

COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS OPEN SESSION AGENDA ITEM

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: June 2016 – O-407

DATE: June 1, 2016

TO: Subcommittee on Educational Standards

FROM: Gayle Murphy, Senior Director, Admissions

SUBJECT: **American Heritage School of Law – Status Report**

BACKGROUND

American Heritage University School of Law (AHUSOL) is a registered, unaccredited distance-learning law school with administrative offices located in Ontario. It is one of the schools of American Heritage University, an online entity operating as a for-profit California corporation. University president Tony Ogamien has been acting as AHUSOL's interim Dean and part-time administrator; he is qualified for both positions since he holds a Juris Doctor degree from Western State University School of Law, an ABA-approved law school in Orange County. He is not, however, a licensed attorney.

At its meeting in January 2016, the Committee of Bar Examiners (Committee) issued a motion to place AHUSOL on probation for a period of 12 months from the date of the notice and also requested by motion the following actions by AHUSOL: 1) Payment within 90 days of any outstanding obligations it may have relating to any contractual agreements it may have made with professors and administrators, 2) Provision of audited financial statement within 90 days, 3) Ensuring that all future contracts are in compliance with the Unaccredited Law School Rules, 4) Conducting a survey of its currently enrolled students, asking for their comments with respect to the new teaching technology, new faculty, etc., and reporting the results of the survey within 90 days, 5) Submission of a progress report 60 days prior to the expiration of the probation period, 6) An interim inspection of the school to be conducted after the progress report has been completed and before thirty days before the probation period is scheduled to expire and 7) That currently enrolled and potential students be advised of this action by the Committee in the form and manner determined by staff within 30 days from the date of the notice.

DISCUSSION

Action number seven has been completed by the school. The letter and draft email to be sent to students was received on March 9, 2016, and the response and requested change was sent on March 30, 2016. (Attachment A).

A report on Actions number two and four was received on May 16, 2016 (Attachment B). After review of the exhibits, there were three questions that needed clarification: 1) The Balance Sheet contains a line item for a bank overdraft amount which seems unusually high; 2) Page four indicates that the student survey was sent to 21 enrolled students, but the number of emails sent shows 29; and 3) The total number of responses is listed as 11, but only 6 are included. A letter was sent on May 19, 2016 with the requested clarifications to be received by May 31, 2016 (Attachment C).

AHUSOL's response was received on May 31, 2016 (Attachment D), but does not sufficiently resolve the three questions. AHUSOL states that the bank overdraft item is not owed to the bank and that the amount is currently being analyzed. In regards to the student survey discrepancies, AHUSOL contends that the survey was only sent out to 21 students not the total of 29 actual email addresses that are listed. The survey that was sent to students asks five specific questions and also gave the student the opportunity to give any other comments. AHUSOL only sent six of the 11 responses and says that the reason is that only the six completed the comment section. Further clarification may be needed.

Additional information will be sought from Mr. Ogamien to see if the pending issues can be resolved.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this status report on AHUSOL be received and filed.

PROPOSED MOTION

If the Subcommittee agrees with the recommendation, the following motion to the full Committee is suggested.

Move that the status report on American Heritage University School of Law be received and filed.