

Indiana University School of Law – Indianapolis 2009-2010 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).

In 2010, after a year-long study, the faculty at Indiana University School of Law – Indianapolis adopted a new strategic plan and mission statement. “The Mission of the IU School of Law Indianapolis is to be a premier public law school that advances understanding of the law; prepares students to be excellent, ethical professionals and leaders; provides service to society at a local, state, national, and international level; and promotes a diverse, humane, and supportive community of persons engaged in influential scholarship, teaching, and service.” Strategic Plan, IU School of Law – Indianapolis, <http://indylaw.indiana.edu/news/StrategicPlan.pdf> (last visited July 19, 2010).

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).

Faculty on the tenure or long-term contract track use a newly-created standardized course and faculty evaluation form at the conclusion of each semester. This form was adopted by the faculty in the fall of 2009. The evaluation 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 also are 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. The following table indicates the law school’s bar passage rates. The July 2009 school pass rate is in line with the average for the total takers. While the February school pass rate appears low, these results are historically lower than the July scores. Further, the February school pass rate is in line with February’s total pass rate. Finally, 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 2009 and the February 2010* Indiana bar examinations are presented below:

Date	Total Candidates	Total Pass Rate	IU-I Candidates	IU-I # Passing	IU-I Pass Rate
July 2009	544	80%	206	159	77%
February 2010	268	69%	87	57	66%

** 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:

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

Employment Status (Within 9 Months of Graduation)		
Employed	245	91%
Enrolled in full-time degree program	6	2%
Unemployed, seeking employment	14	5%
Unemployed, not seeking employment	1	1%
Employment status unknown	3	1%
Total	269	100%

Median Starting Salary		
Law Firms		\$82,500
	Solo Practice	\$55,800
	2-10 lawyers	\$54,500
	11-45 lawyers	\$74,000
	26-50 lawyers	\$93,600
lawyers	101-250	\$95,000
lawyers	251-500	\$100,000
Business		\$57,000
Government		\$45,500
Judicial Clerks		\$50,000
Public Interest		\$46,000
Academic		\$51,500
Median Starting Salary by Employment Location		
Indianapolis		\$72,000
Indiana (outside Indianapolis)		\$60,000
Out of State		\$75,000

Employment Categories		
Private Practice	117	47.8%
Business	36	14.7%
Government	55	22.5%
Judicial Clerkships	5	2.0%
Public Interest	5	2.0%
Military	1	.4%
Academic	9	3.7%
Unknown/Unreported	17	6.9%
Total	245	100%

Top 10 Program & 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 2010, the *U.S. News and World Report* ranked one program 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 field of legal writing ranked the law school's legal writing program (Legal Analysis Research and Communication or LARC) as 5th.

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. The full-time law professors teaching in the LARC program are actively involved in the regional, national, and international legal community. 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 IU School of Law-Indianapolis has received several awards for publication excellence. In May 2010, the school received a Gold award for its winter 2009 alumni magazine/dean's report, *IU Law-Indianapolis*, in the 25th annual Educational Advertising Awards competition, sponsored by the *Higher Education Marketing Report*. In June, the same publication received a 2010 Hermes Creativity Award (Platinum designation) from the Association of Marketing and Communications Professionals. The school also received a Gold Award for the 2010 Viewbook (produced by the law school's Office of External Affairs in conjunction with the IU Office of Creative Services). Also in June, the school received a 2010 APEX Award for Publication Excellence as part of the APEX twenty-second annual awards program recognizing excellence in publications work by professional communicators. The award was given for the 2009 winter *IU Law Indianapolis* alumni magazine/dean's report. And finally, in July the school won a Magnum Opus Silver Award for "Best Call to Action Copy" for "10 Easy Ways to Help the Law School," in the summer 2009 *IU Law-Indianapolis* alumni magazine. Magnum Opus awards are presented jointly by *ContentWise*, a leading source of content marketing information and the University of Missouri School of Journalism. The school also received an Honorable Mention for its 2009 winter magazine/dean's report.

Conclusion:

In October 2009, a site evaluation team representing the American Bar Association and the Association of American Law Schools conducted a review of our law school in accordance with accreditation standards. In July 2010, the law school received a letter from the Executive Director of the Association of American Law Schools, which provided in relevant part: "I am pleased to inform you that the Executive Committee has determined that your school complies with the obligations of membership and your membership in the Association is therefore continued. The Executive Committee warmly congratulates you, the faculty, staff, and students for your achievements since the last evaluation of the school." Although the law school is still in the accreditation process with the American Bar Association, the law school has every reason to believe that the result of the American Bar Association review will be equally successful.