

CUNY Law School Quality Hit

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Byline: By Robert Polner. STAFF WRITER

Body

The CUNY Law School has drawn unfavorable criticism from the American Bar Association, whose December report found "unevenness in teaching quality and rigor" and "leniency in academic standards," among other shortcomings.

A spokeswoman for the 450-student graduate school in Flushing yesterday said it has addressed several concerns raised in the evaluation and is working on other issues and is not in danger of losing accreditation by the bar association.

The school was given until Sept. 15 to detail efforts in response to the ABA's report, said spokeswoman Andrea Shapiro Davis.

An accreditation committee of the ABA visited the school last September. Among the criticisms stemming from the ongoing evaluation were the following:

-- The law school gave relatively few failing grades during the last three academic years. For example, in the spring and fall of 1994, only two failing grades were given in elective courses. This, despite the fact that some students are enrolled with very low entrance examination scores.

-- The class of 1994 had a 59 percent pass rate on the New York State bar exam. Statewide, 82 percent of first-time takers statewide passed. The report noted, though, that the law school's pass rate is on the rise.

-- Instruction is uneven: "The level of classroom rigor in the analysis of doctrinal issues, the pedagogical skill of the faculty, and the use of clear evaluative standards in measuring student work could all benefit from . . . attention."

The ABA report also expressed concern about the ability of CUNY graduates to obtain employment, and the lack of job security or advancement opportunity for adjunct professors.

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