



July 18, 2023

UMKC Faculty Senate

Re: Nomination of Barbara Glesner Fines for designation of Emerita Dean Status

Dear Members of the UMKC Faculty Senate:

The Policy & Planning Committee of the Law School submits for your consideration our nomination of Rubey M. Hulen Professor of Law Barbara Glesner Fines for Dean Emerita status. The Policy & Planning Committee, the committee elected by the faculty to represent the Law School, voted to approve this honor at its meeting of July 6, 2023. Before doing so, the Committee sought input from the full faculty (our normal procedure for faculty matters during the summer) and received strong support and no opposition. Our new Dean, Lou Mulligan, has authorized us to report that he also enthusiastically supports this nomination.

Glesner Fines meets the express eligibility requirements for the emerita dean title as outlined in University of Missouri Collected Rule Section 320.090 (B) Emeritus Designation.

She more than meets the requirement that “administrators must have held the rank of professor or associate professor at the university for at least five years.” CRR 320.090(B)(1). Glesner Fines joined the UMKC School of Law faculty in 1986. Moreover, she has served in leadership positions in the law school for over fifteen years. She served as Executive Associate Dean from 2008 to 2016, and then as Interim Dean from January 2017 until she was appointed as Dean in June 2018. She stepped down from the deanship and rejoined the faculty on July 9, 2023.

She also more than meets the requirement that she have “made contributions to the university recognized as meritorious.” CRR 320.090(B)(3).

Glesner Fines was the thirteenth dean of the Law School and only the second woman to serve as its dean.

As Dean, Glesner Fines engaged in record-setting and strategic fundraising. She raised the two largest gifts in the Law School’s history. During her tenure as dean, the Law Foundation endowment has grown to over \$13 million and the law school consistently has the strongest percentage of alumni giving of any unit on campus. Glesner Fines’s leadership has strengthened the law school’s strategic areas of focus. Her development and advocacy efforts have led to the grant funding of the newly approved Center for Law, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation. She led the development of an advocacy campaign that is nearing its goal of \$750,000 to fund faculty fellowship and student scholarships in the school’s nationally ranked advocacy program. She strengthened ties with national family-law organizations (such as the American Bar Association

Family Law Section and the American Academy of Matrimonial Attorneys) that not only provide funding for the Law School's top ranked Child & Family Law program but also provide strategic partnerships for national programs and visibility. Her leadership has transformed the building: under her leadership the law school has built a new admissions suite, renovated two classrooms, upgraded technology in two courtrooms, and is currently completing construction of a new faculty suite and home for the new Center for Law, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation.

Glesner Fines led the Law School through more than one challenge. She was a calm and steady force leading the law school through the pandemic. Well before the University went completely online in 2020, Glesner Fines was teaching professors how to teach online and led by example by being the first member of the faculty to obtain online teaching certification. Indeed, it was Glesner Fines's expertise in using technology that led the Kansas court system to turn to UMKC during the pandemic to develop a grant-funded online portal through which victims of domestic violence can apply for protective orders from their phone. Today, over 50% of all protective-order applications in the state of Kansas come through this system, the Kansas Protection Order Portal. Under her leadership, the School of Law prepared for its seven-year ABA re-accreditation, achieving that re-accreditation without question from the ABA Council—the first time this has happened in over thirty years. Glesner Fines managed the School of Law's budget during the University's deepest financial challenges in years. To develop new revenue lines, she, along with Associate Dean Jeffrey Thomas, led the development of a new Master of Legal Studies degree program, which was approved by the Curators just this past month.

Grant writing—an atypical activity for law faculty—has blossomed under Glesner Fines's leadership. Again she led by example, personally serving as PI on a Department of Justice grant funding the Innocence Clinic (2020-2023) and as a co-investigator and co-teacher on a grant from the Center for Inter-professional Education, which funded a course on Interprofessional Perspectives on Aging, combining graduate students from Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Dentistry, and Law (2017-18). During her deanship, the School of Law has seen grant activity grow to unprecedented levels, with major grants supporting the Center for Law, Entrepreneurship & Innovation; an Expungement clinic; and a post-graduate Truman Fellowship that holds the contract to provide tenant-eviction defense under Kansas City's new right-to-counsel ordinance, to name a few.

Glesner Fines's view of what law schools should do and be is capsulized in UMKC Law School's mission statement, which she led the faculty to create: the School of Law provides student-centered, community-connected, justice-driven legal education and research. The UMKC Law Self-Help Clinic she founded as Dean is a perfect exemplar of her ability to braid all three values together to provide legal services to self-represented community members. Glesner Fines created that clinic in partnership with Legal Aid of Western Missouri in 2019. The clinic's volunteer senior attorneys, UMKC public-service librarians, and pro bono students work together to provide free brief advice, limited scope legal representation, and referrals for a range of civil matters. The Self-Help Clinic serves as a national model of how to create collaborative partnerships between legal-aid societies and law schools, while folding in law students as early as the first semester of their first year in well-supervised pro bono projects.

The effort has been award-winning on several fronts. Two of the senior volunteer attorneys and Glesner Fines were honored for their work with the Robert C. Welch Volunteer Attorney Project Award presented by Legal Aid. The American Association of Law Libraries recently

honored the Clinic with its 2020 Excellence in Community Engagement Award. Missouri Lawyers Media honored one of the librarians who orchestrated the move to online as one of the Unsung Heroes in Information Technology for facilitating the move to remote work due to the pandemic shutdown. While the clinic has mainly been a service clinic to this point, Glesner Fines will personally be taking over the direction of the clinic to transform it into a teaching clinic to prepare students to develop innovative solutions to access-to-justice challenges.

Glesner Fines is absolutely beloved by students. She has taught 32 different courses over her years at UMKC. Charmingly, she was recognized by *National Jurist* magazine as one of “23 Law Profs to Take Before You Die” (Mar. 2011). She has taught continuously while serving as Dean, teaching a Seminar in Family Violence, Client Counseling, Professional Responsibility, and Solo and Small Firm Practice. She developed and teaches each semester an undergraduate course in Logical Reasoning for Pre-Law Students that provides LSAT test preparation and professional development guidance.

Glesner Fines sees her teaching portfolio as always including continued mentorship of practicing lawyers as well. As an expert in legal ethics and a talented teacher, her presentations are in high demand. She has provided at least one continuing legal education presentation monthly throughout her deanship, presenting not only for UMKC-CLE, but also for community partners, bar associations, and private law firms. Through this work, she has not only raised the visibility of the UMKC School of Law but has also advanced the standards of practice in the profession.

If the above recital were not sufficient to prove that Glesner Fines meets the standard of excellence required for Emerita Dean status, the Faculty Senate could also look to its own evaluation of her leadership, concluded in February 2022. That report noted that every group surveyed (Law faculty, staff, peers, board members, and alumni) rated the Dean 91% to 100% positive for overall performance. A full 100% of the faculty respondents said the Dean should be retained, and there were no significant areas of concern expressed by any group.

The School of Law’s Policy & Planning committee recommended this designation, not only because of the excellence of Glesner Fines’s leadership, but also because this designation would be important for the law school’s national visibility. The convention nationally is to bestow emeritus status on former law school deans who return to their faculty. For example, the former deans of NYU Law (Richard Revesz), Columbia Law School (David Schizer), Duke Law (David Levit), the University of Cincinnati Law School (Joseph Tomain and Louis Bilionis) and the University of Arkansas School of Law (Cynthia Nance) all were granted the title of Emeritus Dean upon their return to their faculties after service as Dean. For Glesner Fines to be unable to use this title as well would be anomalous.

Moreover, the designation of Dean Emerita for Glesner Fines would help her continue to bring attention to UMKC. Glesner Fines is nationally acclaimed as a scholar of the development of professional identity and the pedagogy of legal education. The designation of Dean Emerita will advance the visibility and impact of this research and thus of the university.

Thank you for your consideration of this nomination.

Very truly yours,

Steve Leben
Chair of the Policy & Planning Committee

Julie Cheslik
Member of the Policy & Planning Committee

Ryan Copus
Member of the Policy & Planning Committee

Timothy Lynch
Member of the Policy & Planning Committee

Sean O'Brien
Member of the Policy & Planning Committee