

# ALDA

## AMERICAN LAW DEANS ASSOCIATION

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July 16, 2007

To: Council on Legal Education of the American Bar Association  
From: Board of Directors of the American Law Deans Association  
Re: Report of the Accreditation Policy Task Force

The American Law Dean's Association ("ALDA") is an association of the deans from over 130 law schools in the United States. These comments, however, express the views of the Board of Directors alone, and have not been reviewed or agreed to by the entire membership of ALDA.

The Board of Directors of the American Law Deans Association (the "ALDA Board") commends the Accreditation Policy Task Force for its excellent and thorough work reflected in its report dated May 29, 2007 (the "Report"). Chairman Rakes' creation of the Task Force and selection of its members has proven to be an excellent step, one that will help all of us improve the Standards. It clearly outlines the underlying principles that should govern the content of the Standards and their interpretation. We thank the members of the Task Force for their dedicated and quick work to produce this Report and its recommendations.

The ALDA Board agrees with and endorses each of the specific recommendations contained in the Report and urges the Council to move forward quickly to implement them.

With respect to the final issue addressed by the Report on "terms and conditions of employment", the ALDA Board understands the complexity as well as the contentiousness (as expressly identified by Task Force members Shepard and Garcia-Pedrosa) of these issues. While the ALDA Board is disappointed that the Task Force could not make a recommendation on this issue, the ALDA Board agrees with and endorses the idea proposed by what is identified in the Report as the "first group". That group suggested that a committee be formed to study the Standards to determine "whether the 'security of position' provisions of the Standards should be replaced with alternative Standards that more directly and effectively safeguard the underlying systemic interests in protecting academic freedom and ensuring the existence of a well-qualified faculty and a sound program of legal education." This is an extremely positive suggestion on how to make progress on this issue.

The ALDA Board urges the Council to create such a committee without delay. The ALDA Board believes this is an urgent matter because of its impact on many schools currently undergoing accreditation reviews in which the issue of terms and conditions of employment may be an issue. The ALDA Board stands ready to assist the Council and the proposed committee in any way it can. For example, members of the ALDA Board are willing to serve on the committee, and the ALDA Board is willing to collect descriptions of practices used by academic institutions to protect academic freedom. We would welcome the chance to work together with you on this issue.