

An explanation of website documents

The California Bar is a large operation with something on the order of \$50 million in annual revenues. It is overseen by its Board of Governors. The general Executive Director of the Bar is Judy Johnson. Under Ms. Johnson is Gayle Murphy, who directs the semi-annual bar examination. Ms. Murphy has a large staff, including her lieutenant Dean Barbieri. Advising Murphy on various matters of policy is the Committee of Bar Examiners, which is currently chaired by Alan Yochelson.

Our initial approach for use of the bar data was to Ms. Murphy, in May 2006. With input from Murphy, we prepared a proposal for use of the data that was submitted to the Committee of Bar Examiners in September 2006. We concurrently submitted a proposal to fund the research to the National Science Foundation (“NSF”), and later to the Searle Freedom Trust, a private foundation. The NSF sent out our original proposal (see “Project Description from August 06) to peer reviewers; their reviews are posted. NSF asked us to “revise and resubmit” the proposal, which we did in January 2007. The revised Project Description is posted, along with the peer reviews from that second round. The document “Summary of NSF reviews” links the two sets of reviews, since in some cases particular reviewers commented on both rounds.

Meanwhile, Murphy informed us in November 2006 that it would be helpful to provide some evidence of outside support for our research proposal. We approached several people whom we thought would be supportive, and in virtually every case those we approached readily agreed to write and express their support. The letters included one from seven of the leading legal empiricists in the country, letters from several current and former deans of law schools in California, and a letter from several members of the US Civil Rights Commission.

The only written materials received in opposition to our proposal, so far as we know, are the memorandum from William Kidder and the letter from SALT, both posted at the bottom of the web page. Also posted is our response to Kidder.

Finally, we also include two “Cal Bar memos” from Dean Barbieri – the only official communications about our study proposal that we know about, and a list of the 2006-07 membership of the Committee of Bar Examiners.