



**THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA
COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS/OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS**

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Notice of Public Forum

**Friday, April 29, 2016
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**The State Bar of California
180 Howard Street
San Francisco, California**

The Committee of Bar Examiners (Committee) invites input from interested parties on the following under consideration by the Committee:

The Future of Unaccredited Law Schools in California, Requiring Unaccredited Law Schools to Become Accredited and Expanding the Accreditation Rules to Include Distance Learning Law Schools

The Committee has spent many hours during a number of its meetings discussing issues related to California's registered, unaccredited law schools; the future of such law schools; the Committee's regulatory oversight of unaccredited law schools and their various programs of legal education; and whether its authority to accredit law schools should be expanded to include distance-learning law schools.

After receipt of comment during a public forum to discuss the issues involved and a formal public comment period, the Committee took the following action during its January 2015 meeting, to amend the associated rules and statutes, which was subsequently approved by the State Bar of California's Board of Trustees:

RESOLVED, that following a period of public comment and consideration of the public comment received, and upon recommendation of the Board Committee on Admissions and Education, the Board approves the proposed amendments to the: 1) California Rules of Court – Chapter 3. Legal Education, Rule 9.30. Law School Study in Schools Accredited or Registered by the Committee of Bar Examiners, 2) Business and Professions Code Sections 6046.7 and 6060.7, 3) Article 4 Admission to the Practice of Law, Business and Professions Code Section 6060, Qualifications, Examination and Fees, 4) State Bar Rules, Title 4. Admissions and Educational Standards, Division 2. Accredited Law School Rules and, 5) State Bar Rules, Title 4. Admissions and Educational Standards, Division 3. Registered Law School Rules as attached hereto; and it is

FURTHER RESOLVED, that staff be directed to pursue adoption of the proposed amendments to the Rule of Court and Business and Professions Code.

In preparing the memorandum to the California Supreme Court and with the passage of time, it was determined that additional or revised proposals should be considered by the Committee prior to submitting these proposals formally to the Supreme Court for adoption.

These issues were discussed by the Committee during its January 2016 meeting. The Committee considered whether to: (1) require all currently registered unaccredited law schools to become provisionally accredited within three years of the date the proposed amendments are adopted; (2) require new schools seeking registration to apply for provisional accreditation; (3) phase out the *Unaccredited Law School Rules*; (4) seek amendments to Section 6060 regarding the First-Year Law Students Examination' to eliminate the three administrations opportunity and return to the previous version of the requirement, which was having to pass the examination before advancing into the second year of law study; (5) better define online education to ensure that it adequately provides an educational experience at a school that could be accredited by the Committee; (6) require that a certain portion of online study be synchronous and conducted in real time; and (7) draft transitional rules before any changes are approved rather than wait until approval is received.

After discussion of the various issues associated with these considerations, the Committee took the following action:

It was moved, seconded and duly carried that a public forum be held on April 29, 2016 in the San Francisco State Bar offices to discuss proposed amendments to the rules and statutes that govern the regulation of law schools by the Committee and that staff prepare additional proposed amendments to the statutes and rules that conform with the consensus reached at this meeting, which will be attached to the Notice of the Public Forum.

To facilitate discussion of these matters, preliminary drafts of proposed amendments to the various statutes and rules have been prepared by staff for the purpose of eliciting comments and assisting the Committee in determining the appropriate direction that it should take. The preliminary drafts are attached.

Those persons who wish to speak during the Public Forum on these issues should contact Deanna Chinn (deanna.chinn@calbar.ca.gov) no later than April 25, 2016. The amount of time allotted for each speaker's comments will be affected by the number of persons who wish to comment, as the amount of time designated for the public forum is limited. Written comments are welcome and should be sent to the Committee of Bar Examiners, to the attention of Gayle Murphy, Senior Director, Admissions, The State Bar of California, 180 Howard Street, San Francisco, California 94105. Written comments must be received no later than April 25, 2016, to be considered at this phase of the Committee's consideration.

Following the public forum and after consideration of all comments received, final versions of the proposed amendments will be drafted and reviewed by the Committee at a future meeting. It is anticipated that following the Committee's approval of revised amendments to the rules and statutes, the final version of the proposed amendments will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees with a request for a public comment period prior to final approval.