



AVE MARIA SCHOOL OF LAW STATEMENT ON ABA COUNCIL DECISION

The Ave Maria School of Law has undergone a thorough review of its operations by the ABA's Accreditation Committee, which included the regularly scheduled ABA site visit that occurs every seven years for fully approved law schools nationwide. Following that review, the Law School was found to be in full compliance with ABA Standards governing the Law School's academic program, academic standards, academic support, financial resources, and bar passage rates. The Site Team and Committee called the Law School's academic support program "robust" and its bar prep program "aggressive" and "well developed."

The Committee and Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar found, however, that the Law School has not demonstrated its compliance with the ABA's standard on admissions, which requires that a law school "maintain sound admissions policies and practices" and admit only applicants who "appear capable of satisfactorily completing its program of legal education and being admitted to the bar." The Council has directed the Law School to submit additional information and a written plan for bringing the School into full compliance, which the Law School will do. Ave Maria School of Law retains its full ABA accreditation.

The ABA has focused particular attention on the LSAT scores and undergraduate GPAs of students in the bottom quartile of the Law School's entering classes. Those bottom quartile figures have improved considerably in the past two years. No other law school in the country had higher LSAT score improvements in 2015 (at both the median and bottom quartile levels). There were additional increases in the LSAT scores and undergraduate GPAs of the bottom quartile of the incoming class that arrived on campus this week. That recent evidence was not available at the time of the ABA's decision and is part of the additional information the Council has requested.

Dean Kevin Cieply issued the following statement concerning the ABA's action: "Overall we are pleased with the report of the Site Team and with the Committee's findings of compliance. The finding of noncompliance with the standard on admissions is a disappointment but not a cause for alarm. We are confident that when the Committee reviews the additional information we will be submitting, including the credentials of our 1L class, we will be found in full compliance. Ave Maria is on a strong upward trajectory, and we are confident that all of our students are capable of success."

August 10, 2016