

Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law

2013-2014 PRAC Annual Report on Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Accreditation

Indiana University McKinney School of Law (McKinney School of Law), while a part of the IUPUI campus and thus included in the campus requirements for accreditation under the North Central Association's Higher Learning Commission (NCA HLC), is also subject to accreditation by the American Bar Association (ABA). The ABA conducts a full sabbatical site evaluation every seven (7) years. Additionally, every law school is required to complete a comprehensive Annual Questionnaire to ensure continued compliance with accrediting Standards. McKinney's last site visit by the ABA was in October 2009. Notification of full reaccreditation was received on 11 May 2011. (For additional information about the ABA accreditation process, please visit http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/misc/legal_education/2010_a_ba_accreditation_brochure.authcheckdam.pdf.)

Student Learning Outcomes

For the 2013-2014 academic year, the ABA Standards do not require the establishment of student learning outcomes (SLOs). As a result, assessment has been input-based rather than outcome-based (bar passage rates and employment statistics). McKinney School of Law has mentioned in previous PRAC Reports that SLOs and assessment have been contemplated for inclusion in the ABA Standards for several years. In August of 2014, the ABA adopted revised Standards. The Standards now include SLOs and Assessment of Student Learning. In these regards, law schools will be required to:

Standard 301. Objectives of Program of Legal Education

- (a) A law school shall maintain a rigorous program of legal education that prepares its students, upon graduation, for admission to the bar and for effective, ethical, and responsible participation as members of the legal profession.
- (b) A law school shall establish and publish learning outcomes designed to achieve these objectives.

Standard 302. Learning Outcomes

A law school shall establish learning outcomes that shall, at a minimum, include competency in the following:

- (a) Knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law;
- (b) Legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem-solving, and written and oral communication in the legal context;

- (c) Exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system; and
- (d) Other professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession.

Standard 314. Assessment of Student Learning

A law school shall utilize both formative and summative assessment methods in its curriculum to measure and improve student learning and provide meaningful feedback to its students.

Standard 315. Evaluation of Program of Legal Education, Learning Outcomes, and Assessment Methods

The dean and the faculty of a law school shall conduct ongoing evaluation of the law school's program of legal education, learning outcomes, and assessment methods; and shall use the results of this evaluation to determine the degree of student attainment of competency of the learning outcomes and to make appropriate changes to improve the curriculum.

The revised Standards apply beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year to students who become first-year law students that year. McKinney School of Law will take the necessary steps to ensure compliance with the new Standards by the 2016-2017 academic year and we look forward to being able to report on our efforts in upcoming PRAC Reports.

While the ABA Standards do not require SLOs, the NCA HLC is placing an increasing emphasis on them. To that end, McKinney School of Law, along with each credential-granting program at IUPUI, defined explicit SLOs in 2011. McKinney School of Law offers three professional degrees: the J.D., LL.M., and S.J.D. degrees. The corresponding SLOs are:

Students who graduate with a J.D. degree will:

1. Identify and apply fundamental principles of Civil Procedure, Contracts, Criminal Law, Property, Torts and Constitutional Law.
2. Communicate effectively with clients, decision-makers, and a range of other stakeholders in the legal system.
3. Apply strategies for identifying, analyzing, researching and solving legal problems.
4. Analyze a self-selected topic of interest in the law and write a substantial research paper on said topic.
5. Recognize and resolve ethical issues in light of the history, traditions and responsibilities of the American legal profession and its members.

6. Demonstrate mastery of at least one (1) professional skill generally regarded as necessary for effective and responsible participation in the legal profession.

Students who graduate with an LL.M. degree will:

1. Identify and apply fundamental principles of their selected specialty track of study.
2. Apply strategies for identifying, analyzing, researching and solving legal problems.
3. Analyze a topic in the law related to their selected specialty track of study and write a substantial research paper of publishable quality on said topic (if required by the track of study).

Students who graduation with an S.J.D. degree will:

1. Compose and defend a dissertation of publishable quality that constitutes an original and substantial scholarly contribution of the areas of law in which it is written.

As things progress with the new ABA Standards, McKinney administration expects that the aforementioned SLOs will likely change to meet ABA reaccreditation standards.

Student Learning Outcome Measurement

At present, the SLOs for the J.D. degree are measured in two cumulative ways: Indiana bar passage rates and employment statistics.

McKinney School of Law bar passage rates (most recent data available) for first-time takers*

| Date | McKinney Candidates | McKinney # Passing | McKinney Pass Rate |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| July 2014 | 193 | 152 | 78.8% |
| February 2014 | 42 | 28 | 67% |

** These figures subject to change following the review of failing applicants' appeals.*

McKinney's bar passage rates continue to meet or exceed ABA accreditation standards for bar passage rates. However, in an effort to improve the passage rate of our graduates, McKinney School of Law has added two 1-credit pass/fail bar preparatory courses to its spring class schedule. The courses are strongly recommended for students with a grade point average below 3.0.

For past McKinney School of Law bar exam statistics through February 2006, please visit <http://mckinneylaw.iu.edu/students/bar-exam/>.

Indiana statewide bar passage rates (most recent data available) for first-time takers*

| Date | Candidates | Pass Rate |
|-----------|------------|-----------|
| July 2014 | 471 | 79.6% |
| Feb. 2014 | 152 | 77% |

For past statewide bar exam statistics, please visit <http://www.in.gov/judiciary/ble/2361.htm>.

It is important to note that the bar exam results are a single part of the licensing process adopted by the Indiana Supreme Court, which also requires an applicant to pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam (MPRE), and graduate from an ABA accredited law school.

Employment statistics

Our SLOs can also be measured by our employment statistics, as arguably one reason students receive employment offers is because they have demonstrated mastery of the SLOs, which are examples of some of the skills required of attorneys.

Employment status (9 months after graduation) for the 256 of the 257 graduates from the class of 2013 who reported their status is as follows:

- 88% employed
- 0% enrolled in a full-time degree program
- 10% seeking work; and
- 2% NOT seeking work at this time.

The class of 2013 includes December 2012, May 2013, and August 2013 degree certifications.

Additional employment information can be found at <http://mckinneylaw.iu.edu/careers/employment-statistics/index.html>.