

## **Why CLEA Exists**

The Clinical Legal Education Association is a membership driven organization that serves as a voice for instructors teaching clinic and skills courses, advocating on their behalf both inside and outside of the academy. It is the largest association of law teachers in the United States. The mission statement delineates the many purposes of CLEA and can be found here: <http://cleaweb.org>. Historically, CLEA can act more quickly and speak more forcefully and on a broader range of issues than other clinical organizations.

The organization engages in community-building activities, co-sponsors the *Clinical Law Review*, and engages in important advocacy efforts on behalf clinicians as a whole, as well as individual programs challenging political interference with educational activities. Past board members have advocated to change the ABA's evaluation of outcomes in the accreditation process, ensuring that clinical outcomes are integrated into new standards. Others have fought to preserve gains in status won by earlier generations of clinicians. Many have defended clinics from political attack and interference, most notably in Louisiana, Maryland, and New Jersey. In addition, the organization continues to monitor and bring to the fore concerns about the racial diversity within clinical legal education.

## **Board and Committee Activities**

The CLEA Board is responsible for the management of the business, affairs and programs of CLEA. Board meetings take place twice a year, at the AALS Conference in January<sup>1</sup> and at the Clinical Conference in April/May. Throughout the year, the Board usually meets via conference call a number of times. Board members are also expected to actively participate in e-mail discussion of various issues.

In addition to participation in CLEA meetings, Board members are expected to be actively involved in one or more of the CLEA committees. Currently there are thirteen committees: Website/Communication; Accreditation/Standards (subgroups on Security of Position and Outcome Measures); Best Practices Implementation; Per Diem; Awards; Membership/Outreach; Creative Writing; Elections; Fundraising; Conferences; New Clinicians; Clinics and Law School Rankings; Task Force on Minorities in Clinical Legal Education. The work of each committee varies. Some are active all year (Accreditation/Standards) while others are active during particular times each year (Awards, Elections). Board members are also expected to seek other ways to meet the mission of CLEA, such as being involved in special projects, writing for the CLEA newsletter or website, leading a small group at the CLEA New Clinicians Conference, or other appropriate activities.

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<sup>1</sup> It is understood that not all members of the CLEA Board will be able to attend the January meetings at AALS, particularly for those members newly elected (since they will not know the results of the election until mid-December).

If elected, Board members serve for a three-year term and are eligible to run for two consecutive terms if they so desire.

### **Board Member Responsibilities**

Each member of the Board should expect to do at least the following:

- Prepare for and participate actively in each meeting of the board, and keep CLEA leadership informed if unable to do so.
- Participate in the work of at least one standing CLEA committee.
- Stay alert to matters of broad concern among clinicians and raise those concerns within CLEA as appropriate.
- Become informed about matters relating to ABA regulation of legal education and CLEA's advocacy: ask questions, get answers, be pushy, and figure it out!
- Assist in administrative support for CLEA events, including staffing of dues tables and assistance with the New Clinicians Conference.
- Remain current in CLEA dues, and encourage others at your school and in your region to pay their dues.