

MEMO

Re: US News Survey

Date: October 3, 2016

Dear Colleagues,

It's that time of year again when US News sends its surveys around the country asking us to rank every ABA-accredited law school "on a scale from marginal (1) to outstanding (5)." I would like to offer some thoughts.

First, reputation makes up 40% of a school's overall rank -- *yet 33% percent of academics surveyed last year did not respond*. At the very least, I strongly encourage every UC Hastings alum or professor who gets one of these surveys to complete it in a timely fashion.

US News tells us that academic reputation surveys will be sent to law school deans; deans of academic affairs (which I assume means me!); chairs of faculty appointments; and the most recently tenured faculty members. Folks can expect to be getting these surveys via snail mail in the first week of October; the deadline for submissions will be 11/29. Reputation surveys for lawyers and judges will be sent out around October 13 via email and the submission deadline will be December 8.

How you rank schools, including UC Hastings, is of course entirely within your discretion. But I offer some thoughts from my unique perspective as the head of the academic program at Hastings. I am extremely impressed with recent pedagogic innovations, such as our Inns of Court program for early professionalization of 1L students and our introduction of "hybrid" classes that teach legal analysis and bar passage skills in the context of a specific doctrinal curriculum. I am constantly surprised at how productive and impactful our scholars are, providing intellectual leadership to the bench and bar, not only here in California but throughout the nation and world.

Our overall rank in US News has been artificially depressed for the last 15 years by two factors. One is that for a long time we refused to depart from our policy of offering financial aid to students based entirely on economic need. Meanwhile, some of our competitor schools were offering financial aid to students not primarily based on need, but instead based on which ones could improve their US News rankings because of their LSAT and/or college GPA. Those schools shot up in US News while we declined. In the last couple of years we have begun to devote greater resources to the higher metrics applicants, and the result was a dramatic upward move last year in our ranking.

The other major downward ranking force is our location. Although San Francisco is very clearly the greatest city in the world, it hurts us in the rankings because it has become an extremely tight job market for our graduates and because prospective students are frightened by runaway housing prices. We have now devoted additional resources to our Career Development team, and the numbers are improving. We are also planning to add new student housing -- more on that later -- so we can expect that to eventually improve as well.

I tell you these things to explain why such a strong academic school like UC Hastings could slip so far in the US News rankings, which are highly sensitive to factors unrelated to the actual strength of the academic program. If nothing else, the proof of our academic strength can be seen in the astonishing accomplishments of our alumni, who are among the leaders of the bench and bar in California and beyond. There is no doubt in my mind that UC Hastings is better today than we were in 1994, when the 65-Club was just coming to an end and our overall rank was #20.

I invite anyone with questions, or who may receive a specialty ballot and would like information about our strengths in categories recognized by US News, to pay me a visit.

With that, I invite you to consider the attached table and ask whether UC Hastings is properly ranked as against these sister schools.

We endeavor to continue to build on our national, indeed our international, reputation as an outstanding law school. Your work and support are essential to our success. Thank you.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Evan Lee".

Evan T. Lee
Acting Provost & Academic Dean

Rank, Peer Score, Non-Academic and Total Score (2017)

School	Rank	Peer	Bench/Bar	Total
University of Alabama	28	3.2	3.2	63
University of California--Irvine	28	3.2	3.5	63
Boston College	30	3.2	3.7	61
Ohio State University (Moritz)	30	3.3	3.5	61
University of California--Davis	30	3.3	3.6	61
College of William and Mary (Marshall-Wythe)	33	3.2	3.6	60
University of Georgia	33	3.2	3.4	60
University of Washington	33	3.2	3.5	60
University of Wisconsin--Madison	33	3.4	3.6	60
Fordham University	37	3.1	3.5	59
Brigham Young University (Clark)	38	2.8	3.2	58
University of North Carolina--Chapel Hill	38	3.4	3.9	58
University of Arizona (Rogers)	40	3.1	3.3	57
University of Colorado--Boulder	40	3.1	3.3	57
University of Illinois--Urbana-Champaign	40	3.1	3.5	57
Wake Forest University	40	3	3.5	57
Washington and Lee University	40	3	3.7	57
George Mason University	45	2.7	3.1	54
Southern Methodist University (<u>Dedman</u>)	45	2.6	3.3	54
University of Utah (<u>Quinney</u>)	45	2.8	3.2	54
University of Florida (Levin)	48	3.1	3.4	52
University of Maryland (Carey)	48	3	3.2	52
Florida State University	50	2.9	3	51
Temple University (Beasley)	50	2.6	3.1	51
Tulane University	50	3	3.4	51
University of California (Hastings)	50	3.1	3.7	51
University of Houston	50	2.6	2.9	51