



Association of American Law Schools

**AGENDA
ITEM**

December 16, 2011

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Memorandum 11-17

TO: Deans of Member Law Schools and
Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Susan Westerberg Prager, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: School Recommended for Admission to Membership in the
Association: **North Carolina Central University School of Law**

The Executive Committee has found that the **North Carolina Central University School of Law** has met, and is capable in the future of continuing to fulfill the obligations of membership in the Association as stated in the Bylaws and Executive Committee Regulations. The Executive Committee therefore recommends that the North Carolina Central University School of Law be admitted to membership in the Association.

This item has been placed on the agenda of the first meeting of the House of Representatives, which is to be held on Thursday, January 5, 2012, beginning at 5:15 pm during the Annual Meeting in Washington, DC.

When considering the membership application of North Carolina Central University School of Law, the Executive Committee reviewed the report of the 2011 site team, Professor Leo P. Martinez, University of California Hastings College of the Law, Chair, and Associate Dean Gail M. Daly, Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law, and the report of the 2009 site team, Dean R. Lawrence Dessem, University of Missouri, Chair; Professor Filippa Marullo Anzalone, Boston College; Professor David F. Chavkin, American University; Okianer Christian Dark, Howard University; Associate Dean Michael L. Goodnight, University of Miami; The Honorable Louis Sands, US District Court of the Middle District of Georgia; and Associate Dean Barbara Holden-Smith, Cornell University. It also considered the affirmative recommendation of the Membership Review Committee and the correspondence and the statements before the Executive Committee and the Membership Review Committee of Chancellor Charlie Nelms, Dean Raymond Pierce and Associate Dean Wendy Scott.

North Carolina Central University ("NCCU") is one of 16 public universities that comprise the University of North Carolina system. It was chartered in 1909 as a private institution that opened to students on July 10, 1910. In 1923 the

General Assembly of North Carolina appropriated funds for the purchase and maintenance of the institution, which in 1925 became North Carolina College for Negroes—the first state-supported liberal arts college for African-American students in the nation. Today, North Carolina Central University offers bachelor’s degrees in more than 100 fields of study, and graduate and professional degrees in approximately 40 disciplines. In addition to the School of Law, NCCU includes schools of business, education, library and information sciences, and colleges of behavioral and social sciences, liberal arts, and science and technology. While NCCU is a historically black university, its 9000 students represent many races and ethnicities. These students come to the University from across the country and from more than 12 nations. The University’s campus occupies more than 100 acres in Durham, North Carolina.

The law school at North Carolina Central University was authorized by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1939. Created as a “separate-but-equal” option for African Americans who were not permitted to attend the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the first students entered the nation’s second historically black college or university law school in the fall of 1940. The law school has been accredited by the American Bar Association since 1950. This fall there are 534 total students enrolled in the J.D. program. The School of Law has 30 tenured and tenure-track faculty and 6 long-term contract faculty.

The Executive Committee recognized the significant progress made by the North Carolina Central University School of Law in recent years. A critical element in this progress was the successful effort to equalize the funding of the two state law schools, an effort led by the Dean. Equally important, Chancellor Nelms elevated aspirations and stressed the importance of successful research efforts to the education students receive and to the long term health of the University. Within the law school, the recruitment of Wendy Scott as Associate Dean brought the leadership of a senior scholar to the effort to further scholarly productivity and a large new co-hort of younger faculty have committed themselves to the school. The Executive Committee noted that the law school has continued to emphasize, share, and promote its vitally important mission to educate students who are committed to public service and to meeting the needs of the underserved. The faculty remains admirably and passionately devoted to ensuring the success of their students and their students are successful in entering the practice of law, and in working to serve the interests of justice within their state. They are aided in this mission by the success of so many alums of the law school who have become members of the judiciary and other effective members of the legal profession.

The Executive Committee notes with appreciation North Carolina Central University School of Law’s achievements and values. It believes strongly that the school will contribute in significant ways to the work of this Association.

cc: AALS Executive Committee
Membership Review Committee
Deans of Non-Member Fee Paid Law Schools