and Academic Assessment Plan created and three priority goals for all law school administrative departments established and end of year assessment of goal completion made.
11. Marketing & Admissions Initiatives
 - A. 1.1 Million dollars in merit scholarship awards
 - B. 3 + 3 Articulation Agreement reached with university to provide incentive for our best undergraduate students to consider applying to and selecting TMSL.
 - C. National Advertisement Placed in Leading Law & Diversity Publication.
12. Teaching & Learning – Additional Initiatives
 - A. New pre-enrollment academic support program for all in-coming students “Prep for Law Program” has 12 sequential learning modules, and also serves the dual purpose as a marketing tool to provide incentive for admitted students with strong credentials, and probably other law school options, to choose TMSL.
 - B. Orientation Program redesigned to add strong bridge Academic component.
 - C. Teaching Experts, Teaching Forums, Teaching Grants, Teaching & Learning Tips, Student Learning Outcomes – Measures – and Skills and Behavior Accomplished metrics instituted throughout law school’s curriculum.
 - D. Experiential Learning Enhancement – Mock Trial Competition Program.
13. LLM. in Immigration Developed - ABA & Faculty Approval Stage reached.
14. Collaborative Review of Clinic Program and Reshaping of Earl Carl Institute to focus on core and special projects all with a strong level of commitment to interdisciplinary work.

Note: **Student Enrollment Trends** - Our 2011-2012 enrollment represents an increase of approximately nine percent (535 to 582) over our 2010-2011 enrollment. Our goal is to remain in this enrollment range.