

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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***US News* Remedies Loyola Law School Naming Inconsistency that Affected Ranking**

Los Angeles – *US News & World Report*, which unilaterally changed Loyola Law School's name on the ranking ballot it sent to law school faculty members for its 2010 "America's Best Graduate Schools" published in April, has agreed to revert to the school's proper name at the request of Dean Victor Gold. The publication, which switched the school's name to "Loyola Marymount University," said it will use "Loyola Law School" on future ballots beginning with the 2011 rankings. The school, whose downtown Los Angeles campus is approximately 20 miles from its parent institution Loyola Marymount University, has been known as Loyola Law School since 1930.

The sudden change to a name unfamiliar to many law school professors led to a ranking drop in the 2010 rankings. No other school's name was changed on the 2008 ballot. "On ballots for all prior years going as far back as I can find, we were called 'Loyola Law School,'" said Dean Gold. "In other words, the first time the ballot called Loyola Law School by a different name, our reputation score among academics fell by a magnitude nearly unprecedented in the history of the magazine's survey."

Loyola Law School was ranked 71 out of 185 schools in the 2010 *US News* survey, falling from a ranking of 63 in 2009. The decline was the result of a drop in Peer Assessment – from 2.6 to 2.3 – the most heavily weighted of all criteria in the rankings. *US News* has used a five point scale for Peer Assessment (reputation in the academic community) since 1998. For each of the 11 surveys published between 1998 and 2008, Loyola's score was either 2.6 or 2.5. The last eight surveys show only one other instance in which a law school's score dropped as much as 0.3 in one year. Since about 185 schools are ranked each year, these eight surveys presented more than 1,000 opportunities for schools to drop 0.3 from one year to the next (7x185=1,295). It happened only twice.

There was no other explanation for the drop, according to Dean Gold. "Our faculty's productivity in the last year or two has been normal," he said. "We published articles in the principal law reviews at Stanford, Berkeley, Virginia, Penn, Minnesota, Iowa, Northwestern, Washington University, William & Mary and many others. During the same period, we published more than a dozen books with the likes of Oxford, NYU, Aspen, West and more." He added that Loyola Law School is ranked 40th among all law schools in Social Science Research Network (SSRN) downloads for the last 12 months, according to a May 18, 2009 survey.

Several prominent legal blogs concurred with Gold's assessment. Brian Leiter's Law School Reports blog, eponymously written by a University of Chicago Law School professor, posted a headline stating: "Why Did Loyola Law School Fall in *US News*? Because the Magazine Changed the School's Name, and Its Reputation Score Plunged!" Leiter went on to explain, "This is almost certainly the explanation – I have never in all my time in teaching ever heard the school called anything other than 'Loyola Law School' or 'Loyola Law School, Los Angeles.'" (Full posting: <http://leiterlawschool.typepad.com/leiter/2009/07/why-did-loyola-law->

school-falls-in-us-news-because-the-magazine-changed-the-schools-name-and-it-repu.html). Reacting to the *US News* decision to change the name back, Leiter posted, “*US News* Does Right by Loyola Law School.”

Above the Law, another prominent law blog, echoed Leiter’s sentiment in a posting: “Apparently, the drop didn’t have anything to do with any legitimate factor.” The blog went on to say, “As always, prospective law students should think about mistakes like these before they put too much stock into the law school rankings.” (Full posting: <http://abovethelaw.com/2009/07/loyola-law-school-la-blames-na.php>).

Dean Gold further explained the correlation between the ballot name and ranking change: “This drop in score following a name change is not surprising. While we are part of Loyola Marymount University, and proud of it, we have been known as Loyola Law School for 80 years. That name has been used in all our branding efforts. Most law school professors and deans know us by that name. We use that name consistently in an effort to avoid confusion with two other law schools that have ‘Loyola’ in their names. By changing what we are called on the survey ballot, the magazine may have confused some respondents. To add to the confusion, the version of the rankings published in spring 2008 called us ‘Loyola Marymount University’ in print, but was based on a survey ballot sent in the fall of 2007 that called us ‘Loyola Law School.’”

About Loyola Law School Los Angeles

Located in downtown Los Angeles—a legal, financial and media capital—Loyola Law School is home to prominent faculty, dedicated students and cutting-edge programs. Loyola is committed to legal ethics and the public interest, and it has produced top attorneys for nearly a century. The Princeton Review’s *Best 174 Law Schools* 2009 edition ranked Loyola second in the nation for quality of classroom teaching, and *The National Jurist* magazine ranked Loyola second nationally for public interest law in 2008. Please visit www.lls.edu for more information or contact Brian Costello, deputy director of communications, at 213.736.1444 (d), 213.393.8504 (c) or brian.costello@lls.edu.

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