

# PRESS RELEASE

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### **ELA Announces the 2007 Joseph C. Beckham Dissertation of the Year Award Recipient**

DAYTON, Ohio—December 18, 2007—The Education Law Association (ELA) announces Dr. Laurence B. Alexander of the University of Florida as the 2007 *Joseph C. Beckham Dissertation of the Year Award*. ELA presented Dr. Alexander with the award at the 2007 ELA Annual Conference, held in San Diego, California, for his dissertation titled, “Public Forum Doctrine in Higher Education: Student Rights and Institutional Prerogatives.”

Laurence B. Alexander is a professor and Interim Associate Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Florida. A native of New Orleans, Alexander received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of New Orleans, Master of Arts degree from the University of Florida, a Juris Doctor from Tulane University, and a Doctor of Philosophy from Florida State University (2007). Before joining the University of Florida in 1991, he served on the faculty of Temple University and the University of New Orleans. He has received numerous awards for his teaching, research, and service.

Dr. Alexander is a former chair of the Department of Journalism at the University of Florida. He was an inaugural Provost Fellow in the Office of Academic Affairs at the University of Florida. He and his wife, Veronica, have three sons: Brandon, David, and Tyler.

The *Joseph C. Beckham Dissertation of the Year Award* recognizes exemplary dissertations by doctoral students in the field of education law. To be considered, the dissertation must be conceptually clear and address an important problem or hypothesis; contain a comprehensive and relevant review of applicable literature; demonstrate a methodologically sound approach; present a cogent analysis of data; show significant results and discussion; and be written in a scholarly style with appropriate documentation.

Richard Fossey, Chair of the Joseph C. Beckham Dissertation of the Year Committee, explained the process for granting the award. “This year, the committee received seven nominations from university professors across the United States. Our committee is made up of six ELA members, all university professors, who read the dissertations that were nominated in a blind review process. Dr. Alexander’s dissertation stood out among an outstanding group of dissertations.”

“I am honored to receive the ELA Dissertation of the Year Award.” Dr. Alexander expressed. “It’s a high honor to have my work recognized in this way by such a prestigious organization. I shall cherish this moment for a long time to come. I am also pleased to have my name associated with the award that honors a great scholar, mentor and professor—Joseph C. Beckham.”