

Like several other law schools across the nation, Golden Gate University School of Law has received a letter from the ABA regarding ABA Standard 501(b). This finding -- which is based on our 2015 and 2016 first-time bar pass rates and non-transfer attrition-- does not impact GGU Law's accreditation. It simply requires that we continue providing details on our admissions and bar passage goals and the steps we are taking to meet these goals.

It is important to keep in mind that the proactive efforts of GGU Law to increase admissions standards and prepare our students for the bar exam are producing positive results. While the ABA Findings were based on 2015 and 2016 first-time bar pass rates, our first-time pass rate on the July 2017 exam improved by 20 points over the July 2016 exam.

It is also encouraging that the recent ABA letter provides considerable detail on progress GGU Law has made on numerous other fronts including our extensive academic support and bar preparation programs and the rising credentials of our incoming students.

When I joined GGU Law as Dean last August, I was convinced that the school was taking the correct steps to help our students succeed in law school and on the bar exam. Since my arrival, we have taken further aggressive and innovative steps to increase our academic support and bar preparation services, provide additional support to keep students in law school, and to refocus our Law Career Development office to help more students obtain jobs in law firms, non-profit legal entities, government, and technology companies. We have also been aggressive in recruiting students with excellent credentials, with the goal of increasing our median LSAT by two points.

In just this past year, we have increased the credentials of our incoming students, lowered the transfer-out rate from 13% to 9%, had the largest improvement in the bar pass rate among all California law schools, and improved our job placement rate by 7.4 points which represents an increase of 14% (bar-required and JD-advantage jobs).

We are also instituting one of the most comprehensive bar preparation and academic development programs in the country. We recently agreed to partner with Themis to provide our students an academic excellence program that begins the moment they enroll at GGU Law and continues through the bar exam. Highlights of the program include:

- Students will be able to answer practice bar questions in each course that is tested on the bar exam, with many of the questions pulled directly from previous MBE exams.
- Students and faculty will be able to track student progress to see where additional help and resources are needed.
- Students will take practice bar exams at the end of the first year and at the beginning of the student's final year in law school.
- Students will be provided a Themis bar review course after graduation that is designed exclusively for GGU Law students.

We are very confident that the steps we have taken over the past year will continue to increase our bar pass rate, lower our attrition rate, and enhance the success of our graduates.

I know that GGU Law is on the right path to continue building upon these successes, while remaining true to our legacy and mission. I greatly appreciate the outstanding work of our faculty and staff—and most of all, I believe in our amazing students. Together, we will continue to make GGU Law a place that produces the practice-ready lawyers of tomorrow.

Anthony Niedwiecki
Dean, Golden Gate University School of Law