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Law Dean Unhappy with Commissions Actions

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Law dean unhappy with commission’s action

by Kevin Scionti
I.U. Staff Writer

The I.U.-Bloomington Law School may lose its accreditation or be censured by the American Law Schools and the American Bar Association if an addition to the school’s library is not built before the school is re-inspected in 1982.

But the probability that an addition would be completed by that time severely was reduced last week.

On Nov. 9, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education recommended that the University’s $10.4 million request for Law School funds not be forwarded to the state legislature for consideration this spring.

The commission met last week in Indianapolis to consider operating and capital budget requests from state universities. Capital budget appropriations fund new buildings, renovation of existing buildings and land acquisition projects.

"I do not think the commission did the University or the cause of legal education any good with this decision," said Sheldon Plager, Law School dean.

In an attempt to convince the legislature to grant the appropriation, Plager said he will lobby in Indianapolis while the legislature is in session, appealing to individual senators and representatives to grant the funds.

George Weathersby, director of the higher education commission, said the library's alteration because the library cannot provide enough space for study areas and for new volumes, Plager explained. Each of these is an accreditation requirement.

The Law School also was asked to lobby for the funding request, Plager said.

The school is in danger of losing its accreditation because the library cannot provide enough space for study areas and for new volumes, Plager explained. Each of these is an accreditation requirement.

The Association of American Law Schools requires accredited schools to provide study space for at least 65 percent of the students enrolled in the school. The law library must provide space for 377 students to meet the requirement, Plager said.

At the beginning of the semester, the law library had space for only 299 students. The school purchased additional furniture for 78 students to comply with the accreditation requirement. But to accomplish this, the school had to sacrifice storage for new volumes, bringing this area below accreditation standards, Plager said.

The library will be useless as a research tool and in violation of accreditation standards if it does not have the space necessary to keep its collection up to date, he said.

Plager explained. The school purchased 78 students to comply with the accreditation requirement. But to accomplish this, the school had to sacrifice storage for new volumes, bringing this area below accreditation standards, Plager said.

George Weathersby, director of the higher education commission, said the need for space for new volumes was not emphasized by I.U. officials when the commission considered the request.

The University emphasized the need for more study space and told the commission the Law School might be in violation of accreditation standards, he said. However, the Law School has met that requirement, and thus the new addition could not be justified on that basis, Weathersby said.

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