

COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS OPEN SESSION AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: June 2016 - O-404

DATE: June 13, 2016

TO: Subcommittee on Educational Standards

FROM: George C. Leal, Director for Educational Standards

SUBJECT: **San Luis Obispo College of Law – Major Change Request
Regarding Relocation of Campus and Administrative Offices**

BACKGROUND

Attachment A is a request submitted by the San Luis Obispo College of Law (SLOCOL), a branch campus of the Monterey College of Law (MCL), seeking approval from the Committee of Bar Examiners (Committee) to relocate its campus. As required by Rule 4.164 of the *Accredited Law School Rules* (Rules), “an accredited law school contemplating a major change must notify the Committee and obtain its approval at least ninety days before making the change.” As defined by Rule 4.165(B), changing “the location of the school or the location of a branch” constitutes a major change requiring the Committee’s prior approval.

SLOCOL is a relatively new law school; MCL received Committee approval to open an accredited branch campus in San Luis Obispo in April 2015. SLOCOL recently completed its first academic year operating from leased space in the basement of a commercial building in downtown San Luis Obispo. Prior to receiving the Committee’s approval to open as a new branch campus, SLOCOL was inspected and found compliant with the *Guidelines for Accredited Law School Rules*. (Guidelines).

As described in Dean Winick’s letter of April 14, 2016, SLOCOL had been planning to increase the number of its classrooms to meet its growing enrollment. However, the construction expense to do so would be significantly higher than either the law school or its landlord had anticipated. As a result and as confirmed by Dean Winick, MCL and its landlord came to an agreement to terminate its lease at end of the current summer semester. Thus, to meet its current and anticipated enrollment, MCL has signed a lease to occupy a significantly larger space located at 4119 Broad Street, a short drive from its current location. The new lease begins on July 1, 2016 and the law school anticipates moving into the new location in time for the start of the 2016 fall semester.

DISCUSSION

It appears that SLOCOL is the beneficiary of the very recent decision of the University of La Verne, a private university located in southern California, to close its San Luis Obispo campus and vacate its classroom and office space. As a result, MCL was able to negotiate a five-year lease for a far larger amount of space (almost 6,000 square feet versus 1,500 at the original SLOCOL location) that is already built out and furnished to serve the needs of SLOCOL, its students, faculty and administrators. The space, only a short drive from downtown San Luis Obispo, offers four large classrooms, five administrative offices, along with conference, workroom and student lounge. SLOCOL will also acquire the space fully furnished with classroom tables, chairs, whiteboards and AV screens and room to store its hardcopy law library.

The new location is located in a Class A office building that is ADA compliant and will offer students free parking. Dean Winick has also represented that the negotiated lease rate for the new space is within the law school's projected and anticipated rent expense over the next four years.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee approve the requested relocation of the law school 4119 Broad Street, San Luis Obispo, California.

PROPOSED MOTION

Should the Subcommittee agree with this recommendation, the following motion is suggested:

Move, that the request for approval of the major change submitted by the San Luis Obispo College of Law, pursuant to Rules 4.164 and 4.165(B) of the *Accredited Law School Rules*, to allow it to move its campus to 4119 Broad Street, San Luis Obispo, California, be received and filed and that the request be granted.