

SECTION COORDINATION

1. Description and Purpose The 34 MSBA sections inform members of legal trends and legislative developments, providing members with access to experts and colleagues, high-quality CLE programs, periodic and specialty publications, and other practice-related materials. Additionally, the MSBA sections provide networking, leadership and professional development opportunities for members of the Minnesota legal community. Sections are a tangible, accessible venue for members to become actively involved in the MSBA and offer a sense of community among members of the legal profession.

2. Historical Information The importance of the services provided by sections has been confirmed time and again. In a 1995 membership survey, section CLE programs were among the four items ranked most important; section meetings and newsletters were included in the group of programs ranked next highest. In the 2003 Membership Survey, section CLE programs ranked the second highest in importance of the 21 MSBA programs and services included in the survey; section membership and newsletters were among the top seven offerings ranked important. In both 2002 and 2005, 83% of respondents ranked section CLE programs as important. In February, 2009, 82% of respondents in a survey of 78 members ranked the importance of Section CLEs as “very” important. *Bench & Bar* received the next highest response rate with 70% of respondents ranking it a “very” important member benefit.

Since 2002-03, CLE attendance has grown by 2,604 attendees - an 86.3% cumulative increase. The attendance figure does not represent the full level of staff services that need to be provided in conjunction with an event. For example, in 2007-08, staff actually registered and prepared for 6,015 potential attendees. Even for those members who did not actually attend an event, staff prepared name tags, often assisted with registration, and answered questions or emails concerning the event.

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Total Programs	118	139	140	123	133	128	135
Total Attendees	3,016	4,048	4,895	4,094	4,354	5,254	5,620
# Incease/Decrease (attendees)		1,032	847	-801	260	900	366
% Increase/Decrease		34.2%	20.9%	-16.3%	6.3%	20.7%	7%

The table included in the Performance Standards section shows the number of section members in the past ten years. The number of New Lawyers Section members is stated separately because membership in that section is a free service to all MSBA members who were admitted to the bar in the past six years. While the number of new lawyers should not be ignored, the total number of section members less new lawyers shows how many of our members affirmatively join a section.

The New Lawyers Section develops and submits its own budget for approval.

New Lawyers Section Budget Allocation from the General Fund			
Year	Revenues	Expenses	Net
1997-98	\$1,322	\$7,114	\$(5,792)
1998-99	\$175	\$11,580	\$(11,405)
1999-00	\$0	\$21,870	\$(21,870)
2000-01	\$11,594	\$26,414	\$(14,820)
2001-02	\$25	\$9,522	\$(9,497)
2002-03	\$2,000	\$17,856	\$(15,856)

New Lawyers Section Budget Allocation from the General Fund			
Year	Revenues	Expenses	Net
2003-04	0	\$12,600	\$(12,600)
2004-05	0	\$12,600	\$(12,600)
2005-06	0	\$14,000	\$(13,238)
2006-07	0	\$14,500	\$(14,500)
2007-08	0	\$15,000	\$(15,000)
2008-09	\$510	(\$13,845)	(\$13,335)
2009-10 (Projected)	0	\$12,500 Approved; \$300 additional in December and an additional \$1,000 approved by the Council 2/19/10.	(\$13,800)

3. **Personnel** There are 3.77 FTE positions allocated to this program.

4. **Report on 2009-10 Performance Standards**

A. Sections will achieve a 2% membership growth rate.

This standard was not met. The Sections Group has continued efforts to increase section membership by: 1) collaborating with the Marketing Group on membership offers at Institutes/online; 2) offering a "Join the Section" CLE payment option, where a non-member can pay the annual membership fee and join the Section for the same price as simply attending the CLE; and 3) encouraging non-section members to join at the time of CLE registration. Despite these efforts, section membership decreased by 3.3%. We attribute this loss to economic reasons as members reduced the number of sections they belong to when they renewed.

Year Ending	Section Members	New Lawyers	Net of NL	Net Growth Rate
12/31/08	18,799	3,993	14,806	3.7%
01/01/10	18,173	3,680	14,493	-3.3% (decrease)

B. One hundred percent (100%) of sections will sponsor at least one activity providing a direct member benefit other than legislative initiatives i.e. CLEs, social event, regular newsletter.

This standard has not yet been met, but we fully expect it will be.

See the chart below for the specific activities provided by each section.

Section Sponsored Activities	
Section Name	2009-10
Administrative Law	2 CLE programs; quarterly newsletter
ADR	5 CLE programs; SelectADR web database
Agricultural Law	1 CLE program; bi-annual newsletter
Animal Law	2 CLE programs
Antitrust	4 CLE programs
Appellate Practice	2 CLE programs
Art & Entertainment	3 CLE programs; holiday social
Bankruptcy	4 CLE programs; holiday social
Business	2 CLE programs
Children & the Law	1 newsletter; 2 roundtable meetings
Civil Litigation	1 CLE program; updated <i>Time's Up Manual</i>
Communications Law	3 CLE programs

Section Sponsored Activities	
Section Name	2009-10
Computer Law	4 CLE programs
Construction Law	3 CLE programs
Criminal Law	1 CLE program
Elder Law	Weekly e-newsletter
Employee Benefits	1 CLE planned for May 2010
Environmental & Nat Resources	3 CLE programs; Half day summit; newsletter
Family Law	5 CLE programs; 2 newsletters
Food & Drug Law	3 CLE programs
General Practice Solo Small Firm	2 CLE programs
Health Law	4 CLE programs
Immigration	1 CLE program
International Business Law	2 CLE programs; 2 social receptions
Labor & Employment	1 social reception; 2 newsletters
Law Students	NO ACTIVITY
New Lawyers	4 CLE programs; 2 newsletters
Outstate Practice	Outstate Practice member online website and searchable database
Practice Management & Marketing	4 CLE programs
Probate and Trust Law	2 CLE programs; newsletter
Public Law	2 CLE programs; newsletter
Public Utilities	3 CLE programs
Tax Law	3 CLE programs
Real Property	Title Standards Updates/Book

33 of the 34 MSBA sections have provided or are in the process of providing a tangible activity which benefits members in fiscal year 2009-10. The only section which has not provided and is not planning an activity is the Law Student Section. This section was recommend for Administrative Suspension in December 2009. As referenced in the New Lawyers Section budget narrative, the New Lawyers Section is interested in absorbing the Law Student Section and taking over the mission of engaging current law students in MSBA activities.

- C. Fifty percent (50%) of sections will offer at least one CLE program with 35 attendees.
This standard was met. Eighteen (18) sections (53%) offered at least one program with over 35 or more attendees since July 2009. The largest program since July 2009 had 104 attendees and was sponsored by the Probate & Trust Section.
- D. Fifty percent (50%) of sections will offer a CLE specifically directed to the professional growth of their new lawyer members and/or a networking event for their new lawyer members.
This standard was not met. Sections staff strongly encourage each section council to consider ways to engage their new lawyer members, such as targeted CLE programs and networking events; however, the section councils ultimately determine the types of programs which are section-sponsored. So far, only one section – the New Lawyers Section- has provided a targeted program.

Although targeted programs have only been offered by one section, the sections as a whole have seen a steady increase in the number of new lawyers who are attending programs, increasing 1-2% each month. The total increase in participation went from 27% in October 2009 to 30% in December 2009. The Sections Group has been working with

the Marketing Group to promote section opportunities, specifically CLE programs, to new lawyers and will continue this effort.

5. 2010-11 Performance Standard

The sections staff recommend performance standard D be amended for fiscal year 2010-11 to read, "Twenty-five percent (25%) of sections will offer a CLE specifically directed to the professional growth of their new lawyer or law student members and/or a networking event for their new lawyer or law student members. This standard is more realistic and achievable as a number of sections already participate in law student programming. The sections staff will of course continue to encourage the involvement of and programming for new lawyers.

6. Three-Year Plan Performance Standards:

A. Sections will achieve a two percent (2%) membership growth rate in each of the next three years.

B. One hundred percent (100%) of sections will sponsor at least one activity providing a direct member benefit other than legislative initiatives i.e. CLEs, social event, regular newsletter.

C. Fifty percent (50%) of sections will offer at least one CLE program with 35 attendees.

D. Fifty percent (50%) of sections will offer a CLE specifically directed to the professional growth of their new lawyer members and/or a networking event for their new lawyer members.

7. 2009-10 User Satisfaction

Ninety percent (90%) of Section chairs will have an excellent or good opinion of MSBA staff support. This will be measured through an electronic survey.

In January 2010, the 33 current section chairs (the law student section does not currently have a chairperson) were asked to complete a brief online service satisfaction survey. 15 of the 33 chairs completed the survey. The results of the survey follow.

When applicable, the section service received a ranking of either "very satisfied" or "satisfied." None of the services were ranked as "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied."

Please provide your level of satisfaction for the following section staff services in fiscal year 2009-10.						
	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not applicable	Response Count
Assistance with CLE/Event planning and promotion	86.7% (13)	6.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	6.7% (1)	15
Onsite CLE/Event registration and coordination	80.0% (12)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	20.0% (3)	15
Assistance with newsletters/publications	57.1% (8)	21.4% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	21.4% (3)	14
Assistance with maintaining section records/information	80.0% (12)	13.3% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	6.7% (1)	15
Assistance with section website updates	60.0% (9)	20.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	20.0% (3)	15

Please provide your level of satisfaction for the following section staff services in fiscal year 2009-10.						
Assistance with section council meetings	93.3% (14)	6.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	15
Assistance with other section activities	93.3% (14)	6.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	15

The section chairs were also asked to provide an overall ranking of the service they've received from the sections staff in fiscal year 2009-10, with a rank of 5 being very satisfied and 1 being very dissatisfied. The average ranking received was 4.40 out of 5. Thus, 100% of the respondents ranked the sections service positively, exceeding the 90% threshold set for this performance standard.

8. 2010-11 User Satisfaction

Ninety percent (90%) of Section chairs will have an excellent or good opinion of MSBA staff support. This will be measured through an electronic survey.

9. Market Penetration

The table below shows the number of section members in the past thirteen years. The number of New Lawyers Section members is stated separately because membership in that section is a free service to all MSBA members who were admitted to the bar in the past six years. While the number of new lawyers should not be ignored, the total number of section members less new lawyers shows how many of our members affirmatively join a section.

As of January 1, 2010, 50.2% of MSBA members had joined one or more sections (a 0.7% decrease since 12/31/08). This is a smaller percentage decrease than for overall section membership which decreased 3.3%.

Year Ending	Section Members	New Lawyers	Net of NL	Net Growth Rate
12/31/95	17,046	3,500	13,546	
12/31/96	17,363	3,361	14,002	3.4%
12/31/97	18,073	3,105	14,968	6.9%
12/31/98	17,416	2,852	14,564	-2.7%
12/31/99	18,831	3,959	14,872	2.1%
12/31/00	17,668	3,282	14,386	-3.3%
12/31/01	17,281	3,058	14,223	-1.1%
12/31/02	17,641	3,318	14,323	0.7%
12/31/03	17,501	3,492	14,009	-2.2%
12/31/04	17,216	3,305	13,911	-0.7%
12/31/05	17,483	3,488	13,995	0.6%
12/31/06	17,478	3,674	13,804	-1.4%
12/31/07	17,648	3,370	14,278	3.4%
12/31/08	18,799	3,993	14,806	3.7%
01/01/10	18,173	3,680	14,493	-3.3%

10. Current Issues and Challenges

Although section staff was increased by .58 FTE this fiscal year, they are stretched very thin due to increasing section activity, CLE attendance has increased 23.6% in the past two years, and the number of section-sponsored programs increased 5.2% in the past year. This may in part be attributable to the section administrative suspension policy and sections becoming increasingly

aware through staff reinforcement that it is important to provide benefits to their members in the form of CLEs, newsletters, or other programming.

Larger CLEs often mean more formal presentations with PowerPoints which take staff time to test, particularly when the CLE is held offsite. More members are participating by phone in section meetings and CLEs, which require staff presence to connect and disconnect, as well as troubleshoot any problems. In addition to CLE programs, staff are increasingly assisting with technology projects and formal publications, such as the SelectADR online database and the new *Time's Up Manual*. Should section activity continue to grow at this rate in coming years, additional staff time may be necessary to continue a high level of service to members.

Two other challenges facing Sections are the lack of MSBA conference room space that can accommodate the growing attendance at CLEs and the fact that our conference rooms are not set up for CLE presentations (i.e. no videoconferencing technology; tables are not easily moveable, etc). In 2005-06, between September and February, Sections offered two events attended by 50 or more members, in 2006-07, there were 4 such events, in 2007-08 there were 9 events, in 2008-09 there were 37 events and in the first six months of the 2009-10 fiscal year there were 18 events. With larger CLEs, staff must haul chairs and rearrange tables. Even when rearranged, the MSBA conference rooms are meant for meetings, not CLEs. There is no space for a raised speaker platform to enhance sightlines. If the speaker must access the computer keyboard, they are not at the front of the room but awkwardly placed on the side. There is no space for panel presentations. The MSBA conference rooms are simply not conducive to a quality CLE experience. Registration is often awkward because there is no space for name tags and materials other than the one long counter in the lobby.

Finally, several sections that are routinely attracting large numbers meet off-site at restaurants or hotels because of the lack of MSBA space. This structure is becoming difficult for sections to maintain without significantly raising the price of MSBA-sponsored CLE programs. Low-cost, high-quality CLE programs are a tangible member benefit which is at risk, because none of the current MSBA conference spaces can accommodate more than 50 people comfortably. The sections staff are currently investigating the interest of these sections in funding a larger MSBA conference center space, which could accommodate 100+ attendees.

11. Explanation of Budget Categories

Revenue:

Labor Reimbursement – Staff will charge the Real Property and Civil Litigation Sections an hourly rate of \$22 for their time that is related to Title Standards and Time's Up Manual respectively. These two items raise revenue for the sections.

Section Administrative Fee – Each section, with the exception of New Lawyers, will be charged an administrative fee of \$6 per member. When dues are pro-rated in December of each fiscal year, the administrative fee will also be pro-rated.

Expenses:

Postage -- Advance payment for postage provided to vendors who handle large mailings for sections such as newsletters or *Title Standards* updates. Once mailed, the charges are billed back to the sections.

Copying -- Photocopying for general section coordination that can not be billed to a specific section.

Supplies -- General supplies needed by staff that can not be billed to a specific section.

Printing Banner - Portion of red bordered paper charged to section coordination.

New Lawyers Section -- Annual allocation by MSBA to the New Lawyers Section, which does not collect dues.

Credit Card Fee – Fee paid to the credit card company when members use a charge card to pay for CLE programs. This charge is too difficult to track per section so it is absorbed into the section coordination budget.

Miscellaneous - Includes charges for food & beverages at events such as the chair and treasurer orientations, mileage and parking reimbursement to staff who attend off-site section activities, storage company fees, teleconferencing or long distance phone charges for MSBA sponsored events.