September 26, 2017

**A Resolution to Promote More Equitable Grading in Externship Seminars**

WHEREAS page 14 of the 2017-2018 Student Extern Manual provides that “[i]n the externship seminar, students receive two grades: (i) a Pass/Fail grade for their work at their field placement, i.e., a fieldwork grade; and (ii) a letter grade for their work in the 1-credit seminar”;

WHEREAS American Bar Association (ABA) Standard 304(c) requires that externship students engage in “ongoing, contemporaneous, faculty-guided reflection” during their externship semester;

WHEREAS American Bar Association (ABA) Standard 304(c) does not require the Law Center to impose curved grading in field placement courses;

WHEREAS American Bar Association (ABA) Standard 304(d) provides that “[c]redit granted for such a . . . field placement course shall be commensurate with the time and effort required and the anticipated quality of the educational experience of the student,” thereby supporting a grading scheme based on a student’s individual experience, rather than that student’s experience *relative to other students’ experiences*;

WHEREAS the requirements to qualify as an experiential learning course under American Bar Association (ABA) Standard 303(a)(3)—(i) integrate doctrine, theory, skills, and legal ethics, and engage students in performance of one or more of the professional skills identified in Standard 302; (ii) develop the concepts underlying the professional skills being taught; (iii) provide multiple opportunities for performance; and (iv) provide opportunities for self-evaluation—emphasize professional development and not demonstrated proficiency; and

WHEREAS the Law Center’s Recommended Curve and Historical Grade Distribution provides that “[b]ecause of the nature of seminars, grades in these courses tend to be somewhat higher and the recommended grading curve does not apply. If grades are significantly above or below the Historical Grade Distribution, a dean will discuss the grades with the faculty member”;[[1]](#footnote-1) and

WHEREAS, when delegates expressed a preference to implement a non-curved grading scheme in externship seminars to Dean Gunja during the April 18, 2017 House of Delegates Meeting, Dean Gunja instructed the delegates to submit a resolution with their proposal;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that:

The Student Bar Association respectfully requests that the Law Center implement a new grading scheme for externship seminars whereby professors are not required to adhere to a grading curve.

Respectfully submitted,

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3L Delegate, 2017-2018

Noah McCullough

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1. https://www.law.georgetown.edu/campus-services/registrar/upload/Recommended-Curve\_Historical-Grade-Distribution.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)