

Indiana University School of Law – Indianapolis 2008-2009 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).

Currently, 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. However, the use of the standardized student evaluation is expected to be on the agenda for review by the law school's Teaching Committee over the 2009-10 school year.

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. The following table indicates the law school’s bar passage rates. The July 2008 school pass rates are in line with the average for the total takers. While the February pass rates appear low for the law school’s graduates, these results are historically lower than the July scores, as shown by the over-all takers’ results. Even with the lower February results, our passage rates for both exam periods continue to meet or exceed the ABA accreditation standard for bar passage rates.

The passage rates for the July 2008 and the February 2009* Indiana bar examinations are presented below:

| Date | Total Candidates | Total Pass Rate | IU-I Candidates | IU-I # Passing | IU-I Pass Rate |
|---------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| July 2008 | 519 | 82% | 199 | 161 | 81% |
| February 2009 | 260 | 67% | 88 | 53 | 61% |

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

It is important to note that 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:

Employment Survey Summary
(Students graduated in December 2008, May and August 2009)

| Employment Status (within 9 months of graduation) | | |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Employed | 268 | 94.04% |
| Enrolled in full-time degree program | 0 | 0% |
| Unemployed, seeking employment | 10 | 3.51% |
| Unemployed, not seeking employment | 6 | 2.10% |
| Employment status unknown | 1 | .35% |
| Total | 285 | 100% |

| Median Starting Salary | | |
|--|------------|-----------------|
| Law Firms | | |
| 2-10 lawyers | | \$45,000 |
| 11-45 lawyers | | \$56,000 |
| 26-50 lawyers | | \$75,000 |
| 51-100 lawyers | | \$160,000 |
| 101-250 lawyers | | \$95,000 |
| 251-500 lawyers | | \$100,000 |
| 501 or more lawyers | | \$160,000 |
| Business | | \$50,000 |
| Government | | \$44,000 |
| Judicial Clerks | | \$54,324 |
| Public Interest | | \$43,000 |
| Military | | \$60,000 |
| Academic | | \$48,000 |
| Median Starting Salary by Employment Location | | |
| Indianapolis | | \$70,000 |
| Indiana (outside Indianapolis) | | \$53,000 |
| Out of State | | \$60,000 |
| Employment Categories | | |
| Private Practice | 154 | 54.04% |
| Law Firms | 133 | |
| Started Own Practice | 6 | |
| Business | 52 | 18.25% |
| In-House Legal | 4 | |
| Management | 5 | |
| Other Business | 43 | |
| Government | 48 | 16.84% |
| Judicial Clerkships | 3 | 1.05% |
| Public Interest | 14 | 4.91% |
| Military | 2 | .7% |
| Academic | 11 | 3.86% |
| Unknown/Unreported | 1 | .35% |
| Total | 285 | 100% |

Two Top 10 Programs & Outstanding Publications:

While not a direct measure of law student success, national recognition of important initiatives and integral programs at the school are another gauge of the achievements of the school toward its mission. In 2009, the *U.S. News and World Report* ranked two programs at the Indiana University School of Law - Indianapolis in the top 10 in their national ranking of top law schools. Faculty who teach in the fields of health law and legal writing ranked the Hall Center for Law and Health as 10th and the school's legal writing program (Legal Analysis Research and Communication or LARC) as 8th. Additionally, the school was in the Top 10 of public law schools offering a part-time program, ranking 7th.

The school's Hall Center for Law and Health provides a legal perspective to the life sciences. The center also is a part of the Consortium for Health Law, Policy, and Bioethics, in collaboration with the IU School of Medicine's Center for Bioethics and the IU School of Public and Environmental Affairs.

The law school's LARC program has a core of required courses focusing on research and predictive analysis and communication, persuasive writing, giving oral arguments to a court, and drafting. Many of the seven full-time law professors teaching in the legal writing program are actively involved in the legal community, both nationally and internationally. In 2008, the IU School of Law – Indianapolis hosted the 13th national biennial conference of the Legal Writing Institute, bringing more than 600 legal writing faculty members from 13 countries to Inlow Hall.

The law school's Office of Institutional Advancement received a prestigious APEX Award for publication excellence for the law school's 2009 Student Viewbook. This was the second major national publications award this office received during the past school year, the previous one being for our last edition of the Alumni Magazine.

Conclusion:

In anticipation of a site visit by the accrediting body of the law school in October 2009, the American Bar Association, the law school conducted a self evaluation in accordance with the ABA accreditation standards during the 2008-2009 school year. The self-evaluation resulted in a comprehensive review of our systems and important faculty dialog. This review is expected to be the basis for strategic planning that the school will be engaging in during 2009-2010.