

Indiana University School of Law – Indianapolis 2006-2007 PRAC Learning and Assessment Report

Narrative:

Indiana University School of Law – Indianapolis is an integral part of the IUPUI campus and supports its efforts in building a university of the first rank, yet takes care to emphasize its status as an independent professional component of Indiana University. The law school is accredited by the American Bar Association (ABA).

The missions of Indiana University School of Law – Indianapolis are:

- To provide an excellent graduate and professional legal education for its students;
- To contribute through research, writing, and publication to knowledge, understanding and improvement of law, legal institutions, and legal processes;
- To serve the university, the legal and academic professions, and the wider society;
- To maintain a vibrant and humane community of persons engaged in various aspects of teaching, learning, scholarship, service, and support for those activities.

While the law school is collectively committed to these broad missions, it is also committed to fostering wide intellectual and professional freedom to its faculty. Because of the intellectual and professional freedom of its faculty, the law school has not adopted any formalized methods or requirements for assessing learning outcomes as anticipated by the Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PUL's). There have been discussions within legal education about adapting the PUL's to professional graduate education with a conference and publication of the Symposium issue, *Seven Principles of Good Practice for Legal Education*, 49 J. LEGAL EDUC. 367 (1999).

At the present time, faculty on the tenure or long-term contract track typically use the standardized course and faculty evaluation form from the Testing Center at the conclusion of each semester. The results are tabulated and reported on the faculty member's Annual Survey to the Dean of the law school for use in determining salary recommendations. The results are also included in the materials submitted to the law school's Promotions and Tenure Committee for use in determining the faculty member's progress toward promotion and tenure. A number of faculty members, notably those in the law school's clinical ranks, combine the standard evaluation form with one tailored to obtain feedback related to the specific course. For example, it may ask for input on the teaching methods employed – such as the use of simulation, role-playing, or technology-based information sharing.

In a representative law school course, assessment of student performance and learning is based upon a final examination at the conclusion of the semester. A few faculty members may give an additional mid-term test or provide a pre-exam workshop to assist students with test-taking skills. Assigning the final grade for each student in each course and reporting it to the administration is the responsibility of the faculty member. Further reporting of learning outcomes is not required or expected.

As cumulative measures of student learning, the law school tracks the performance of its graduates on the Indiana bar examination and their ability to obtain law-related occupations.

Bar Passage Rates:

The bar examination provides the easiest available data, but is only part of the cumulative measure the school uses to gauge the achievement of our school's endeavors. As the following table indicates, the law school's bar passage rates have been on track with the overall passage rates of all takers. The July 2006 school pass rate exceeded the average for the total takers, while the February 2007 rate dropped slightly from the total pass rate. These figures overall represent a strong performance of our graduates on this portion of the licensing process.

Even so, the law school has taken steps to investigate and address the matter. It has assigned a law professor to study the matter; she has already attended several conferences. In addition, another member of the law faculty is studying the criteria used in the national law school rankings, one of which is the bar passage rate.

The passage rates for the July 2006 and the February 2007 * Indiana bar examinations are presented below:

Date	Total Candidates	Total Pass Rate	IU-I Candidates	IU-I # Passing	IU-I Pass Rate
July 2006	544	79%	196	157	80%
February 2007	281	70%	78	53	68%

** This figure is subject to change following the review of failing applicants' appeals.*

The bar exam results are a single portion of a three-part licensing process adopted by the Indiana Supreme Court. Graduates must also take a professional responsibility and a multi-state exam, along with the state bar examination. A better measure of the success of our graduates can be found in the ultimate employment figures, which are extremely positive, and are noted below.

Employment Statistics:

The employment statistics for the most recent reporting period are provided below:

2006 Employment Survey

(Students graduated in December 2005, May and August 2006)

Employment Status		
Employed	247	95.0%
Enrolled in full-time degree program	2	.8%
Unemployed, seeking employment	10	3.8%
Employment status unknown	1	.4%
Total	260	100%

Median Starting Salary	
Law Firms	
2-10 lawyers	\$50,000
11-25 lawyers	\$45,000
26-50 lawyers	\$72,500
51-100 lawyers	\$75,000
101-250 lawyers	\$80,000
251-500 lawyers	\$90,000
Over 500 lawyers	\$130,000
Business	\$52,000
Government	\$43,000
Judicial Clerks	\$48,500
Public Interest	\$38,000
Military	\$40,000
Academic	\$50,000
Indianapolis	\$53,500
Indiana (outside Indianapolis)	\$45,000
Out of State	\$50,000

Employment Categories		
Private Practice	125	50.6%
Law Firms	122	49.4%
Started Own Practice	3	1.2%
Business	49	19.8%
In-House Legal	3	1.2%
Management	4	1.6%
Other Business	42	17.0%
Government	51	20.6%
Judicial Clerkships	4	1.6%
Public Interest	5	2.0%
Military	3	1.2%
Academic	6	2.4%
Other	4	1.6%

Conclusion:

The law school has recently experienced a transition in its leadership that may move the school to engage in more programmatic assessment. Furthermore, a recent interest in additional and electronic assessment methods at the law school indicates a positive movement towards incorporating the principles of good practice for legal education in the future.