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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Texas Wesleyan University announces
appointment of new dean for the school of law**

FORT WORTH, March 14 – Texas Wesleyan University President Harold G. Jeffcoat concluded a six-month national search by announcing that Frederick G. Slabach will become the fifth dean of Texas Wesleyan School of Law, succeeding Richard Gershon, who will step down from the post at the end of May. Slabach will join the School of Law on June 1.

“It was a difficult search because of the extraordinary job Dean Gershon has done for the law school,” Jeffcoat said. “Fred was chosen because his background and diverse experience is in line with the direction in which the law school is headed and because he understands the challenges the law school is facing as it prepares to build upon the successes it has achieved under Gershon’s leadership.”

Slabach, who was nominated for the deanship last November, was selected from a highly qualified field including numerous experienced academic administrators and scholars.

Professor Lynne Rambo, who chaired the dean search committee, said the selection process was rigorous, but that Slabach’s credentials and background stood out amongst the other applicants.

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“The committee found Dean Slabach a very dynamic individual and was convinced he could provide the strong leadership to take Wesleyan to the next level,” Rambo said.

Slabach currently serves as the vice dean of Florida Coastal School of Law in Jacksonville, Florida, a school similar to Wesleyan’s law school, not only in size but in its structure as well, offering full-time and part-time programs.

“The deanship at Texas Wesleyan School of Law is certainly a unique opportunity,” Slabach said. “Richard has put the law school in an enviable position, and I know he will leave behind some very big shoes to fill. I sensed that Richard, the faculty and the staff all believe in the mission of the school, and their shared vision of what this law school can become is what compelled me to accept the position. I believe we can articulate and implement that vision, and I am confident that we can build upon the successes that Wesleyan has experienced over the last several years.”

Slabach will inherit the reins of a program that has indeed been flourishing. Over the last five years, applications have jumped 58 percent, median LSAT scores have risen from 149 to 151, median undergraduate GPAs have raised from 2.95 to 3.04, and each of these areas is once again expected to improve in 2003. In addition, the first-time bar passage rate increased from a high of 71.57 percent in July 1998 to 85.71 percent in July 2001. The law school scored 81.91 percent on the July 2002 Texas Bar exam.

Slabach brings a wealth of experience to the law school. As current vice dean and professor of law at Florida Coastal, Slabach is responsible for coordinating academic program and compliance with ABA accreditation standards and overseeing administrative supervision

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and budget preparation for all key areas of the law school. Before coming to Florida Coastal in 2001, Slabach served as interim dean and associate professor of law at Whittier Law School in California, where he was the chief academic and administrative officer for a 650-student law school. He also served as associate dean for academic affairs at Mississippi College of Law in the early 1990s.

In addition to his academic experience, Slabach served as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Congressional Relations and Counsel to the Secretary for the Department of Agriculture from 1993-95. He also served as Deputy Director and General Counsel at the John C. Stennis Center for Public Service Training and Development from 1989-90. Prior to that he served as the Chief Legislative Assistant and Legal Counsel for U.S. Sen. John C. Stennis of Washington, D.C.

Slabach currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation and is a member of the Ethics Committee for the Jacksonville, Florida, Bar Association. Additionally, Slabach was a recipient of the 1995 Elmer B. Staats Public Service Award.

Slabach is the author of “The Constitution and Campaign Reform,” Carolina Academic Press, 1998. He has also published numerous articles in various law journals on Constitutional Law, Civil Rights, and the Voting Rights Act.

Slabach received his LL.M. from Columbia University School of Law, his J.D. from the University of Mississippi and his Bachelor of Science from Mississippi College. He is married to Melany Neilson. They have twin 4-year-old boys.

Texas Wesleyan University was founded in 1890 by the United Methodist Church and

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has a tradition of integrating the liberal arts and sciences with professional and career preparation. Wesleyan's main campus is located in east Fort Worth and extends to downtown Fort Worth, where the Texas Wesleyan School of Law resides. Relocated to downtown Fort Worth in 1997, Texas Wesleyan University School of Law became part of the University in 1992 and received full accreditation from the American Bar Association (ABA) in 1999. The school enrolls approximately 410 students in its day program and 250 students in its part-time evening program.

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