



Association of American Law Schools

May 14, 2010

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MEMORANDUM 10-04

TO: Deans and Faculty of AALS Member Schools  
FROM: Susan Westerberg Prager *Susan* and Michael A. Olivas  
SUBJECT: Recommendations for Committee Appointments

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Strong and thoughtful volunteers are a dominant element in the work of the AALS. Soon, Michael A. Olivas, President-Elect of the Association, will begin work on his committee appointments. He will appoint members to the following standing committees for three-year terms to begin in January 2011: Academic Freedom and Tenure, Bar Admission and Lawyer Performance, Clinical Legal Education, Curriculum Issues, Government Relations, Libraries and Technology, Membership Review, Professional Development, Recruitment and Retention of Minority Law Teachers and Students, Research, Sections and Annual Meeting, and the Journal of Legal Education Editorial Board. Additionally, President-Elect Olivas will appoint members to the following Special Committees for a one-year term: Nominating Committee for Officers and Members of the 2012 Executive Committee and Committee to Review Scholarly Papers for the 2012 Annual Meeting.

It would be most helpful to have your suggestions before **June 20, 2010**. Please send your recommendations of AALS member school faculty who should be considered for committees to Susan Prager, Executive Director. Recommendations should be sent to [sprager@aals.org](mailto:sprager@aals.org) with "Committee Nomination" as the subject header or mailed to 1201 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Last year we received many suggestions and President Reese Hansen selected a large number of appointees from those recommendations. On behalf of the Association I want to thank the many of you who made recommendations and to ask you to do so again.

The AALS seeks committees that reflect the participation of newer as well as seasoned members of the faculty. It would be most helpful if recommenders provide insight into the suggested person's strengths in the context of committee service as well as any aspect of their background and interests that would contribute to the work of a particular committee or committees.

Attached are brief descriptions of the standing and special committees.

## AALS STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing Committees, established by action of the Executive Committee and appointed by the President-Elect, provide reports and policy advice to the Association.

Standing Committees of the Association are charged with advising the Executive Committee on matters within their jurisdiction. Recommendations to the Executive Committee are submitted through the Executive Director. The Executive Committee may ask for recommendations on a particular issue or a Committee may call the attention of the Executive Committee to a matter on which they believe an AALS position or other action is appropriate and desirable.

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### **The Committee on Bar Admission and Lawyer Performance (BALP)**

This Committee is concerned with issues of bar admission (how bar requirements impact the curriculum, mental “disability” questions, etc.) and with improving lawyer performance through various means, including continuing legal education. The committee has the responsibility of advising the Executive Committee on issues relating to bar admission and lawyer performance. In recent years the Committee has offered programs at the AALS Annual Meeting. The committee may also work jointly with groups like the National Conference of Bar Examiners and Conference of Chief Justices on matters of mutual interest. This committee normally meets once a year in the Association’s office in Washington, D.C., although in some years this meeting occurs via teleconference. Occasionally the committee meets at the Association’s Annual Meeting.

### **Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure (CAFT)**

This Committee serves as a quasi-adjudicatory body in considering complaints from faculty members that they have either been discriminated against in a manner prohibited by AALS bylaws, or that their academic freedom rights have been violated. The Committee may also be asked to review proposed changes in bylaws, regulations, or policies referred to it by the Executive Committee. The Committee generally meets in the AALS office for one day during the academic year or at the Association Annual Meeting in January for a two hour meeting, although it need not meet if there is no business pending.

### **Committee on Clinical Legal Education (CLE)**

The charge of this committee is to advise the Executive Committee on issues regarding clinical legal education. Because there is a great deal of ferment about curricular reform, we do expect that the Executive Committee will be especially interested in your advice. The Committee meets at the AALS Clinical Conference.

### **Committee on Curriculum Issues**

This Committee is charged with identifying curricular innovations in the various law schools and disseminating information about significant curricular developments to the Executive Committee. The Committee advises the Executive Committee on the appropriate role for the AALS in promoting discussion and exchange of ideas about the law school curriculum. From time to time, subcommittees will be appointed to develop recommendations for consideration by the full Committee. The Committee now has an excellent track record of producing programs at

## AALS STANDING COMMITTEES

the AALS Annual Meeting. The Committee typically meets once a year in the Association's Washington office, and occasionally meets at the Annual Meeting.

### **Committee on Government Relations (GR)**

This Committee is concerned with actions the Association should take if an important legislative or regulatory action may affect the law schools or law faculty. This Committee advises the Executive Committee on matters that could require the Association to play a role in legislative or executive advocacy. It should be noted, however, that the Executive Committee leaves those issues that appear to be expertly handled by other associations to them. Our focus is on issues affecting legal education that may not be adequately addressed by other organizations or issues on which our perspective is particularly important. The Committee typically meets once a year with the ABA Government Relations Committee, at the AALS Annual Meeting. As issues arise, conference calls may be arranged.

### **Journal of Legal Education Editorial Board (JLE)**

The role of the 12 member Board is to assist the Coordinating Editors of the *Journal* in reviewing manuscripts presented for possible publication in the *Journal* and give general policy guidance. The quarterly publication addresses numerous issues confronting legal educators, including curriculum development and legal scholarship. It also serves as an outlet for emerging areas of scholarship and teaching.

### **Committee on Libraries and Technology**

This Committee advises the Executive Committee on the appropriate role for AALS to play in assisting its member schools with matters relating to libraries and information technology. Unlike other Committees, which typically have nine members, this Committee has twelve members, with half being librarians and half non-librarians. Recommendations to the Executive Committee are submitted through the Executive Director. The Executive Committee may ask for recommendations on particular issues or the Committee may want to call the attention of the Executive Committee to a matter on which the Committee believes an AALS position or other action is appropriate and desirable. The Committee generally meets briefly during the Annual Meeting and often designs and presents a program at the AALS Annual Meeting.

### **The Membership Review Committee (MRC)**

The Membership Review Committee examines law school applications for membership in the Association, sabbatical site evaluation reports of member law schools, and progress reports from member schools that were asked to report on issues of noncompliance with AALS membership guidelines. The Committee meets twice a year at the AALS office in Washington, D.C. (fall and spring) to evaluate schools up for review and to make recommendations to the Executive Committee on the actions it should take. Prior to the spring MRC meeting, new members have an orientation conference. The Membership Review Committee is one of the most important and demanding committees of the AALS so regular attendance at meetings and thorough preparation on each member's part before each meeting is critical. For this reason, we provide the dates on which the Committee will be meeting at the beginning of the year. A Membership Review Committee member should expect to serve on behalf of the AALS on one site evaluation team during the three-year term, and one year immediately following the term.

## **AALS STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **Committee on Professional Development**

The Committee generally meets in the AALS office for one day during to make recommendations to the Executive Committee about what professional development programs should be presented for the following academic year.

### **Committee on Research**

This Committee is charged with assisting the Association in promoting research on legal education. The Committee typically meets once a year in the Association's office in Washington, and often produces a program at the Association's Annual Meeting.

### **Committee on Recruitment and Retention of Minority Law Teachers (RRMLT)**

This Committee is charged with recommending to the Executive Committee what role the Association should play in assisting its member schools in the recruitment and retention of minority law teachers and students. The Committee's charge has recently been expanded to include "Students"; this change is a result of the Association's strong commitment to increasing the number of people of color attending law school. Consistent with the expanded mission of the Committee, the number of committee members has been expanded from nine to twelve. Since this is a relatively new change, the committee should spend a significant amount of its time considering how the association can make a real difference. The Committee also concentrates on faculty hiring and retention. The Committee typically meets once a year at the Association's Washington office, and occasionally meets at the Annual Meeting.

### **Committee on Sections and Annual Meeting**

This Committee is charged with advising the Executive Committee regarding the functioning of the Association's roughly 90 Sections. The Committee's fundamental purpose is to work toward improving the AALS Annual Meeting and the operation of the Sections which produce much of the content of the Annual Meeting program. Each committee member serves as liaison to about ten Sections. This liaison roll involves communicating with the officers of those Sections to seek their advice, and offer any appropriate assistance. The Committee typically meets once a year in the Association's Washington office.

## AALS SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Special Committees, established by action of the Executive Committee or Association President and appointed by the President-Elect, assist the Association with specific projects for a one year term.

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### **Nominating Committee for 2012 Officers and Members of the Executive Committee**

This Committee is charged with the task of nominating faculty from member schools to the AALS Executive Committee. The committee will review nominations solicited by the AALS Executive Director and recommend to the AALS House of Representatives two nominees for the Executive Committee and the 2013 AALS President.

### **Committee to Review Scholarly Papers for the 2012 Annual Meeting**

The Scholarly Papers Competition is open to faculty at AALS Member and Fee Paid Schools that have been teaching for 5 years or less. The winning paper(s) is/are presented at a special session at the Annual Meeting. Committee members read papers over a six-week period, beginning in August. The Committee meets by conference call to select awardee(s) after a winnowing process takes place. The conference call occurs no later than early November (the conference call is preceded by an e-mail vote for the winner(s)). There need not be any winner, although that has not occurred in recent years; there also can be co-winners and, as indicated earlier, one or more runners-up.