



**THE COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS  
OF  
THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA**

## **2010 Annual Report**

### *Committee of Bar Examiners/Office of Admissions Administration Activities*

- In 2010, the names of 6,423 applicants were placed on motions to the Supreme Court of California certifying their eligibility for admission to practice law in California. In 2009, 6,766 applicants were certified.
- Adjustments to the admissions fees were implemented January 1, 2010.
- Proposed administrative amendments to the *Admissions Rules* were drafted, approved in principle by the Committee of Bar Examiners (Committee) and forwarded to the Board Committee on Regulation, Admissions and Discipline Oversight with a request to circulate them for public comment.
- Three (3) training sessions for the Committee and meetings with the unaccredited law school community and applicants' attorneys were held.
- Sixteen (16) presentations were made by Office of Admissions staff to California Law School students to discuss admission requirements.
- A report on an evaluation of the Office of Admissions' examination materials security procedures, which was conducted by an outside contractor, was considered by the Committee. Several recommendations for enhancement of the current procedures will be implemented.
- Revisions to the Committee's Refund policies were adopted by the Committee and approved by the Board of Governors.
- Programming to the State Bar's computer systems that will permit new attorneys to order their Admission Certificates online was completed, a process was developed to run the program was developed and the new feature was implemented.
- Adjustments to the computer system to remind applicants who had received positive moral character determinations to update their moral character applications every year were made.

- Access to secure Status Screens, which permits applicants who are registered with the Committee to determine their individual status with regard to meeting the requirements for admission to practice law, i.e., passage of the First-Year Law Students' Examination, the status of their moral character determination, receipt of a passing score on the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE) and passage of the bar examination, was implemented.
- Several meetings of the Committee's Advisory Committee on Accredited Law School Rules were held and recommendations concerning proposed amendments to the accreditation rules were prepared, approved and forwarded to the Committee for consideration.

### *Examinations Activities*

- The California Bar Examination, which includes both the General Bar Examination and Attorneys' Examination, was administered to 13,478 (4,572 in February and 8,906 in July) law students and attorneys admitted in other states and foreign jurisdictions, which were slightly more than the 13,441 that were tested in 2009. The total number of applications filed in 2010 for the examination, however, was slightly lower, as 15,035 law school graduates and attorneys filed applications in 2010 compared to 15,184 in 2009. In February, 3,189 applicants (69.8%) and in July, 7,259 applicants (81.5%) took the examination at laptop computer test centers. Applicants using their laptop computers were required to download special security software installed prior to administration of the examination. In February, 319 petitions for testing accommodations submitted by applicants with disabilities were granted and 265 applicants were tested at testing accommodations test centers. In July, 393 petitions were granted and 345 applicants were tested at testing accommodations test centers.
- In February 2010, 37.6 percent of the applicants passed the California Bar Examination, a higher pass rate than in February 2009 when 34.5 percent passed. In July 2010, the overall pass rate was 54.3 percent, a slightly lower pass rate than in July 2009 when 55.5 percent passed.
- The First-Year Law Students' Examination was administered to 1,423 law students (776 in June, 647 in October), which was a slightly higher number than the 1,400 applicants who took it in 2009. One thousand, seven hundred and forty (1,740) law students filed applications in 2010, compared to 1,662 who filed in 2009. Out of the total number of law students taking the examination, 32 law students with disabilities were granted accommodations and 26 applicants took the examination at testing accommodations test centers in June. In October, 27 applicants were granted accommodations and 20 took the examination at testing accommodations test centers.
- In June 2010, 24.6 percent of the law students passed, compared to 21.5 percent who passed in 2009. In October 2010, 19.5 percent passed, compared to 19.1 percent who passed in 2009.
- 225 new First-Year Law Students' Examination multiple-choice questions were drafted.

- A draft research study regarding the First-Year Law Students' Examination, which was prepared by the Committee's psychometric consultants, was reviewed by the Committee. A final version of the report is expected to be released in 2011.
- Revisions to the Committee's Grader Retention Policy, which include a new provision that will permit attorneys who acquired their law study at schools other than those with fixed-facilities to apply to become Graders if they meet all other requirements, were approved by the Committee.

#### *Moral Character Determination Activities*

- Eight thousand, two hundred and sixty-four (8,264) moral character determination and extension applications were received from applicants seeking admission to practice law in California in 2010. This number is less than the number received in 2009, which were 8,789. One hundred and twenty-eight (128) moral character determination applications were submitted by attorneys seeking to register under the Multi-Jurisdictional Practice rules, which is fewer than the 132 applications received in 2009.
- The number of investigation reports reviewed by the Committee decreased in 2010, as 296 reports were reviewed compared to the 302 reviewed in 2009. During 2010, 126 informal conferences were held with moral character determination applicants, compared to 119 that were held in 2009. The number of applicants receiving adverse moral character determinations decreased, from 50 in 2009 to 35 in 2010.
- Revisions to its Informal Conference Procedures were adopted by the Committee.

#### *Legal Education Regulation Activities*

- Thirty (30) law school reports were considered by the Committee, which included reports on visitations to the law schools in connection with their continued registration or accreditation by the Committee of Bar Examiners, major change requests submitted by the law schools and proposed notices of noncompliance.
- Guidelines for the interpretation of the regulations for accredited law schools, which were adopted in 2009, were implemented January 1, 2010.
- Proposed revisions to the library standards for law schools regulated by the Committee, which are contained in the *Guidelines for Accredited Law School Rules*, were drafted, circulated for public comment and approved for implementation January 1, 2011.
- Following a 45-day period of public comment, during which no public comment was received, proposed revisions to Rule 9.30 of the *California Rules of Court* regarding unaccredited law schools were approved by the Committee and the Board of Governors, for submission to the California Supreme Court with a request that they be adopted.

- Either in connection with an initial inspection, the five-year periodic visitation requirement or in response to a request for approval of a Major Change, visitations to 5 unaccredited law schools and 4 accredited law schools, were conducted.
- Following completion of a candidacy period, review of the school's application and self-study, and an on-site inspection, the Committee granted accreditation to Pacific Coast University School of Law.
- Requests for approval of Major Changes, which permit the schools (Monterey College of Law and Concord Law School) to offer LLM programs in certain areas of the law, were approved by the Committee.