

(The Board of Visitors of the Wisconsin Law Alumni Association conducted its annual inspection of the Law School and its program on October 19-20, 1980. Their report is printed here in full.)

BOARD OF VISITORS REPORT

The University of Wisconsin Law School Board of Visitors was created in 1957 "for the purpose of assisting in the development of a close and helpful relationship between the Law School and the University of Wisconsin Law School Alumni on all matters of mutual interest, including Law School facilities, curriculum, placement, admission and public relations of the School and the Bar ... " Since 1970, the Board has devoted at least one day each year to an annual visit of the Law School, during which the Board has observed classes, reviewed programs, and met with students, faculty members and administrators to discuss issues concerning the Law School.

On October 20, 1980, we, the present members of the Board of Visitors, visited the Law School. This is our report.

Classroom Observation. On the morning of the visit, individual visitors attended nearly two dozen classes, taught by 20 different teachers. Some of these classes were conducted in the lecture hall setting which, along with the Socratic method, has until recent years dominated American legal education. Some classes, however, were taught in smaller discussion sections. While most classes were taught by full-time faculty members, a few were conducted by practicing attorneys.

Our classroom observation and discussion with students convinces us that the teaching ability of the faculty remains high. Especially impressive is the student-teacher rapport in the small sections. In prior reports we recommend that, within budgetary constraints, the number of small section classes be increased. This again is our recommendation.

Evening Classes. Under part-time attendance law enacted by the Legislature last year, the Law School must offer students the option of attending school part-time. The law also requires that sufficient classes be scheduled in the evening so a student could meet graduation requirements by attending classes only in the evening. The Law School began to implement the law this school year by offering two first year classes in the evening.

Fewer than 25 students have signed up for the part-time option, and, of these, fewer than 10 attend classes only in the evening. Unfortunately, the small number of evenings-only students has necessitated assigning full-time students to evening classes to fill out these classes. This has resulted in some complaints from the involuntarily assigned full-time students. The scheduling difficulties will probably increase in coming years, when, to meet the course requirements of the evenings-only students, the Law School will be required to offer a fuller array of evening classes.

This school year the evenings-only students are in their first year. However, in coming years, as

these students achieve advanced standing, the Law School will be required to offer second-year and third-year courses in the evening to meet these students' course requirements. First-year courses will have to be offered in the evening to serve evenings-only students in future classes. This will result in more and more full time students being assigned to fill out the evening classes. It is likely that full time students — who normally expect to attend daytime classes and to have their late afternoons available for work or family responsibilities — will encounter difficulties resulting from unanticipated assignment to evening classes. For some these may be serious problems, and the Administration should be sensitive to these problems and attempt individual rescheduling of classes.

The evening classes have created a whole new series of problems for both the Law School Administration and for the full time student body. We therefore recommend that a study of the anticipated impact of the expansion of evening classes should be made and that the findings of the study should be reported to the University Administration and the Legislature.



Board of Visitors Meet

Faculty Leave Policy. The Law School's liberal leave policy for faculty members is also a source of student concern. For several years students have complained that leave-taking by faculty members has made it difficult to anticipate who will be teaching a given course in a given semester. The liberal leave policy is viewed by the faculty as an attractive fringe benefit. Moreover, for the Law School to live within its budget, it is necessary that a significant number of faculty members be on leave each year. Therefore, we believe that, for the Law School to continue to maintain a faculty of national repute at the present salary levels, the present leave policy should continue. However, to make it easier for students to plan their future class schedules, faculty members should be encouraged to make their leave-taking plans known as early as possible. The Dean has agreed that he will then announce these leave-taking plans to the student body.

Student Placement. This school year more employers will interview students at the Law School than in any previous year, and the students' job prospects appear to be brighter than in the recent past. Despite this, Assistant Dean Reisner, who is in charge of placement, reported to us that students this year are unusually apprehensive about their ability to sign up for interviews. Apparently as a result of this apprehension, long lines of students form outside of the Placement Office before the interview sign-up sheets are scheduled to be posted. Sometimes these lines start forming two hours before the posting of sign-up sheets during the noon hour.

Students and faculty members view these long, early-forming lines as a major problem. Students often have to cut late morning classes to assure themselves an early place in line. Moreover, students who want to interview with a specific employer often feel crowded out by students who indiscriminately sign-up for every possible interview. Finally, the noise caused by the lines of students outside the Placement Office is disrupting to nearby classrooms.

Because of these and other problems, some other law schools have abandoned the first-come, first-served sign-up system in favor of a lottery system or a bid system. Both of these latter systems would reduce long lines, but each has disadvantages. A lottery system, under which students would be selected for interviews on a random selection basis, would not adequately serve the needs of students who are only interested in interviewing with a few but well-chosen employers. These students would be better served by a bid system, but such a system could be administratively unwieldy. Under a bid system, all students would be given an equal number of "interview bid points" at the start of the school year. Students then could use these points to bid for the opportunity to interview with the employers of their choice, with the high bidders

being allowed to interview. Despite the disadvantages inherent in the lottery and bid systems, we recommend that they be studied further and that a new interview sign-up system be devised for implementation in the 1981-82 school year.

Curriculum and Programs. The students to whom we spoke were generally pleased with Law School programs. If they had criticisms, it was not with existing course offerings or programs. Instead, their criticisms — really suggestions — focused on the need for more programs and activities to supplement existing programs and to foster a sense of community in the Law School. Specific suggestions included the organization of forums for outside speakers on law-related subjects, the holding of longer orientation programs for new law students, and the holding of a graduation ceremony for law



students apart from the all-University graduation.

We believe that such activities are worthwhile for the Law School. However, we make no recommendation as to any specific program because we feel that individual programs should be worked out by the Dean and the Student Bar.

Conclusion. There appears to us to be a higher degree of satisfaction with the Law School among students and faculty members this year than in the recent past. Moreover, although prospects for the future well-being of the Law School appear good, we believe that the problems caused by the part-time attendance program re-

quired by the Legislature merit serious attention by the Administration and all concerned alumni.

Respectfully submitted,

BOARD OF VISITORS

Howard A. Pollack, Chairman
William Rosenbaum, Vice Chairman
Edward J. Reisner, Secretary
Thomas E. Anderson
Lloyd A. Barbee
Kirby O. Bouthilet
Roger D. Einerson
Roy B. Evans
Justice Nathan S. Heffernan
Deborah S. Kleinman
Robert B. L. Murphy
Susan Wiesner-Hawley

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Speaking at the recent Board of Visitors Dinner, Associate Dean Stuart G. Gullickson told two stories that are included here with apologies to all who are, were or would be a dean. Said Dean Gullickson:

"Isn't the law wonderful! An assistant professor can take a single point of law and turn it into a whole lecture. An associate professor can take that same point and construct an entire course from it. A full professor is able to take the self-same point and build an entire career from it. And then there is the dean — he is the one who has forgotten what the point was!

"When I practiced law in Mer-

rill," Dean Gullickson went on, "I had some doctor friends who annually traveled to North Dakota for bird hunting. On one of these trips they chanced to rent the best bird dog any of them had ever seen, a dog named 'Professor'. The next year they returned and asked the outfitter for 'Professor'. 'Oh, you can't have him this year,' the outfitter answered. 'But we're willing to pay double,' cried the doctors. 'It's not the money, he's just no good anymore. Another party took him out and, after he had done his usually outstanding job, they thought they would honor him by calling him Dean. Now all he will do is sit on his tail and bark.'"