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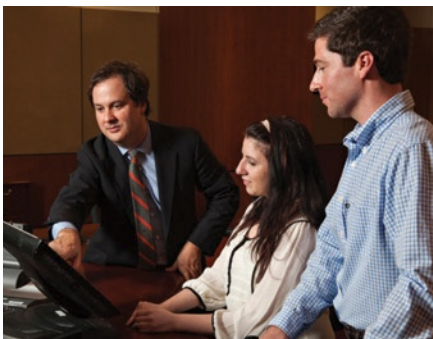
La Verne, Memphis and Cincinnati top tuition cutters; W. Mitchell and Hamline to merge. Stetson rocks moot court.

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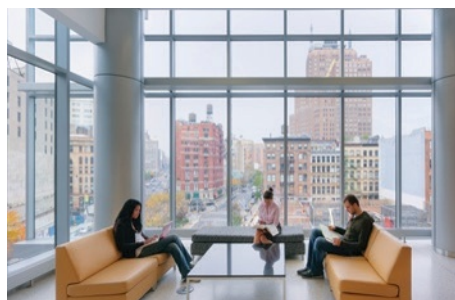
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► 27 BEST SCHOOLS FOR PRACTICAL TRAINING

Many law schools continue to increase offerings, making practical training an integral part of the law school experience. While a lot talk about practical training, we honor the schools that deliver the goods.

40 BEST SCHOOLS FOR BAR PREPARATION

LSAT scores are designed, in part, to predict success on the bar exam. But 33 schools excel above and beyond what their LSAT scores predict. How are these schools bucking the odds?



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William Mitchell, Hamline to merge

Dropping enrollment played a part in the move, as both schools have struggled to attract students

BY JACK CRITTENDEN

William Mitchell College of Law and Hamline University School of Law will merge, assuming the American Bar Association consents. The schools are hopeful the ABA will acquiesce by Aug. 1, allowing the combined school to start with the Fall 2015 semester.

The combined school will be named Mitchell|Hamline School of Law and will be on William Mitchell's existing campus. Both are private law schools in St. Paul, Minn., located only three miles apart.

While several law schools have merged with universities in recent years, this is the first time two law schools have merged. It underscores the serious challenges that law schools face, given the drop in enrollment nationwide, especially stand-alone schools such as William Mitchell.

"Obviously, enrollment was a factor," said Jean Holloway, dean of Hamline. "But the two came together more for the strategic benefits. The mission and commitment to community are very similar for both."

Both schools have seen enrollment plummet during the past four years. Hamline University's enrollment dropped from 652 in 2010-2011 to 321 in 2014-2015. Only two other schools have seen enrollment drop by a higher percentage. William Mitchell has seen enrollment drop from 1,013 in 2010-2011 to 665, the 10th largest decline among law schools in terms of actual numbers.

If approved, the new law school will have an enrollment less than what William Mitchell had four years ago.

The two schools began merger discussions in September. But they have previously discussed a merger several times during the last 15 years. Both schools have very similar tuition, and entering LSAT and GPA



scores, making the merger easier. Hamline charges \$39,536 and William Mitchell charges \$38,660. Hamline's median GPA is 3.27 and median LSAT is 151. William Mitchell's median GPA is 3.25 and LSAT is 152. Both schools have seen their median LSAT scores drop three points since 2009-2010.

"This is a bold move at a time when students and the legal profession are calling on law schools to do things differently," said Eric Janus, William Mitchell president and dean. "It will leverage the best of two outstanding institutions to create a stronger law school."

The Mitchell|Hamline School of Law will offer more enrollment options than any other school in the country, including full-time, weekend and part-time programs, as well as a hybrid, on-campus/online J.D. option. (See story on page 8) In addition, students will be able to earn dual degrees through the school's affiliation with Hamline University, and they will have access to Hamline's athletic facilities, library and cultural programs.

The president and dean of the combined law school will be Mark Gordon, who previously served as dean of University

of Detroit Mercy School of Law. He was announced as dean designate of William Mitchell in January, but was hired to oversee the combined school.

Both schools have cut back on staffing in recent years, offering voluntary incentive programs to faculty and staff.

"We are in the early stages of integration planning, but our goal will be to retain as many faculty as we can," said Holloway, who has only been dean at Hamline for one year and is unsure about her future role. "There will probably be some attrition. But I am not sure if we will need to ask [people to leave]."

Mitchell|Hamline School of Law will be an autonomous, nonprofit institution governed by an independent board of trustees, with an affiliation to Hamline University. The new board of trustees will include trustees from William Mitchell and Hamline University.

Arguably, this is the most dramatic step taken by law schools since the crisis in legal education began. Western Michigan University Cooley Law School was forced to close its Ann Arbor, Mich., campus because of dropping enrollment. It has four other locations.

Are law schools diversifying to survive?

St. Louis University School of Law Assistant Professor Aaron Taylor's new study suggests law schools admitted more minorities to combat declining enrollment between 2010 and 2013. He found that schools with higher-median LSAT scores enrolled more white and Asian students. Black and Hispanic students were more likely to attend schools with lower median LSAT scores, thus increasing racial and ethnic stratification.

"We often equate median LSAT scores with quality, whether or not they are a true reflection," Taylor said. "What you have is larger proportions of black and Hispanic students going to schools considered less prestigious. This affects long-term outcomes, career trajectories and payoffs from law school investments."

"Diversity as a Law School Survival Strategy" will appear in the Spring 2015 volume of the St. Louis University Law Journal.
—*Laina Martin*

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Around the nation



■ The United States Patent and Trademark Office accepted **UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO COLLEGE OF LAW** into its pilot program, which will allow students the opportunity to practice patent and trademark law in real cases through the school's small business clinic. Students will prepare applications for clients to trademark a business name or a particular product.

■ **GOLDEN GATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW** launched an integrated bar prep program for its students. Partnering with Themis Bar Review, students now receive bar preparation services and training from their first day of classes until they pass the bar exam. This is coupled with on-site bar prep services, which features regular testing, with feedback, and optional classroom work on major bar topics, such as Evidence, Property and Civil Procedure.



■ **THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO SCHOOL OF LAW** received funding from the Department of Justice to help investigate innocence claims. The school's Innocence and Justice Project allows students to help investigate claims of innocence. The grant will allow the program to expand its investigations of claims of factual innocence in cases where physical or biological evidence may exist.

■ **WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL** created an independent law firm to help new attorneys move forward and assist Detroit entrepreneurs with growing their businesses and being part of the city's economic comeback. The nonprofit firm, Wayne Law Group, will be financially self-sustaining and use an apprentice model of post-graduate legal training to provide discounted services to Detroit-area entrepreneurs. The firm charges its clients about half what most firms in the area charge.



■ **VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL** launched its program on law and innovation, which offers a growing list of courses, externships and research fellowships to prepare students for the technologically changing legal industry. All Vanderbilt University students have access to the program offerings, which include five core courses and 15 related courses such as Electronic Discovery and Information Governance, Legal Project Management, and Technology in Legal Practice. The curriculum is centered on four major themes: the legal industry, legal technologies, legal innovation, and entrepreneurship and access to legal services.





■ **PENN STATE UNIVERSITY - DICKINSON LAW** will launch a new clinic in the fall to train students in legislative and public policy advocacy. The Legislative Advocacy Clinic will allow students to work with nonprofit organizations in urging the state Legislature to develop and enact legislation, as well as respond to proposed legislation and agency rules. The school is located in Carlisle, near the state capital of Harrisburg.



■ **UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE SCHOOL OF LAW** launched a new health law and policy program in conjunction with the university's College of Health and Human Services. It expects to unveil a new certificate of health law and policy in the fall.

■ **ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW** leased 76,566 square feet of office space in downtown Providence, R.I., to expand its presence in the state capital. After renovation, the space will house the school's Criminal Defense, Immigration and Community Economic Development clinics, as well as provide additional classrooms and a large, flexible space that can be used as a mock courtroom, suitable for trial practice instruction and even use by state and federal judges.



■ **SETON HALL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW** added a J.D. concentration in compliance law, one of the fastest-growing practice areas during the past few years. Students will take required courses in compliance, corporate governance, ethics and sustainability. They can then take electives in finance, information privacy, cybersecurity and human resources.

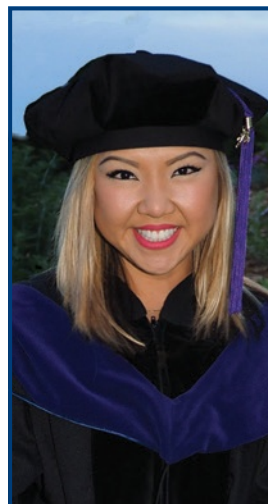


SEAN SIME

■ **STETSON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW** had a weekend to remember in January. The Tampa, Fla., school won two major competitions. It notched the Andrews Kurth Moot Court National Championship, which invites the 16 best moot court programs. It also won the ABA Law Student



Division Arbitration Competition, along with University of Missouri School of Law. (It's designed to crown two champs.) Also, in the same weekend, Phylcia Pearson, a Stetson University student, was named best advocate at the Florida Bar Trial Lawyer Section's Chester Bedell Mock Trial Competition. Pearson's team came in second.



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Finally, an online J.D.

William Mitchell launches the first-ever, ABA-approved online J.D. program

BY LAIRA MARTIN

Brian Kennedy was accepted to William Mitchell College of Law in 1981 but did not attend because, as he puts it, “Life got in the way.” But the 59-year-old Texan’s dream of attending law school has come true now that he is a member of William Mitchell’s inaugural hybrid class, which allows students to take most of their course work online.

“My wife asked me what regrets I had in life and never going to law school was my only real regret,” Kennedy said. “It was just about that time that I got a notification about the hybrid class.”

Kennedy lives in El Paso, where there is no law school. The closest one is The University of New Mexico School of Law in Albuquerque, which is 270 miles away. That’s a tough commute.

William Mitchell, located in St. Paul, Minn., is 1,500 miles away. And that’s no problem, no longer. Got a computer? Potentially, you can get a law degree.

The program, launched Jan. 12, is a four-year, part-time J.D. that combines semester-long online classes with 10 weeks of on-campus practical training. Annual tuition is \$27,770, the same as for on-campus part-time students. It is the first of its kind, under special variance from the American Bar Association.

“The word ‘pioneer’ keeps coming up. We’ve got to blaze this trail for others,” Kennedy said. “There’s a feeling, from talking to people, that we know we’re not only going to show everybody that this is the right way to have an avenue [into hybrid learning] but that we were the right people to pick.”

William Mitchell recently announced plans to merge with Hamline University

School of Law — also in St. Paul — as soon as this fall. Because of the merger, the newly combined schools will offer more enrollment options than any other school in the country. It will also have full-time, weekend and part-time programs.

But it is the hybrid on-campus/online J.D. option that is the most unusual. The 85 students in the program range from ages 22 to 67, come from 30 states, two countries and have an array of credentials and careers.

“It’s a diverse group of individuals that all have their own life circumstances that have

A third of students have advanced degrees, including 14 MBA degrees, five medical doctors and three Ph.D. degrees.

“We’re thrilled to have people with high credentials, but are also excited to have the baggage handler who always dreamed of being a lawyer but has a family and has to keep his job,” said professor Sarah Deer. “That brings another real-world element to the class.”

Classes are offered asynchronously, meaning students can listen to lectures or post comments and questions on discussion boards at their convenience.

“One of our key missions is accessibility,” Janus said. “Students are uniformly expressing gratitude for the fact that we have made this kind of program available. Our goal has been to make it a rigorous program that’s accessible. It is not, by any means, less rigorous than our normal J.D. program.”

If anything, online programs can be more challenging for students and professors, said Deer, who has been teaching online courses since 2003.

“It is harder to teach and take courses online,” she said. “I think there’s a myth that you can scoot by, but it is actually more work.”

Students are held accountable for weekly assignments, which is a higher frequency than in traditional residential classes. But professors are also providing weekly feedback, which increases the amount of individual attention they receive, Deer said.

“It takes a lot of self-discipline,” Kennedy said. “You have got to commit yourself to the discipline of doing the work. I like it because it allows me to work my schedule around school. It is a perfect fit for me.”



Brian Kennedy realized his dream of attending William Mitchell College of Law 34 years after first being accepted.

led them here. But they all share the desire to become lawyers,” said Dean Eric Janus, who started the planning process for the hybrid in 2010.

The aspiring lawyers are baggage handlers, college professors, bankers and business executives such as Kennedy, who is CEO of the El Paso Sports Commission.

Kennedy is no stranger to online education. He completed his bachelor's degree online at The University of Texas at El Paso in 2012 but rarely communicated with his fellow students. His experience through William Mitchell's on-campus introduction has set a very different tone.

"I was so impressed with the quality of students and instructors," he said. "I was able to find people that I melded with immediately. These are people I had not met seven days earlier that I am 100 percent comfortable [reaching out to]."

The on-campus portion of the program consists of preparatory weeks at the beginning of the first and third semesters and capstone weeks, focused on practical training, at the end of each semester.

"Starting out with an in-house week was a really brilliant move," Kennedy said. "Bringing us together really allowed us to start personal relationships. Had I just started Internet classes without the prep week, I wouldn't know the personalities of the people I'm talking to and wouldn't have gotten my support system together. We showed up as 85 individuals and became a class during that first week."

Janus is the first to acknowledge that there are some lawyering skills that can only be acquired through face-to-face learning, hence the heavy practical emphasis during the capstone weeks. During the online semester, students learn about the nuts and bolts of the law, and then they apply their knowledge in practical activities such as hypotheticals and interviews.

"When they come to campus in April, they will have that knowledge built up, and I'll give them the opportunity to interview a defendant played by an actor," Deer said. "They'll take what they've learned and act out the things we've been reading about to get important feedback about things like eye contact and body language."

Janus sees hybrid learning as one of many approaches for the future of legal education, though he doesn't think it'll be the norm anytime soon.

"I don't think it will be the norm, because diversity in legal education is an important aspiration, so we should have a number of different approaches to teaching law," Janus said. "Some people will always want to be on campus with Socratic sessions. We have to pick and choose the tools that work best,



Hybrid students attend first Torts class with Professor Mike Steenson.

given our mission, which is accessible, rigorous, practical education. So it makes sense to offer an option for students that makes smart use of technology."

The program is still in its infancy, but many are eager to see what it can become, students and professors alike.

"It's exciting to see them so committed to law, not that my full-time students aren't, but you have to want it more than the average law student because of the nature of the program," Deer said. "I'm more excited to be a professor than I have been in years because there is a whole new energy around."

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Sliding enrollment and LSAT scores

Only a small number of law schools have been able to beat those trends

BY LAIRA MARTIN

Given the steep drop in law school applications, most law schools have had only two options — none of them good.

Cut enrollment. (And take a revenue hit.)

Or see their entering class LSAT median drop. (A move that lowers academic standards and threatens rankings.)

And most have had to do both.

Enrollment has dropped by an average of 144 students per school from 2010-2011 to 2014-2015. Overall enrollment fell 7.2 percent this year, and first-year enrollment fell 4.4 percent, according to the American Bar Association, contributing to a nearly 30 percent decline in new students since the peak in 2010.

However, some schools are pulling off a minor miracle. Thirty-three have seen modest enrollment increases since last year. The University of California, Berkeley School of Law, is one.

In 2010, UC Berkeley School of Law had a student body of 915, only to drop to 858 in 2013. It rebounded to 894 this year, a 4.2 percent increase. It was able to do so without sacrificing quality. Since 2009, its median LSAT score dropped by only one point, from 168 to 167, and GPA increased from 3.78 to 3.79.

“When the applicant pool is smaller, and all pools have shrunk, there is so much competition on the back end,” said Edward Tom, dean of admissions. “We’ve maintained standards and diversity in the face of a smaller pool. All schools, no mat-

ter where they place in the pecking order are concerned about enrollment and maintaining standards. It’s no cake walk.”

The struggles facing law schools have been magnified because, up until the crisis in legal education, class sizes were burgeoning. The subsequent drop followed an historic peak, not a flat or marginal increase in enrollment. Many law schools were going like gang-busters.



“When the recession hit, we saw a big spike in applications and class sizes went up,” Tom said. “People wanted to invest in future education. As the recession continued and stagnated, we have seen applications go down. It’s a function of the general economy and state of law hiring.”

Most law schools have not been as lucky as UC Berkeley. The overall average drop in median LSAT scores at all law schools is 1.48 since 2009. In 2010, every ABA-

accredited law school had a median LSAT score above 145. In 2014, seven schools reported incoming median LSAT scores of 145 or less, according to a study by Jerry Organ, a professor at University of St. Thomas School of Law.

“If one focuses on the LSAT score as one measure of ‘quality’ of the entering class of law students each year, then the period from 2010-2014 not only has seen a significant decline in enrollment, it also has seen a significant decline in quality,” Organ wrote in a blog post on The Legal Whiteboard.

Still, several schools were able to sustain or improve their LSAT scores; 23 schools maintained median LSAT scores and 12 schools raised scores by at least one point. But only two law schools were able to maintain or improve their median LSAT and their enrollment. It’s little surprise they are legal powerhouses: Harvard Law School and Stanford University Law School. The other 33 schools saw decreases in enrollment.

For example, University of New Hampshire School of Law was the only school to raise its median LSAT score by three points. However, its student body has shrunk by 48 percent since 2010.

In addition to Harvard Law School and Stanford University, eight other law schools have increased enrollment since 2010. But all of them have seen their LSAT median drop.

The vast majority of law schools — 150 — have seen both their median LSAT score and enrollment drop. That’s the worst of both worlds.

Tuition freeze

Law schools are freezing, cutting and subsidizing tuition to innovatively rethink how education is funded

BY LAIRA MARTIN

A year ago, an American Bar Association task force challenged law schools to innovatively rethink how to reduce costs and improve the value of a law degree. The good news is that several law schools are responding to that challenge.

"The business model of law schools is broken, but it can be fixed," said Brooklyn Law School Dean Nicholas Allard. "Law schools have been pricing themselves out of business by engaging in a merit scholarship arms race to nowhere fueled by ever-increasing tuition hikes."

Some law schools have responded to the growing need for change by offering more comprehensive merit-based and regional-based scholarships, lowering tuition and, most commonly, freezing tuition. And this is just the start.

This year, 16 law schools dropped full-time, non-resident tuition for an average savings of \$5,331, though several schools marginally increased resident tuition to offset this change (see chart). The most common trend is freezing tuition, which 28 schools did this year, and more are expected to follow suit.

Brooklyn Law School did both. It froze tuition for the 2014-2015 year, locking in the 2013-2014 sticker price of \$54,246. Next year, it will slash tuition 15 percent, saving students more than \$8,000 per year.

"The results [of the current financial model] include inequities for those who pay the sticker price, fewer students applying and entering law schools, and pressure to cut costs by spending less on education," Allard said. "The board and faculty of BLS chose a different approach. Cut tuition and invest to raise the quality and value of the J.D."

University of Maine School of Law, Western New England University School of Law and Pace University School of Law will freeze tuition for 2015-2016, joining the list of schools that are holding tuition constant.

"The tuition freeze demonstrates our commitment to reducing the overall debt of our new and returning students," said Cathy Alexander, assistant dean of admissions at Pace University School of Law.



As for new students, Pace University wants to attract more students from out of state. As it stands, about 56 percent of the student body is composed of New York residents. To gain national presence, Pace is offering to discount its \$45,376 full-time tuition to match the lowest in-state tuition offered by a law school in the qualified student's state of residence. Some students may pay as little as \$10,000.

"We are looking to expand our national student body and believe this model will allow students to consider more options," Alexander said. "We understand the uncertainty some students may feel, based on the high levels of debt load they're carrying from

Law Schools that froze tuition from 2013-14 to 2014-15:

| |
|---|
| Ave Maria School of Law |
| Brooklyn Law School |
| Concordia University School of Law |
| DePaul University College of Law |
| Faulkner University |
| Florida A&M University College of Law |
| George Mason University School of Law |
| Gonzaga University School of Law |
| Indiana Tech Law School |
| Lincoln Memorial University |
| Mercer University |
| New York Law School |
| North Carolina Central University |
| Northern Kentucky University |
| Oklahoma City University School of Law |
| Texas Southern University |
| Touro College |
| University of California Irvine School of Law |
| University of California Davis School of Law |
| UCLA School of Law |
| University of Dayton School of Law |
| University of Massachusetts School of Law |
| The University of New Mexico School of Law |
| University of Oklahoma College of Law |
| University of Toledo College of Law |
| Valparaiso University School of Law |
| Vermont Law School |
| Western New England University School of Law |

undergrad, and want to make law school and affordable option."

Regional-based discounting has also found its way to The University of Tulsa College of Law. Last February, the law school launched the Access to Legal Education Scholarship (ALES), an \$18,000 renewable scholarship for incoming first-years from a 12-state region. This fall, 99 percent of entering students received the scholarship, reducing tuition from \$34,420 to \$16,430.

Schools that have cut tuition

| Law School | Non-resident Tuition 2013-14 | Non-resident Tuition 2014-15 | Difference | Resident Tuition 2013-14 | Resident Tuition 2014-15 | Difference |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| University of La Verne College of Law | \$42,352 | \$26,323 | \$-16,029 | \$42,352 | \$26,323 | \$-16,029 |
| University of Memphis – Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law | \$39,492 | \$25,907 | \$-13,585 | \$17,620 | \$18,470 | \$850 |
| University of Cincinnati College of Law | \$41,044 | \$29,010 | \$-12,034 | \$23,536 | \$24,010 | \$474 |
| University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law | \$38,856 | \$29,000 | \$-9,856 | \$24,396 | \$24,607 | \$211 |
| Ohio Northern University – Claude W. Pettit College of Law | \$33,684 | \$24,800 | \$-8,884 | \$33,684 | \$24,800 | \$-8,884 |
| Roger Williams University School of Law | \$42,130 | \$33,792 | \$-8,338 | \$42,130 | \$33,792 | \$-8,338 |
| University of Iowa College of Law | \$49,025 | \$41,296 | \$-7,729 | \$28,047 | \$23,760 | \$-4,287 |
| University of Florida, Frederic G. Levin College of Law | \$41,546 | \$38,836 | \$-2,710 | \$21,181 | \$22,231 | \$1,050 |
| University of St. Thomas School of Law - Minneapolis | \$39,244 | \$37,185 | \$-2,059 | \$39,244 | \$37,185 | \$-2,059 |
| University of Nevada, Las Vegas, William S. Boyd School of Law | \$37,437 | \$35,749 | \$-1,688 | \$26,437 | \$24,749 | \$-1,688 |
| Drexel University Thomas R. Kline School of Law | \$40,230 | \$39,203 | \$-1,027 | \$40,230 | \$39,203 | \$-1,027 |
| Capital University Law School | \$33,814 | \$33,180 | \$-634 | \$33,814 | \$33,180 | \$-634 |
| Liberty University School of Law | \$31,878 | \$31,562 | \$-316 | \$31,878 | \$31,562 | \$-316 |
| Loyola University New Orleans College of Law | \$43,432 | \$43,150 | \$-282 | \$43,432 | \$43,150 | \$-282 |
| Albany Law School | \$43,523 | \$43,398 | \$-125 | \$43,523 | \$43,398 | \$-125 |
| University of Washington School of Law | \$45,024 | \$45,021 | \$-3 | \$31,983 | \$31,980 | \$-3 |

Renewal is contingent on students maintaining a 2.0 GPA. The scholarship, as the name indicates, is about creating access both for students and for citizens of rural areas.

“There are lots of job opportunities in our region and unmet legal needs,” said Dean Janet Levit. “Some communities have one lawyer who may be approaching retire-

ment and desperately wants to mentor a young lawyer. The problem is a lot of students don’t want to go to rural communities or feel that they are not able to.”

That is the genesis of ALES, Levit said, but she also saw a need to address problems with a former LSAT-based scholarship program.

“There was a bit of discomfort over how scholarship dollars were being allocated,” Levit said. “Low LSAT scores were essentially subsidizing high LSAT scores. ALES internally reallocated most scholarship dollars across the board.”

Awarding scholarships to high-scoring LSAT takers is a widespread practice, which

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the ABA task force said is one of the many deleterious features of the current system.

"Many of these less-credentialed students also have lower potential return on their investment in legal education," the task force's report reads. "A further consequence is that to support the current discounting structure, law schools have drastically reduced the amount of discounts, scholarships or other support based on student financial need."

Dean Gilbert Holmes put an end to discount pricing at University of La Verne College of Law for this very reason.

"Merit scholarships make is so less-privileged or less-able students are paying for those more privileged or more able," he said. "That doesn't coincide with my personal beliefs or the guiding principals of the school. If you're not part of reducing the wealth gap, you're part of expanding it."

This fall, University of La Verne launched the True Tuition Model, dropping its full-time \$39,000 tuition with the possibility of discounts or scholarships for a flat rate of \$25,000 for full-time students and \$19,600 for part-time students.

"We've cast aside the discount model that all schools have in some form," Holmes said. "Having a flat rate makes law school more affordable for those who otherwise would not be able to earn a scholarship. That's pretty innovative. No one else is doing it."

University of La Verne has struggled with enrollment since the ABA revoked its provisional accreditation because of low bar passage rates in 2011. It regained accreditation within a year but is still making up for the loss in enrollment. This, paired with the \$14,000 tuition cut, begs the question: Were any other cuts made?

"We've made no budget or faculty cuts," Holmes said. "We are supported by the university, and our subsidy is going down year by year as enrollment goes up."

While the University of La Verne has moved away from merit scholarships altogether, Faulkner University, Thomas Goode Jones School of Law adjusted requirements to better support students with lower scores. This summer, the law school is implementing the Guaranteed Tuition Scholarship, which unlike many LSAT-contingent scholarships, targets students with scores below the national median of 150.

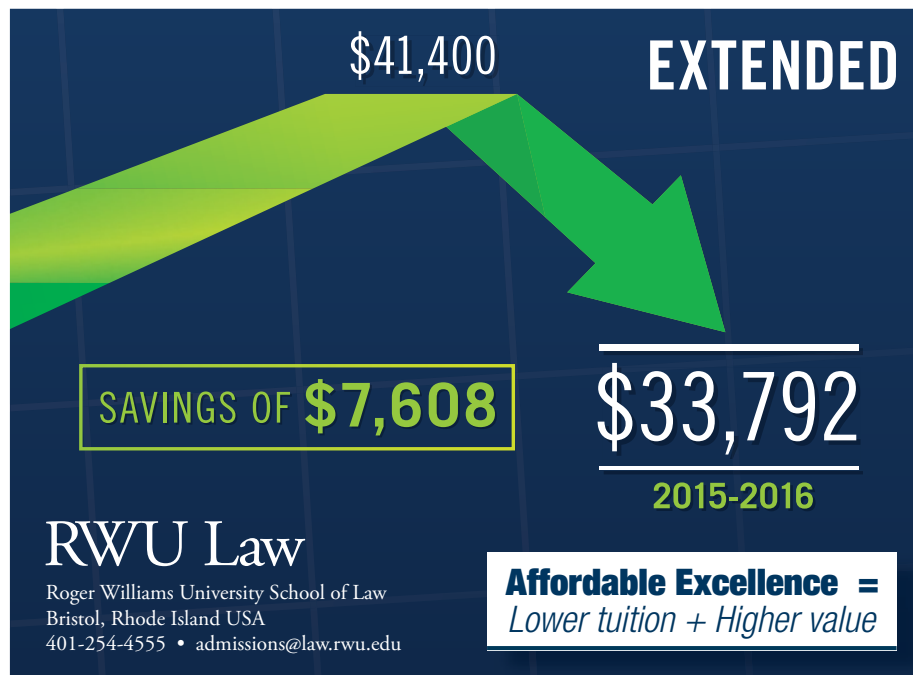
"We tried to develop a plan that would reward students above our law school median but below the [national] LSAT median," Dean Matt Vega said.

Students with LSAT scores between 144 and 149 will receive a scholarship reducing

their \$34,000 tuition to \$25,000, renewing annually with good academic standing. The school arrived at the figure by estimating what someone who earned the national median salary for private practice lawyers in small firms could afford. The goal is to keep the three-year tuition within the range

of one's salary.

"Students are very cost conscious right now," Vega said. "They understand a career in law is as much about having a purpose in your community and passion, not just making money. We want to make sure they can pursue those passions."



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Scholarship barter time

If you've got smarts, look for lower-ranked schools to avoid crushing debt

BY MIKE STETZ

Yes, you can go to law school on the cheap.

You need only two things: a good LSAT score. And — this is the biggie — the willingness to go to a school that isn't the highest ranked of your options. You need to think Ford, not Ferrari.

That's what University of St. Thomas School of Law professor Jerry Organ discovered from research he did on the Class of 2012. He shared the results at The Association of American Law Schools annual meeting in Washington, D.C.

Here's how it works: The lesser-ranked schools not only have lower tuition; they also help offset costs to top students through scholarships. The top-tier schools may not offer that help, particularly to students on the bottom of the entering class. Additionally, the tuition is markedly higher at such schools.

"If somebody really wants to go to law school at a modest price, it's possible if they go someplace they hadn't necessarily thought about," Organ said, in a National Law Journal article.

But will students do this?

Organ did.

"I chose Vanderbilt over Harvard because I got a full ride to Vanderbilt," he said. "That turned out to be a great decision for me. I excelled at Vanderbilt, was on law review and had great opportunities at graduation."

If you're a student entering a lesser-ranked school at the top of the entering class profile, you're likely to do well — and incur little or no debt, Organ noted. If you're a student in the bottom quarter of a more highly ranked school, you could struggle and pay full tuition to boot.

The applicant needs to do a gut check, he said.

"How optimistic is the applicant about her ability to perform in different environments?" Organ asks. "How risk-friendly



or risk-averse is she? These are individual choices."

He believes students are making decisions based on finances — at least in some cases.

"Closer to the top, I think prestige carries more weight," he said. "There is a perception that 17 is much better than 21 (whether that is accurate or not). Further down, I think there is more price consciousness and fit consciousness. A student might take the scholarship to the law school ranked 95th over the full-tuition opportunity at the law school ranked 75th."

For admissions personnel, these scholarship trends have caused a level of frustration. Some students, knowing they are in demand, try and barter for better deals. Jay Shively, assistant dean for admissions and financial aid at Wake Forest University

School of Law, said he feels as if he's being treated like a "used car salesman" at times.

Shively crafted a survey to better ascertain schools' scholarship policies and sent it to all ABA schools. He got 75 responses from a mix of schools. And the results? Schools are zeroing in on smart students and offering bigger scholarships, no question.

"It's a buyer's market," said Shively, former chair of The Association of American Law Schools' section on PreLegal Education and Admission to Law School.

It's pretty simple to understand why it is a buyer's market: More than 98 percent of law schools reported that LSAT scores were a factor in their scholarship awards. GPA? That got a 97 percent response. If students rock the house in those categories, they're likely to get wooed with cash.

And many schools are spending money only for such students. When asked what percentage of scholarship money was “specifically allocated to needs-based grants,” a majority of the law schools — 52 percent — reported zero, zilch, nada.

“Need is not a big part of the scholarship picture now,” Shively said.

Organ found the same thing. Students with lower LSAT scores went to the lowest-ranking schools and paid the highest tuition. They’re the ones helping law schools stay in business.

“I’m troubled by a program where people at the bottom pay for the people at the top,” Organ said in the National Law Journal article.

Some schools reported they do offer needs-based scholarships. However, the ones that do don’t exactly break the bank doing so, Shively’s survey showed. Of the law schools that give needs-based scholarships, 24 percent reported they gave less than 10 percent of the cost of attendance.

Only 1.5 percent gave more than 50 percent of the cost of attendance.

When asked how schools responded to the crisis in legal education when it came “to the greater financial demands of applicants and the impact on institutional financial goals,” school were given a range of survey answers, from “cutting spending” to “reducing faculty.” No other answer, however, got a greater response than “increased scholarships.” More than 80 percent of the law schools said they did so.

A whopping 44 percent said they are “giving away much more money per student than five years ago.”

Obviously, this is good news for prospective law students. Remember, not long ago, many law students were graduating with enormous debt. Indeed, students are now able to negotiate by playing schools against one other. The survey found that more than 70 percent of schools do some form of negotiating.

Wake Forest does it even though it didn’t

want to initially.

“We realized we had to,” Shively said.

Cary Lee Cluck, assistant dean for admissions and scholarships at The University of Mississippi School of Law, said the trend of increasing scholarships was “an unsustainable model.” The battle for exceptional students could financially buckle some law schools, she said.

She said not all students are being particularly savvy when it comes to scholarships. Many are looking for the best financial deals and the highest-ranking schools. But that combination may be more expensive because it doesn’t account for cost of living or other factors, such as if a car will be needed. Students could end up paying more.

“For many, it’s U.S. News and money and that’s it,” said Tracy Simmons, assistant dean for admissions, diversity initiatives and financial aid at University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento, Calif. “They don’t think of the incidentals.”

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Florida Coastal's resolve

Florida Coastal has been attacked as of late, but the plucky school says it is sticking to its mission to help the under-served move into the legal profession

BY JACK CRITTENDEN

It has been a difficult four years for Florida Coastal School of Law. While applications are down more than 30 percent for all law schools, they have dropped even more for the Jacksonville, Fla., school.

Applications that stood at 5,860 four years ago, were less than half that at 2,666 this past year. That has led the school to cut enrollment from 1,742 in 2010-2011 to 1,115 — third most, in terms of raw numbers, among all law schools.

The for-profit school has also seen its median GPA drop from 3.22 to 2.93 and its median LSAT drop from 150 to 143. Only five other schools have experienced such a sharp decline in LSAT scores.

So, it wasn't a huge surprise when the school was highlighted in a recent article in *The Atlantic* magazine about everything that is wrong with legal education.

The only problem, according to leaders at Florida Coastal, is that the author, University of Colorado Law School professor Paul Campos, ignored some facts, failed to present the school's side and made some unfair allegations — including his primary assertion that many of the school's students would never be able to pass the bar exam, land a job and repay their debts.

"Some people think certain groups in the country are not prepared for law school," said Dennis Stone, Florida Coastal's president. "We think they are."

Florida Coastal was founded in 1996 to serve historically disadvantaged groups, including minorities. This year, more than 44 percent of the school's students are minorities — the vast majority black and Hispanic. That is higher than all but 15 other law schools.

"We offer an environment that is clearly supportive," said Chidi Ogene, the school's interim dean, who is black. "Most students



Like most schools, Florida Coastal has taken a hit because of the drop in applications. But leaders say they remain focused on the school's mission.

who don't pass the bar exam, it's not because of skills. It's because they don't believe in themselves enough to get the right answer. We have a soup-to-nuts programs that culminates in academic success and bar prep [for minorities]."

The school requires students to take subjects that will help prepare them for the bar exam, including family law, business associations and trust and estates. It also offers courses that prepare students for the Multistate Bar Exam and the nuances of the Florida bar exam.

That helped the school exceed the bar pass rate that its LSAT scores would otherwise predict, as evidenced by a recent *preLaw* magazine study on the classes of 2011 and 2012. But the school saw its bar exam pass rate drop from 75 percent to 68.4 percent in 2013, the first class admitted after applications began to drop.

That is part of the reason Campos, a harsh critic of legal education, wrote that half of the school's class was unlikely to "ever pass the bar," as incoming LSAT scores have dropped another six points since that class

entered.

Campos criticized the school for placing profit above all else, something Florida Coastal leaders strongly deny.

Florida Coastal is owned by InfiLaw, which is owned by a Chicago-based private equity firm. InfiLaw also owns Arizona Summit Law School and Charlotte School of Law.

Stone said the fact that the school is backed by private equity allows it to be nimble and scale up.

"The model at other law schools is to lead by faculty independence," he said. "But the doors are closed to the students. The focus of our institution is student centeredness."

Stone said for-profit law schools get a bad rap.

"Too many people make the mistake that nonprofit equals virtuous and for-profit is predatory," Stone said. "If you look at the schools that the ABA has censured they are all nonprofits. The matter of how you are organized for tax purposes has no bearing on how well you are preparing students to



Interim Dean Chidi Ogene and President Dennis Stone

practice law.”

And Florida Coastal leaders are adamant that they are producing graduates who are ready to practice law.

“The strength of our curriculum lies in experiential educational programs,” Ogene said. “That has always been at the core of what we do.”

The school received an A+ in preLaw’s study on the best schools for practical training, placing eighth overall. It combines a strong mix of clinics, simulation courses and externships. It recently launched a business and entrepreneurship clinic and a center for law practice and technology.

While Campos wrote that few of Florida Coastal’s students would ever land a job at a large law firm, Florida Coastal leaders say that has never been the focus for the school.

An estimated 90 percent of the school’s 4,000 alumni are practicing attorneys, with many at small firms or in solo practice.

But the school’s employment rate has dipped in recent years, dropping from 95 percent in 2009 to 63.1 percent for the class of 2013. That is lowest in Florida, but Ogene said it is not reflective of the real employment picture. The figure is computed nine months after graduation.

“It really doesn’t tell the whole story,” Ogene said. “The number creeps up for full-time long-term J.D.-required jobs to 80 percent five years out.”

Florida Coastal launched a small practice center in January, where recent graduates can work alongside seasoned attorneys while they learn to run a small law practice.

Several more land jobs in J.D.-preferred positions, such as in compliance, which is exploding.

“We are punching way above our weight class when it comes to our alumni,” Ogene said. “They are doing some phenomenal things.”

But the school still struggles with a high percentage of students transferring to other schools — about 10 percent of the first year

class.

“Transfer attrition is a problem that has bedeviled us,” Ogene said. “Students say they love Florida Coastal, but they transferred because of the perception of rankings.”

While prestige works against the school, Stone said objective examples show Florida Coastal students are excelling.



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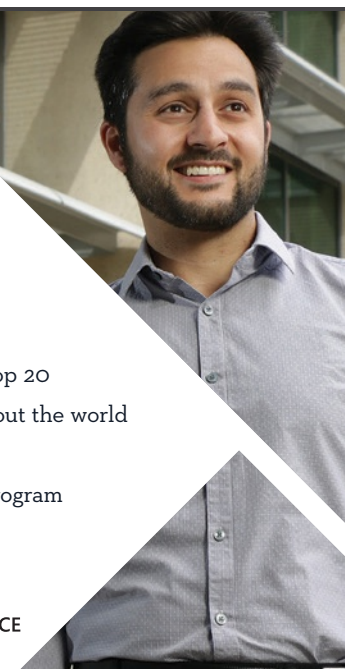
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Atlanta

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Sip on some lemonade as you tour the law schools in Georgia and northern Florida, where you can get a lot of bang for your legal education buck

BY MIKE STETZ

The law schools in Georgia and northern Florida offer value, diversity and — this is critical — air conditioning. (So, it gets a little hot and muggy in the summer).

Talk about variety. Three law schools are based in Atlanta, aptly called the Jewel of the South and one of the more vibrant and diverse cities in the nation.

Like beaches? Florida Coastal School of Law is in Jacksonville, Fla., where there are 22 miles of them. Like theme parks? Barry University Dwayne O. Andreas School of Law and Florida A&M University College of Law are in Orlando, home to Disney World and The Wizarding World of Harry Potter.

This region is particularly hot when it

comes to affordability. Four of the schools in this region — Georgia State University College of Law, Florida State University College of Law, the University of Georgia School of Law and the University of Florida Fredric G. Levin College of Law — were in the top 20 of preLaw's 2014 ranking of Best Value Law Schools.

Three also made our annual ranking of Best Schools for Practical Training (featured in this issue). Florida Coastal School of Law finished 11th with an A+.

We start our tour in Georgia, home to the Masters, peaches and Coca Cola. (Things go better with Coke — except — perhaps — law exams.)

Georgia

EMORY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 158-166

GPA: 3.30-3.85

Enrollment: 819

Academically, Emory University is the heavyweight in this region. Based in Atlanta, it sports the highest median LSAT score at 165, along with the highest median GPA at 3.75.

Next year, it gets ready to party. In 2016, it celebrates its centennial, and it has quite a history to be proud of, said Dean Robert Schapiro. Inclusiveness has



always been a hallmark, he noted. Indeed, in 1917, one year after the school's founding, the first woman, Eléonore Raoul, was admitted to the law school.

The school is nurturing and quick to offer individual assistance to students as soon as they arrive, Schapiro said. And it has renowned offerings, including the TI:GER program, which teams law students with the Georgia Institute of Technology. In it, law students handle legal work for starter projects working on new technologies.

Because it's based in bustling Atlanta, the school can offer students a range of real-world, top-notch training opportunities. It got a B+ in preLaw's ranking of Best Schools for Practical Training.

The school has a close relationship with alumni, Schapiro said, including those who have used law degrees for purposes other than practicing law. That helps show students the flexibility of a law degree.

The former CEO of MetLife, Rob Henrikson, is one such grad. He tells students of his rise in business and the importance of the degree in doing so.

An Emory degree also has national clout, Schapiro noted, so graduates get noticed by employers nationwide. It also helps them get jobs. The school has the highest employment rate in the region — 97.6 percent.

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

LSAT: 155-160

GPA: 3.12-3.61

Enrollment: 630

This fall, Georgia State University College of Law embarks on a new era as it moves to a state-of-the-art building in Atlanta. It's within walking distance of government agencies, major businesses, law firms and local, state and federal courts — meaning students will have many options to bolster their legal education without putting much

of a dent in their shoes.

Faculty offices are located on the teaching floors to better facilitate student-faculty collaboration and to ensure that students take advantage of the college's low student-to-faculty ratio of 10.4-to-1.

"One of the hallmarks of our program is the flexibility and integration of our full- and part-time programs, which makes for a richer learning environment," said Dean Steven Kaminshine. "The new building will facilitate greater interaction with faculty and students and further enrich the program."



The first two years at Georgia State include a sequenced skills program that the school says transforms the old-style, legal writing program into one that promotes self-learning, team-building and the development of professional skills.

"From the moment our students enter the law school as first-years, our program treats them as young lawyers with all the expectations of the profession," Kaminshine said. "Our professors work to instill the skills and professionalism needed in today's profession in every class."

Georgia State Law offers three in-house clinics, including its innovative health law clinic for low-income children, the tax clinic and investment fraud clinic. It also has an externship program with more than 70 nonprofit or government sites and clinical courses that serve domestic abuse, bankruptcy and neighborhood association clients.

The National Jurist has named the college a top 10 Best Value School for eight straight years. The low tuition — \$16,378 for in-state residents — ensures that graduates can pursue legal careers of their choosing without taking on massive debt. And the student body is a diverse one. The

school was given an A- grade in our annual ranking of Most Diverse Law Schools.

It also has the third best employment rate in the region, with 91.2 percent.

ATLANTA'S JOHN MARSHALL LAW SCHOOL

LSAT: 146-151

GPA: 2.68-3.21

Enrollment: 588

Dean Malcolm Morris believes Atlanta's John Marshall is more than just a law school. He calls it an "enterprise of opportunity."

"Our doors are open to those who want to become lawyers, even if they thought that was beyond their grasp," he said. "We can help them achieve that goal."

The law school offers a variety of academic options, which includes a full-time, part-time day, part-time evening and accelerated full-time (spring entry only) program.

Atlanta's John Marshall places much emphasis on practical training and externships. The law school boasts more than 200 placements. The Office of Pro Bono and Experiential Learning works closely with students to find law placements that meet individual interest and needs.

Atlanta's John Marshall has a faculty with a wealth of practical experience as well as scholarly achievements, the school notes. It's also one of the more diverse schools in the nation, finishing fourth in preLaw's 2014 ranking of Most Diverse Law Schools.

The law school has a branch campus in Savannah, called Savannah Law School, which, like Atlanta's John Marshall, is accredited by the American Bar Association.

Vice Dean Rose Anne Nespica said, "As a branch campus, we have the unique



ability to offer a solid educational foundation, along with unique innovations. With a great faculty-student ratio, we have the time to invest in students' success, and we do."

With an emphasis on experiential learning, the faculty represents a broad range of expertise and brings real-world experience to the classroom to ensure that students not only learn to think like lawyers but also to actually practice law upon graduation.

Interestingly, 64 percent of the 2014 entering class joined the law school from out of state, 71 percent are female, and 17 percent are military veterans. Savannah Law School offers three academic programs: full-time, part-time day and part-time evening.

MERCER UNIVERSITY - WALTER F. GEORGE SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 147-155
GPA: 3.05-3.50
Enrollment: 427

Let's talk history because Mercer University – Walter F. George School of Law has it.



Founded in 1873, it's one of the oldest law schools in the nation. Located in Macon, Ga., the law school's building is modeled after Independence Hall in Philadelphia. (It was built for an insurance company originally.)

Given how long the school has been in the community, it's developed strong and important ties with it, said Dean Daisy Hurst Floyd. The local bar and legal community both help educate students in the classroom and outside it, via practical training offerings, she noted.

For students, Macon offers affordability

and livability, she said. They can walk from housing to classrooms, for instance.

The school also prides itself on its small size, Floyd said. It has the smallest enrollment in the region.

"That's an intentional decision," she said, which allows students to get hands-on skills training.

Mercer also has a nationally recognized legal writing curriculum, she noted. Students are required to enroll in eight units of writing and research courses in their first three semesters.

"We've been a leader in developing that," she said.

Additionally, the school prides itself on fostering professionalism. It was the first law school to require first-year students to take a course in legal ethics and professionalism, Floyd said.

This year, it was honored by the ABA with the E. Smythe Gambrell

PHOTO BY CHRIS WELLS

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Professionalism Award, which highlights professionalism efforts. It's the second time the school has been so honored.

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 158-164

GPA: 3.42-3.80

Enrollment: 583



Rock on, University of Georgia School of Law. It's located in Athens, where R.E.M., the B-52s and Matthew Sweet all originated. The school, like those '80s iconic bands, is no one-hit wonder. For years, it's been highly ranked and affordable. With a tuition of \$19,140, it finished 12th in our tally of Best Value Law Schools. It also scored a B+ in preLaw's ranking of Best Schools for Practical Training.

"Our law school has greatly expanded its real practice learning opportunities for its students over the past several years," said Dean Peter "Bo" Rutledge. "Georgia Law now offers a number of programs that benefit various sectors of our society, from the indigent and nonprofit organizations to the corporate world, and from those facing health-related matters to those with environmental concerns."

Georgia Law equips its students with critical oral and written advocacy skills, he added. The moot court and mock trial programs are arguably among the best in the nation. During the 2013-14 academic year, Georgia Law students brought home four national championships (including

the National Moot Court Competition title), bringing the five-year trophy tally to nine national titles, nine regional crowns and four state trophies.

"The Georgia Law faculty prides itself on preparing the next generation of legal leaders for our state and nation," Rutledge said. "Many of our alumni and alumnae go on to clerk for judges, and several have recently served as clerks at the Supreme Court of the United States."

Florida

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA FREDRIC G. LEVIN COLLEGE OF LAW

LSAT: 155-161

GPA: 3.26-3.68

Enrollment: 944

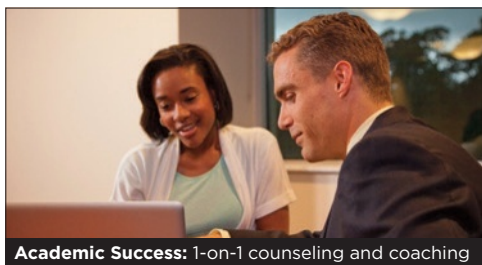
University of Florida Fredric G. Levin College of Law has quite the resume. Based in Gainesville and affiliated with University of Florida, it's the strongest of all Florida law schools in terms of U.S.



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& World Report rankings, notes Dean George Dawson.

Its tax program is considered one of the best in the nation, ranking first among public schools and second overall. Its environmental law program was seventh among public schools and 14th overall.

It achieves those goals while remaining affordable. It finished 10th in preLaw's Best Value Law Schools rankings.

The school produces high-achieving graduates. It ranked first among the nation's law schools in the number of graduates placed in law firms between 51 to 100 attorneys.



According to 2014 Federal Judicial Center data, it is fourth among all public law schools (eighth overall) for the number of graduates who are sitting federal judges. More than 250 graduates serve as state appellate and trial judges in Florida and many serve in those roles in other states.

"We also believe UF Law stands alone in our region in terms of opening up a broad range of employment possibilities," Dawson said. "Whether we are talking about firm size, public service or geographic dispersion, UF is nearly unique in its ability to cover the entire spectrum. Our graduates find quality jobs in a wide range of legal practice settings that complement their individual goals."

"Another key indicator of the quality of our academic program is our Florida Bar passage rate, which was 90.6 percent on the July 2014 test, a result 8.8 percent higher than that of the nearest Florida law school and 18.8 percent higher than the overall pass rate."



FLORIDA COASTAL SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 140-147

GPA: 2.63-3.20

Enrollment: 1,115

Florida Coastal School of Law is based in Jacksonville, with a mission to offer a law school education to the disadvantaged. (See story on the school on page 16).

This year, preLaw magazine honored

it with an A+ for practical training. It also consistently scores high for diversity. preLaw magazine gave it an A- this year for diversity.

The for-profit school is one of three owned by InfiLaw, which is owned by a private equity firm.

BARRY UNIVERSITY DWAYNE O. ANDREAS SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 144-149

GPA: 2.69-3.30

Enrollment: 782

Barry University Dwayne O. Andreas School of Law is the only Dominican Order law school in the United States. It's affiliated with Barry University, which was founded in 1940 by the Adrian Dominican Sisters.

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And it is quite serious about not creating lawyers who are like Saul Goodman, of "Breaking Bad" and "Better Call Saul" fame. Helping meth dealers launder money? Um, no ...

Indeed, the Orlando-based school takes a unique approach to professionalism, with every student required to complete six hours of professionalism enhancement credit before graduation. In the past academic year alone, Barry University offered more than 40 events and workshops designed to help students understand and embrace the importance of professional identity, character, diversity, civility and ethics.

"As a mission-oriented school, Barry Law has always prided itself on molding great people, not just great lawyers," said Dean Leticia Diaz. "During orientation, every new Barry Law student takes a special professionalism oath, vowing to uphold the highest professional standards as a student and as an attorney."

While many law schools have struggled in recent years, Barry University has held its own, with overall enrollment growing from 716 students in 2010 to 782 in 2014. Diaz attributes this sustained growth to the law school's personalized approach to legal education.

"We promise our students a unique, personalized academic environment — that's a commitment we take very seriously. A diverse student body has diverse needs," she said. "Our faculty and administration address those needs on an individual basis. We call ourselves the 'Barry Law Family,' and the feeling on campus among our faculty, students and administrators truly is familial. In my view, that makes all the difference in the world. Law school is a big challenge, and we won't let our 'family' face that challenge alone."

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

LSAT: 156-161

GPA: 3.22-3.64

Enrollment: 644

Florida State University College of Law gives the Sunshine State one of the best-value schools in the country. It is among the top three most rigorous schools in the region at which to gain admission, and it offers in-state students a great deal on tuition at slightly more than \$20,000 per year.

Located 35 miles from the Gulf of

Mexico, the Tallahassee, Fla., school attracts 78 percent of its students from Florida. Naturally, Florida State graduates place well throughout the state, where most of them stay to practice. In addition to Tallahassee, graduates are well represented in Tampa, Orlando, Miami, West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale and Jacksonville.



Florida State offers clinics and a variety of externships and, keeping up with the region's growth in the experiential learning trend, the school recently introduced its new Advocacy Center, a five-courtroom facility where students can practice their advocacy skills.

In addition to having one of the better academic reputations, it ranked 10th in The National Jurist's 2014 ranking of Best Value Law Schools — highest in the state.

Dean Donald Weidner thinks the school's intangibles are just as important for students to pay attention to.

"The greatest strength of the school is the morale of the students," he said. "We have a very high level of collaboration and supportiveness ... lots of esprit."

He said the school has the 10th highest alumni giving rate in the country.

"Last year, 80 percent of our students gave cash gifts," Weidner said. "They wouldn't do that unless they were enjoying the experience."

The school also has the second-highest employment rate in the region, at 92.1 percent.

STETSON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

LSAT: 152-157

GPA: 2.97-3.53

Enrollment: 865

Stetson University College of Law is the first law school in Florida to establish a pro bono service requirement for students and

faculty. Students are required to complete 60 pro bono hours to graduate.

During each of the past few years, Stetson law students completed more than 31,000 legal and non-legal hours of pro bono service, assisting people at more than 100 locations in Tampa Bay and across the state of Florida.

Stetson Law also is home to other law school firsts and best-in-class programs. It has long set the standard for advocacy education, ranking first or second in advocacy since U.S. News began ranking the specialty in 1995.

The school boasts a low student-to-faculty ratio and a high job placement rate



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(Princeton Review 2015)

nation's first model elder-friendly courtroom. Students have an opportunity to watch the appeals process in action at the Second District Court of Appeal, one of few working courts in the country to share space with a law school. The court is located in Stetson's Tampa Law Center, in a hub of legal activity that includes top area law firms and the Hillsborough County Bar Association.

FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

LSAT: 144-149

GPA: 2.75-3.30

Enrollment: 464

Athletes and actors aren't the only ones known for comebacks.

Take Florida A&M University College of Law. A law school created in 1949 for African-Americans — who weren't welcome in white institutions — it was shuttered in 1966 when integration was finally realized.

However, minority leaders lobbied for its return as a place where a new generation

of minority students could train to become lawyers. That happened in 2000, when the school was re-established and located in Orlando.

"Our school offers a sense of special justice," said Dean LeRoy Pernell. "It was originally taken away, and a community struggled to bring it back. It's a testament to determination."

Today, it graduates more African-American attorneys than the other three state law schools combined...

Times two ...

"That's very special," Pernell said.

However, its mission is not about training just African-Americans, but people of all races. It was ranked fifth in last year's preLaw's ranking of Most Diverse Law Schools.

His school attracts many students bent on making a difference, on righting



wrongs, on giving back. The school also promotes that kind of spirit, Pernell said.

"We stress to our students the importance of making a transformative difference in the communities they serve, be it in private or public practice," he said.

He's taught at three law schools but never felt the energy and excitement that he feels here, he said. "I'm seeing students, across the board, of all colors, all wanting to make a difference in the world."



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New York Law School is taking advantage of its key location in the Big Apple to increase practical training offerings.

BEST SCHOOLS FOR **PRACTICAL TRAINING**

Many law schools continue to increase offerings, making practical training an integral part of the law school experience. While a lot talk about practical training, we honor the schools that deliver the goods.

BY MIKE STETZ

TOP 20

AIRCRAFT CARRIERS, GLACIERS, LAW SCHOOLS ...

None has a reputation for changing direction at breakneck speed. However, some law schools are trying to debunk that notion when it comes to creating or strengthening experiential offerings to make graduates more practice ready.

They are trying to move like a cheetah ... chased by a lion.

Look at New York Law School, for instance. Last year, it doubled the number of its clinics from 13 to 26. That is not easy, nor inexpensive. It's one of the reasons the school cracked the top 20 — finishing 13th — in our second annual ranking of Best Schools for Practical Training.

A number of the top performers improved their offerings, showing that even schools at the top are aggressive.

Yale Law School also moved into the top 20. According to our analysis, Yale's clinic participation has risen sharply during the past year and is the highest among all law schools. Yale rose to No. 2, trailing only Northeastern University School of Law, which earned this year's top honors, rising from No. 2.

Last year's top finisher, the University of St. Thomas School of Law — Minneapolis, was third.

While a good number of schools making the top of this year's list are ones that did so last year, there's a caveat. A number of the top performers improved their offerings, showing that even schools at the top are aggressive.

"My sense is that the pendulum has swung and it's doing so more rapidly," said David Santacrose, associate dean for experiential education at The University of Michigan Law School.

| | Law school | Simulation ratio | Clinic ratio | Externship ratio | Interschool skill ratio | |
|----|--------------------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------------|----|
| 1 | Northeastern University | 0.66 | 0.15 | 1.36 | 0.05 | A+ |
| 2 | Yale Law School | 0.15 | 1.16 | 0.08 | 0.29 | A+ |
| 3 | University of St. Thomas - Mn. | 1.03 | 0.36 | 1.75 | 0.12 | A+ |
| 4 | Pepperdine University | 2.87 | 0.25 | 0.57 | 0.12 | A+ |
| 5 | University of Hawaii | 0.59 | 0.67 | 0.46 | 0.22 | A+ |
| 6 | University of Wisconsin | 0.80 | 0.73 | 0.31 | 0.22 | A+ |
| 7 | Brigham Young University | 1.39 | 0.24 | 0.76 | 0.16 | A+ |
| 8 | Washington and Lee University | 1.54 | 0.27 | 0.22 | 0.95 | A+ |
| 9 | Baylor University | 3.00 | 0.20 | 0.26 | 0.19 | A+ |
| 10 | University of Denver | 1.14 | 0.27 | 0.60 | 0.20 | A+ |
| 11 | Florida Coastal School of Law | 1.79 | 0.25 | 0.39 | 0.19 | A+ |
| 12 | Golden Gate University | 1.04 | 0.27 | 0.61 | 0.17 | A+ |
| 13 | New York Law School | 1.36 | 0.33 | 0.45 | 0.13 | A |
| 14 | Brooklyn Law School | 0.92 | 0.33 | 0.66 | 0.12 | A |
| 15 | Temple University | 1.15 | 0.49 | 0.19 | 0.09 | A |
| 16 | University of Utah | 1.40 | 0.12 | 0.69 | 0.10 | A |
| 17 | UMKC School of Law | 1.26 | 0.36 | 0.21 | 0.16 | A |
| 18 | University of Colorado | 0.93 | 0.28 | 0.38 | 0.29 | A |
| 19 | William and Mary Law School | 1.48 | 0.22 | 0.47 | 0.21 | A |
| 20 | University of Arizona | 1.07 | 0.48 | 0.32 | 0.11 | A |

A-

| Law school | Simulation ratio | Clinic ratio | Externship ratio | Interschool skill ratio |
|---------------------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Arizona State University | 0.72 | 0.30 | 0.47 | 0.10 |
| Capital University | 1.89 | 0.24 | 0.46 | 0.06 |
| Case Western University | 1.71 | 0.15 | 0.34 | 0.23 |
| Gonzaga University | 0.94 | 0.31 | 0.37 | 0.10 |
| John Marshall | 1.96 | 0.15 | 0.29 | 0.12 |
| Lewis & Clark Law School | 0.83 | 0.34 | 0.40 | 0.06 |
| Liberty University | 2.30 | 0.11 | 0.24 | 0.21 |
| Michigan State University | 0.96 | 0.30 | 0.37 | 0.17 |
| Northwestern University | 1.48 | 0.41 | 0.33 | 0.05 |
| UC Irvine | 0.33 | 0.51 | 0.23 | 0.03 |
| University of Connecticut | 1.39 | 0.35 | 0.36 | 0.06 |
| University of Idaho | 0.81 | 0.39 | 0.30 | 0.06 |
| University of Maryland | 1.29 | 0.46 | 0.22 | 0.20 |
| University of New Hampshire | 1.80 | 0.23 | 0.48 | 0.08 |
| University of New Mexico | 0.71 | 0.51 | 0.24 | 0.07 |
| University of Wyoming | 1.08 | 0.37 | 0.25 | 0.35 |
| William Mitchell College of Law | 1.00 | 0.20 | 0.54 | 0.11 |

B+

| Law school | Simulation ratio | Clinic ratio | Externship ratio | Interschool skill ratio |
|------------------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Campbell Law School | 1.42 | 0.11 | 0.37 | 0.21 |
| Cardozo School of Law | 0.93 | 0.25 | 0.47 | 0.07 |
| Chapman Fowler School of Law | 1.25 | 0.27 | 0.35 | 0.15 |
| Chicago-Kent College of Law | 1.46 | 0.27 | 0.27 | 0.13 |
| CUNY School of Law | 0.86 | 0.39 | 0.14 | 0.08 |
| Drake University | 0.86 | 0.30 | 0.34 | 0.22 |
| Emory University | 1.61 | 0.12 | 0.37 | 0.13 |
| Hamline University | 0.73 | 0.23 | 0.36 | 0.12 |
| Loyola University Chicago | 1.56 | 0.14 | 0.31 | 0.21 |
| Ohio Northern University | 1.94 | 0.14 | 0.42 | 0.10 |
| Saint Louis University | 1.71 | 0.21 | 0.27 | 0.09 |
| Santa Clara University | 0.78 | 0.33 | 0.34 | 0.17 |
| Southern Illinois University | 0.94 | 0.14 | 0.43 | 0.15 |
| Southwestern Law School | 0.99 | 0.13 | 0.46 | 0.11 |
| Touro Law Center | 0.56 | 0.25 | 0.35 | 0.10 |
| University of Cincinnati | 0.90 | 0.16 | 0.46 | 0.22 |



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| Law school | Simulation ratio | Clinic ratio | Externship ratio | Interscholastic skill ratio |
|---------------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| University of Georgia | 0.92 | 0.44 | 0.25 | 0.11 |
| University of Illinois | 1.26 | 0.24 | 0.39 | 0.15 |
| University of Mississippi | 1.67 | 0.20 | 0.26 | 0.11 |
| University of Oregon | 1.05 | 0.34 | 0.27 | 0.07 |
| University of Washington | 0.91 | 0.29 | 0.29 | 0.14 |
| Washington University | 1.51 | 0.19 | 0.30 | 0.09 |
| Wayne State University | 0.59 | 0.28 | 0.30 | 0.34 |

He's also the founder and president of the Center for the Study of Applied Legal Education, which was created in 2006 to track schools' efforts in this area. Before, there was no reliable data on how preva-

lent experiential learning was and how it was trending.

"I wanted people to have the facts," he said.

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HOW WE DID THE RANKINGS

The American Bar Association now releases ample data on how many students participate in clinics, externships and simulation courses. The National Jurist used this data to measure which law schools are delivering when it comes to practical training.

As we did last year, we looked at the percentage of full-time students in clinics, externships and simulation courses. This year, we also looked at student participation in interscholastic skills competitions, such as moot court tournaments.

We again placed the most weight on clinical experience, at 30 percent. Experts say it is a particularly effective practical training tool. Students, under faculty direction, work with clients in a number of legal areas. However, clinics are the most costly for schools to incorporate.

Externships — at 25 percent — were given second highest weight. Students get experience by working in prosecutor offices, government agencies and nonprofits, to name but a few. They get hands-on training from working with attorneys and judges.

Simulations accounted for 20 percent. This method seems to be growing more popular as schools seek to promote lawyering skills in classroom settings. It's effective and less expensive, experts say. School competitions were given a weight of 5 percent.



Elon Law students in trial practice and procedure, in the school's Robert E. Long Courtroom, home of the NC Business Court.

We then asked schools to provide additional information about their additional offerings that are not reflected in these numbers, and this accounted for the final 20 percent of the study. For example, schools requiring pro bono work were awarded points for those efforts.

Overall, law schools delivered more experiential opportunities per full-time student than in the prior year. Clinics grew from .22 clinic positions per student to .23, a modest change, but significant for one year. Simulation courses grew from .92 per student to .95 per student. However, the overall numbers were down, given the drop in enrollment.

But more schools are earning top grades, as 86 schools received a B or higher this year. Fifteen schools joined the list this year, including three that earned an A-: University of California Irvine School of Law, The University of New Mexico School of Law and University of Wyoming College of Law.

Touro College Jacob D. Fuchsberg Law Center and Campbell University, Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law

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S14-2

each earned a B+, also premiering on the list this year.

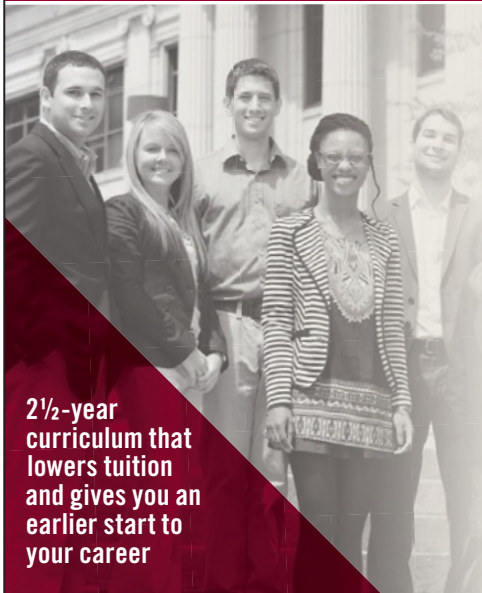
Law schools that moved up the most include Washington and Lee University School of Law, which rose from a B+ to

No. 8, and University of Denver Sturm College of Law, which rose from a B+ to No. 10. The National Jurist ranks the schools that receive an A+ or A and assigns letter grades to the rest.



Northeastern tops our list this year. Its Cooperative Legal Education Program provides students with four quarters of full-time legal employment.

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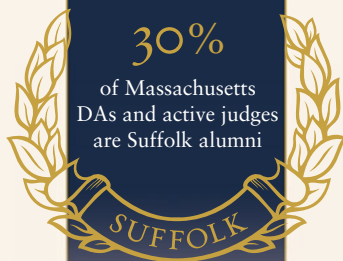
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WHY THE MOVE TOWARD MORE PRACTICAL TRAINING

Northeastern University, this year's No. 1 school, has been providing students with externship opportunities through its Cooperative Legal Education Program, or co-op, for more than 45 years. In it, students get four quarters of full-time legal employment. That amounts to a full year of experiential training.

"This is not a fad anymore," said Dean Jeremy Paul. "For us, it never has been. Experiential training is immersed in everything we do."

William Henderson, the noted legal education scholar and professor of law at Indiana University Maurer School of Law recently assessed Northeastern to determine how well the school's program worked.

"One of the advantages of Northeastern is the epiphanies you have when the professor says 'X' and you're in front of a client in a co-op and 'X' becomes relevant," he said at a symposium last year. "And they have to figure out a way to apply 'X' that they heard in the classroom. And they come back to the classroom with a different take because they know that actually what the professor said is useful."

Other schools are taking steps to deliver these kinds of experiences.

New York Law School doubled its number of clinics because it feels that experiential training is key to a law student's education.

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As Dean and President Anthony W. Crowell noted last year, when announcing the move: “Our goal is to ensure that every student, before they graduate, can and will take advantage of a first-rate clinical placement or supervised externship and

will have the chance to work on real cases, transactions and advocacy efforts, with real people — clients and witnesses, business owners and entrepreneurs, government

officials and others.”

Clinics aren’t cheap because it takes faculty to run them. And it’s not as if law schools are flush with cash. Many are facing increasing financial burdens because of dropping enrollment. Still, New York Law School felt the investment was a necessity.

“I want to give our students more than a competitive edge,” Crowell said. “I want them to have advanced work and to have it considerably early.”

Crowell has taken advantage of his school’s location, in the heart of New York City and just steps away from courts, City Hall and a host of public agencies. Crowell, who served as counselor to former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, has built relationships to expand the clinical offerings. The school has been rebranded as “New York’s Law School” to highlight its relationship with the city and its law-centric neighbors.

“It’s a lonely time for law schools,” Crowell said, noting the trying times they are facing. “We’re not lonely.”

Indeed, he’s found that many local legal institutions are excited to partner with a law school going in this direction.



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“They love our students. They are hiring our students,” he said. “I keep hearing from employers saying how our lawyers are better trained today.”

Law schools feel they have to make these changes because of shifts in the legal market. Law firms don’t want to invest the money to train law graduates. That’s because they’re facing pressure from clients who don’t want to pay hundreds of dollars an hour for a green attorney and possibly shoddy legal work. So students need to walk out of school with the necessary skills to be marketable.

Making students more practice-ready also gives them the tools to start their own practices should they find the job market grim. Law schools want to boost law students’ business and entrepreneurship skills as well. Some argue the nation doesn’t have an abundance of lawyers; the nation has an abundance of lawyers serving big businesses and the wealthy but not serving a segment of the population that needs legal help.

Even if change is happening at a faster clip than how law schools traditionally move, it’s still not happening overnight. Only between 36 percent and 40 percent of law students have participated in a clinic in their three years of law school, said Santacroce, of the University of Michigan.

The ABA now requires that students take at least six credits of experiential training, but that only amounts to about 7 percent of the curriculum.

“You know that saying about how a law school teaches students to think like a lawyer” said Paul, dean at Northeastern University. “Well, if you get into a cab, you don’t want a driver who thinks like a driver. You want someone who can drive.”

Like others, Santacroce points to the medical school model, where students train with real patients. They interact on a regular basis. Yes, the analogy is not exact, given a person’s health is in the balance, but law has a great effect on peoples’ lives and well-being as well, he said.

There are issues of liberty, economic rights and liability, he said.

“It’s important stuff,” he said. “Yet, as a student, it’s quite possible to graduate without ever having interacted with a client, aka, a patient.”

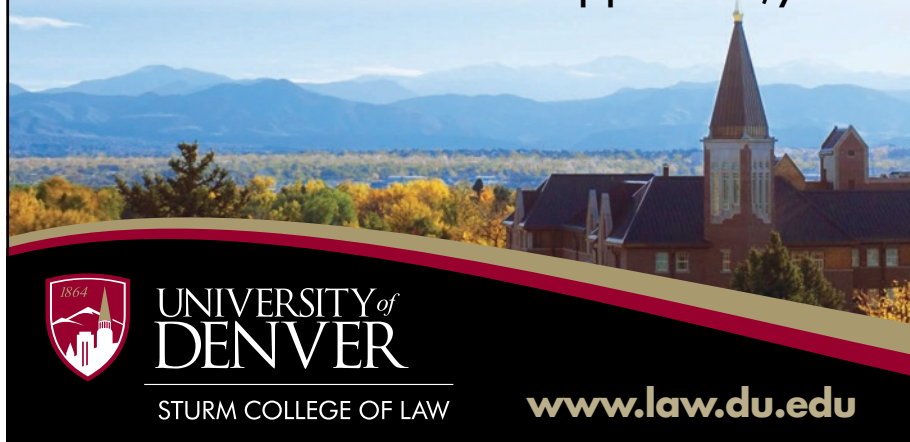
CRITICS OF PRACTICAL TRAINING

There are detractors regarding this surge in experiential training. Some wonder why there hasn’t been more discussion on its

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worthiness.

University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law professor Robert Condlin wrote a recent paper titled “Practice Ready Graduates: A Millennialist

Fantasy,” which was critical of the concept.

In it, he attacks practical training on several levels. For one, the legal market has shifted and jobs aren’t as plentiful. So it hardly matters if students are practice

ready.

“Law schools cannot revive the labor market, or improve the employment prospects of their graduates, by providing a different type of education,” he wrote.

Condlin’s school, University of Maryland, dropped from an A+ last year to an A- this year. Fewer students took simulation courses and externships.

Others have questioned if legal educators have the chops to teach practice-ready courses, because many lack significant practice experience. Among those making that assertion was U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia.

“The academic mind-set is too far removed from the practice of law,” he said in 2013.

Santacroce, of the University of Michigan, dismisses such criticisms. Law schools have a long history of offering experiential learning, particularly via clinics, he noted. They are hardly new. They are “about producing more capable graduates for the sake of the bar and the public they serve,” he said.

Law schools are more than aware they can’t fix the legal market, he said.



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“They are trying to produce more capable graduates, a quest that is as old as the legal academy.”

UP AND COMING SCHOOLS

And some schools are on quite the quest. Take Elon University School of Law, for instance. It has revamped its curriculum to

Elon University School of Law has revamped its curriculum to focus on experiential learning and includes a residency program similar to that of medical school.

focus on experiential learning and includes a residency program similar to that of medical school.

In this year’s ranking the Greensboro, N.C.-based school joined the list for the first time with a B. Next year, it should rise

in the ranking.

All students will be required to take the faculty-directed residency program, which amounts to students working a full-time legal job.

Further experiential training will be



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incorporated into the curriculum so it amounts to 20 percent of the program, well exceeding the new ABA requirements.

And it will all be done in two and one-half years, instead of the traditional three. Elon University has revamped the law school model, going to seven trimesters instead of six semesters. Students will graduate in December and be eligible for the February bar.

“Considering the gap that exists between traditional law schools and the skill sets demanded in modern legal practice, this is not a time for incremental change in legal

education,” Dean Luke Bierman said when the changes were announced.

Other schools are making significant changes as well. Pennsylvania State University, Dickinson Law in Carlisle, Pa., is becoming separate law school from the Pennsylvania State University, Penn State Law in State College. (Before, they were considered one law school with two branches.)

When it does so this fall, it will unveil a new curriculum that is practice-ready oriented. It is even restructuring the first year of law school to add such elements, said

Interim Dean Gary S. Gildin.

“We’ve learned a lot about education since the 19th century,” he said. “And one of those is that a lot of real-world context is extremely beneficial.”

For example, among the offerings in the first year is a course called “Problem Solving 1, the Lawyer and the Client.” In it, students will interview actual clients and work with practicing attorneys.

“We figured if we were serious about this, let’s start from day one,” Gildin said. “We are creating professional skills right out of the box.”

The school will cap class size at 75 to give students the personal attention needed to help them handle the new demands. The school also wants to keep class sizes small to avoid sending a horde of new attorneys into a saturated legal market. The school wants to give them the best shot possible at landing jobs, Gildin said.

Students will be required to take 12 credits of experiential learning, double the new ABA requirement. The school earned a C+ in this year’s study, and should move up based on its plans.

Law students may wield the most influence when it comes to the implementation of experiential learning models. Students like them and find them fulfilling. And they are fully aware of the employment situation and want to become more marketable.

According to a recent survey by the Center for the Study of Applied Legal Education, nearly 80 percent of schools reported that, in the past five years, student demand for live-client clinics has increased.

Look at the increase in clinical participation at Yale Law School, for instance. Why is that happening?

“I think that they [the students] are ‘vot-

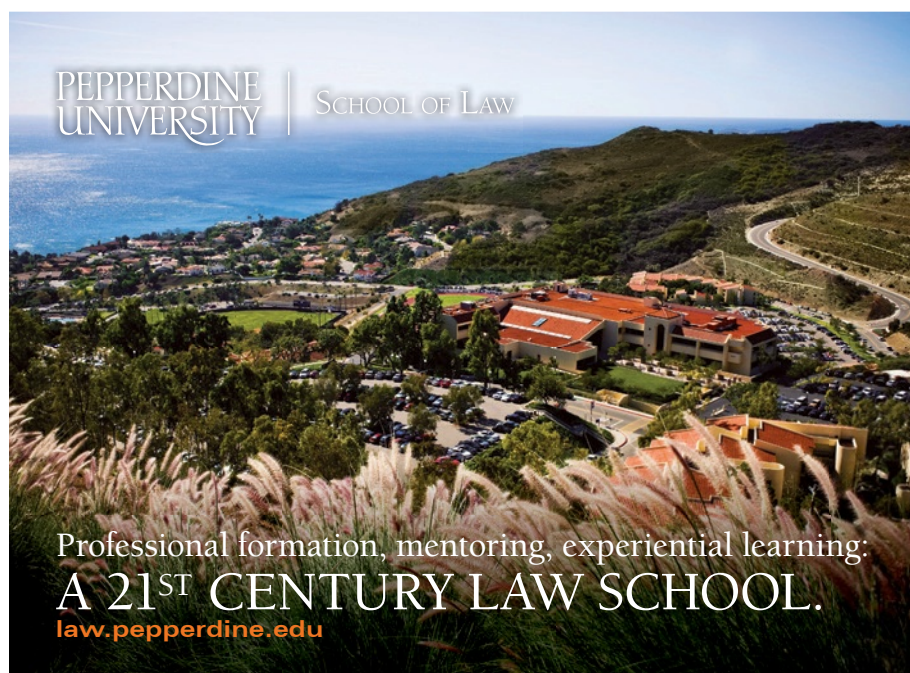


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“The comments we receive from clinic students often describe their experience as not only valuable training for their future lives as lawyers, but also ‘life changing.’”

—JANET CONROY, SPOKESWOMAN, YALE

ing with their feet' — they are valuing the experience they've already had working for a particular clinic or clinics, and they are coming back for more," said Janet Conroy, the school's spokeswoman. "Their reasons for doing so are as varied as the types of clinics we have, but the comments we receive from clinic students often describe their experience as not only valuable training for their future lives as lawyers, but also 'life changing.'"

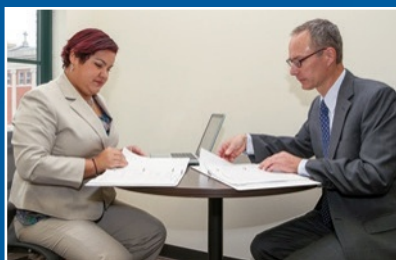
Students at Northeastern have reported important benefits from their co-ops.

"I have a better appreciation for what your work product is going toward," said one student in a report on the school's co-ops. "I think in law school, you are serving yourself, so to speak. Everything that you do is to better yourself and improve your lot. When you are on co-op and you are dealing with clients, there are real implications for what your working product becomes. When I am redacting personal information, people's safety is on the line, people's lives."

Heady stuff. And more and more law school administrators believe such lessons can't be learned early or often enough.

B

| Law school | Simulation ratio | Clinic ratio | Externship ratio | Interschool skill ratio |
|--|------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Catholic University | 0.53 | 0.26 | 0.35 | 0.07 |
| Duke University | 1.18 | 0.25 | 0.13 | 0.16 |
| Elon University | 0.81 | 0.10 | 0.33 | 0.13 |
| Faulkner University | 0.84 | 0.23 | 0.31 | 0.22 |
| Pace University | 0.96 | 0.15 | 0.41 | 0.10 |
| Pacific McGeorge School of Law | 0.80 | 0.19 | 0.28 | 0.16 |
| Quinnipiac University | 0.47 | 0.17 | 0.29 | 0.24 |
| Regent University | 1.15 | 0.14 | 0.31 | 0.16 |
| Rutgers - Camden | 1.24 | 0.25 | 0.33 | 0.04 |
| Seton Hall University | 1.11 | 0.24 | 0.40 | 0.10 |
| Syracuse University | 0.92 | 0.31 | 0.19 | 0.13 |
| UC Hastings | 0.96 | 0.12 | 0.30 | 0.19 |
| University of Arkansas, Fayetteville | 0.69 | 0.23 | 0.46 | 0.07 |
| University of Kansas | 0.67 | 0.24 | 0.36 | 0.28 |
| University of Massachusetts | 0.75 | 0.23 | 0.28 | 0.06 |
| University of Minnesota | 0.61 | 0.30 | 0.29 | 0.07 |
| University of Nevada, Las Vegas | 1.14 | 0.20 | 0.31 | 0.10 |
| University of Pittsburgh | 0.88 | 0.33 | 0.26 | 0.15 |
| University of San Diego | 0.65 | 0.34 | 0.30 | 0.13 |
| University of San Francisco | 1.04 | 0.18 | 0.34 | 0.08 |
| University of Tennessee | 1.33 | 0.29 | 0.17 | 0.14 |
| University of the District of Columbia | 0.10 | 0.60 | 0.07 | 0.03 |
| Valparaiso University | 0.74 | 0.16 | 0.31 | 0.33 |
| Wake Forest University | 0.85 | 0.34 | 0.22 | 0.12 |
| Washburn University | 1.24 | 0.22 | 0.25 | 0.14 |
| Western New England University | 0.81 | 0.26 | 0.23 | 0.20 |



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BEST SCHOOLS FOR BAR EXAM PREPARATION

LSAT scores are designed, in part, to predict success on the bar exam. But 33 schools excel above and beyond what their LSAT scores predict. How are these schools bucking the odds?

BY MIKE STETZ

Brittney Dobbins recently took the Oath of Professional Conduct during a ceremony for graduates who passed the July bar. Talk about a moment.

“From the time I can remember, I wanted to be a lawyer,” said the 2014 graduate of California Western School of Law in San Diego. “I used to sit on my mother’s lap and watch TV shows like ‘Matlock.’ That’s what I wanted to be. And now I am.”

All law graduates, however, do not share that joy. Some students fail, which can be soul crushing. Even if they eventually pass, failing the first time can postpone employment.

The good news is that law schools are more serious about their bar passage rates than ever before. They know that a good

pass rate helps with rankings and student recruitment, not to mention that the ABA is watching.

Some schools are going above and beyond to help students. But that is not always reflected in the final numbers.

For example, California Western School of Law reports a 78 percent pass rate, which is far below Stanford University Law School’s 93 percent, and about the same as cross-town rival University of San Diego’s 78 percent.

But what those numbers don’t show is what the school started with. According to a study in the early 1990s by the Law School Admissions Council, LSAT scores and law school GPAs were found to be the “strongest predictors” of bar examination passage. In

Students at Nova Southeastern School of Law, which focuses on teaching core skills. That leads to bar success, school leaders say.

| Law School | Actual Pass Rate | Predicted Pass Rate | Difference | % diff |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------|--------|
| University of Washington | 87.9 | 73.72 | 14.17 | 19.22% |
| Campbell Law School | 93.3 | 80.33 | 12.97 | 16.15% |
| Faulkner University | 88.63 | 76.81 | 11.82 | 15.39% |
| NSU's Shepard Broad Law Center | 83.11 | 71.46 | 11.65 | 16.30% |
| Western State College of Law | 79.8 | 68.45 | 11.35 | 16.58% |
| University of Memphis | 91.18 | 79.88 | 11.3 | 14.15% |
| Louisiana State University | 82.43 | 71.27 | 11.15 | 15.64% |
| Widener Law, Delaware | 85.98 | 77.18 | 8.8 | 11.40% |
| Samford University | 94.48 | 86.04 | 8.44 | 9.81% |
| Southern University | 62.53 | 54.67 | 7.86 | 14.38% |
| Mississippi College | 80.65 | 72.85 | 7.8 | 10.71% |
| California Western School of Law | 78.66 | 71.09 | 7.57 | 10.65% |
| Capital University | 88.34 | 80.95 | 7.39 | 9.13% |
| UMKC School of Law | 96.28 | 88.93 | 7.35 | 8.26% |
| Florida International University | 85.59 | 78.53 | 7.06 | 8.99% |
| New England Law | 87.39 | 80.45 | 6.93 | 8.61% |
| Stetson University | 87.41 | 80.56 | 6.85 | 8.50% |
| Texas A&M | 86.32 | 80.11 | 6.21 | 7.75% |
| University of Baltimore | 84.6 | 78.48 | 6.12 | 7.80% |
| Pepperdine University | 86.08 | 80.12 | 5.96 | 7.44% |
| University of Akron | 87.54 | 81.61 | 5.92 | 7.25% |
| Stanford Law School | 92.42 | 86.82 | 5.6 | 6.45% |
| USC Gould School of Law | 89.27 | 83.67 | 5.6 | 6.69% |
| Duquesne University | 83.5 | 77.92 | 5.58 | 7.16% |
| Seattle University | 73.72 | 68.13 | 5.58 | 8.19% |
| Widener Law, Harrisburg | 81.23 | 75.75 | 5.48 | 7.23% |
| Arizona State University | 88.65 | 83.67 | 4.97 | 5.94% |
| South Texas College of Law | 85.71 | 80.78 | 4.93 | 6.10% |
| Oklahoma City University | 81.99 | 77.11 | 4.87 | 6.32% |
| University of Florida | 89.97 | 85.25 | 4.72 | 5.54% |
| Georgia State University | 94.22 | 89.61 | 4.61 | 5.14% |
| Regent University | 80.91 | 76.35 | 4.55 | 5.96% |
| University of Arkansas, Fayetteville | 84.16 | 79.96 | 4.2 | 5.25% |
| University of Kentucky | 92.39 | 88.27 | 4.12 | 4.67% |
| Florida State University | 88.62 | 84.58 | 4.03 | 4.76% |
| Ohio Northern University | 86.46 | 82.45 | 4.01 | 4.86% |
| University of Arizona | 88.32 | 84.58 | 3.74 | 4.42% |
| Chicago-Kent College of Law | 96.03 | 92.36 | 3.66 | 3.96% |
| University of South Dakota | 89.21 | 85.56 | 3.65 | 4.27% |
| Penn State Law | 88.79 | 85.14 | 3.64 | 4.28% |
| Penn State's Dickinson Law | 88.79 | 85.14 | 3.64 | 4.28% |
| William Mitchell College of Law | 91.85 | 88.58 | 3.27 | 3.69% |
| University of Virginia | 95.16 | 92.06 | 3.1 | 3.37% |
| Baylor University | 95.1 | 92.08 | 3.02 | 3.28% |
| University of Nebraska | 88.11 | 85.1 | 3.01 | 3.54% |
| St. Thomas University | 75.13 | 72.22 | 2.92 | 4.04% |
| Drake University | 91.53 | 88.71 | 2.82 | 3.18% |
| Chapman Fowler School of Law | 79.08 | 76.28 | 2.8 | 3.67% |
| University of Missouri | 96.85 | 94.06 | 2.79 | 2.97% |
| UC Berkeley School of Law | 86.98 | 84.21 | 2.77 | 3.29% |

Methodology

We used linear regression to find the algebraic equation that best predicted a law school's average bar exam pass rate based on its students' average LSAT scores.

We used the average LSAT score and the average bar pass rate for the classes of 2011 and 2012, the two most recent available data sets at the time of the study.

LSAT scores accounted for 45 percent of the differences between schools in pass rates. By comparing a school's actual pass rate with the pass rate predicted by LSAT scores, we can see how much better or worse it does in comparison to the average law school with similar student LSAT scores.

Because average pass rates vary greatly from state to state, it would be expected that law schools in states with low rates would have fewer passing students. For that reason, we computed a second equation adjusted for state pass rates. This state average pass rate accounted for an additional 24 percent of the differences in pass rates between schools.

Between average LSAT and state pass rate, the final actual school pass rate was 69 percent explained, leaving 31 percent of the pass rate to be explained by other aspects. The adjusted predictions from this model give us a better sense of how well each school's pass rate measures up based on LSAT scores after taking into account the difficulty of passing the bar exam in the state in which the school is located.

other words, students from a school with a high incoming LSAT average should perform better on the bar exam than a school with a much lower LSAT.

So, which schools are adding the most

value to their students when it comes to the bar exam?

The National Jurist sought to answer this question by undertaking a statistical analysis of the nation's law schools, using

linear regression. We compared incoming LSAT scores with bar passage rates.

We looked at two classes — the Class of 2011 and the Class of 2012. (Bar pass data was not available at the time for the Class of 2013). We also took into account the differences of state bar pass rates.

The end result: more than 62 percent of law schools are within 5 percent of their expected score. But there are some that struggle and some that perform far better than expected.

California Western School of Law is a good example. The law school finished 12th in our study. Students have an average LSAT score of 153 and pass the bar at a rate of 78 percent.

Our analysis, however, shows the school's Predicted Pass Rate is 71 percent, a 7-point difference. That difference, however, is not merely statistics. Those numbers represent people. People such as Dobbins, who is now a lawyer. One of the reasons Dobbins went to California Western School of Law was its bar passage rate, she said.

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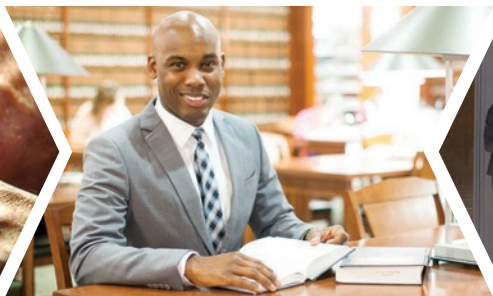
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Who's No. 1?

In a study such as this, it is often easier to perform better than expectations when there is more room for improvement.

For example, Harvard Law School did only 2 percent better than its predicted rate in the study. But it reported the highest average LSAT score in the study — 173. That left it with a predicted pass rate of 94 percent. Even if every student had passed the bar exam, it still would have exceeded the prediction by only 6 percent.

Still, some top-tier schools did do well in the study. Stanford University Law School finished 22nd. Its Actual Pass Rate is 5.6 points better than its Predicted Pass Rate of nearly 87 percent. Like Harvard Law, it's got good clay to work with. The average LSAT is 170.

Coming in first in our analysis is University of Washington School of Law, which had a Predicted Pass Rate of nearly 74 percent but an Actual Pass Rate of nearly 88 percent.

However, that result may be a bit misleading. For one thing, the school has a student LSAT score of 163 — the highest in the top 20, so student success should be

expected.

Its result was also partly because of a horrid 2012 average state bar passage rate of just 60 percent. The school, meanwhile, had a superb passage rate of 94 percent — a 34-point difference. In the unadjusted tally of our analysis — when state pass averages are not part of the formula — the school finishes 123rd.

Still, the school routinely has strong bar exam showings. Its 2013 results, for instance, showed a bar passage rate for first-time test-takers of 93 percent, while the average state passage was 88 percent.

Many of the schools that excel in the study have low LSAT scores. In fact 14 of the top 20 reported LSAT averages at 155 or lower. But not every school with a low LSAT score does well. Of the 20 schools that performed worst in the study, 16 reported LSAT scores at 155 or less.

Many of these schools, including Howard University School of Law, University of the District of Columbia and University of La Verne, have large minority populations. Minorities are known to struggle with passing the bar exam. Of course, they also struggle with the LSAT. But it

appears that schools without large numbers of minorities are able to perform better than the model would predict, whereas schools with large numbers of minorities are not.

For schools such as California Western, which excel in the study, success is no accident. It has a highly structured program — in place for about a decade — to help students prepare for the California bar, one of the toughest in the nation.

"We want to make sure our students are both practice-ready and ready to pass the bar exam," said Shane Dizon, assistant dean for academic achievement.

A bar preparation course is offered in both the second and third years of law school, he said. The school also offers a post-graduate program.

"We think it's important that they begin thinking about the bar early," Dizon said.

The school incorporates bar-related material into first-year courses, said William J. Aceves, vice dean for academic affairs.

"The concept is to show bar relevance throughout law school," he said. "We want it to be something that's always on their radar screens."

It's working. The July passage rate for

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California Western School of Law alumnus Superior Court Judge Michael B. Orfield '77 administers the Oath of Professional Conduct to a group of alumni who passed last year's July California Bar Exam

results.

Second is the drop in student applications. Schools have to fight more fiercely for qualified students, and having an impressive bar passage rate is a potent selling point.

Third is the ABA. About a decade ago, it altered course and allowed schools to offer for-credit bar preparation courses. Many schools have since adopted and strengthened such programs.

One such school is Western State College of Law, which finished fifth on our list. With an average LSAT of 151, the school has a Predicted Pass Rate of 68 percent, but graduates actually pass at nearly 80 percent.

Indeed, the school even got a shout-out from the prickly legal website Above the Law for its bar passage success in July 2012,

the school's first-time test-takers was 71.2 percent, compared to the state average of 69 percent. The law school's graduates have met or exceeded the statewide average for first-time takers from American Bar Association-accredited law schools in 13 of the past 14 exams.

Why schools care about the bar

There are a number of reasons that law schools are placing additional emphasis on bar passage, legal educators say.

One is expense. Law school costs have soared, and students want to make sure they're getting an education that provides



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when 78 percent of first-time test-takers passed:

“Way to go, Western State! Not only did this second-tier, rank-not-published law school beat the state average, but it also lapped several schools that were ranked numerically by U.S. News.”

Again, it’s no accident.

“We care a lot about that first-time pass rate,” said Allen K. Easley, interim dean and vice chancellor.

The school has an aggressive program in place to push students academically in bar-related subjects. During their three years of law school, they must earn a 2.5 GPA in eight of 25 bar subject classes. They are called Foundation Law Points, and students are quite aware of their importance, Easley said. They flunk out if they don’t meet that goal.

“They know from day one what they need to do,” he said.

Easley compares preparing for the bar to training for a marathon. You can’t just do small runs. You have to also do longer runs, ones that increase your endurance and strength.

By having a 2.5 GPA benchmark, stu-

dents learn not to coast, but to fight. It’s changed the culture of the school, he said. If students are falling short, they ask what they can do to do better. And they also get special assistance if they fall behind.

“I’ve seen some amazing transformations [of student success],” he said.

Some critics have said the school has been transformed into one long bar preparation program. Easley dismisses that. The curriculum has not changed, he said. These are the same subjects always offered. Students are simply required to do better.

And that in turn will make them better attorneys, Easley said.

“They learn to dig down,” he said.

Additionally, the school offers a carrot to students to help boost bar exam results. If the class does well, students get a partial reimbursement for the cost of their bar review course. It’s not based on individual achievement. The better the class does as a whole, the bigger the reimbursement, Easley said. It creates bonding.

“We’re trying to tell them, as a group, hang together,” he said.

Bar prep as part of the DNA

But not every school that excels in the study does so through extensive programming.

Faulkner University, Thomas Goode Jones School of Law has a Predicted Pass Rate was calculated at 77 percent, yet its graduates pass the bar at an 88 percent rate — an 11-point difference.

First-time takers of the February 2014 Alabama bar passed at 100 percent. In July 2013, the rate was 98.3 percent.

Amazingly, the school does not have any bar preparation courses. Indeed, half of the students, because they can’t afford to do so, don’t take a commercial bar prep course after graduation. So how are they achieving such success?

“There’s no one factor, no magic bullet,” said Dean Matt Vega said. “We have a fully committed faculty that teaches in a very personal way. They truly embrace the responsibility of teaching.”

Each student develops close ties to his or her professors, he said. They are quick to ask for help.

Additionally, the school has a rigorous academic program, he said. Practical training is a key component of the school’s phi-



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Faulkner University students succeed at the bar because of the personal attention they receive from faculty, school officials say.

mediation advocacy.

The school is not taking its bar success for granted, Vega said. The school is always evolving. This spring it is adding a bar preparation course in conjunction with Barbri Bar Review. Additionally, he is looking for a way to roll bar prep costs into school tuition so more graduating students can have access to prep materials.

Students need the credentials, he said. Many have an entrepreneurial spirit and start solo or small firms, he said. Others are driven toward public service, working in rural areas as district attorneys and other such positions.

“They don’t have a nice cushy law firm to let them sit around for six months if they don’t pass,” he said.

So what do they do? They pass.

losophy.

“We don’t just teach them to think like a lawyer,” he said. “We teach them to think they are lawyers.”

They are over-achievers, as well, school officials say. In the last two years, the school’s students have won five national championships in trial, appellate and

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Mia Breaux Lorick knew since high school she wanted to be a lawyer, but first she had to give the bright lights of Broadway a shot. As a UH Law Center grad, she plans to put the confidence and performance skills she once showcased on stage to good use in the courtroom as a civil litigator.



Blaine Larson earned his undergraduate degree in electrical engineering and seized a career opportunity by combining that technical knowledge with an interest in intellectual property law. As a young associate, he now defends patents with an emphasis on electrical engineering.



It took an eye-opening road trip along the Gulf of Mexico coastline in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill to persuade a public-spirited communications major, Laura Duncan, that she could best serve the environment by studying at the UH Law Center.

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Allan Easley, dean at Western State College of Law, said preparing for the bar exam is similar to a marathon. His school requires a 2.5 GPA in bar courses.

Nova Southeastern University - Shepard Broad Law Center, which finished fourth, takes a pervasive approach.

"It really is the core value of the law school," said Dean Jon Garon of the school's bar passage performance.

He said the school is not focused on schooling students to merely beat the bar. Instead, it stresses achieving excellence in core skills — such as critical reading and legal writing — from day one and throughout the law school experience. That, in turn, produces bar-ready students.

And that approach continues even after graduation, as students prepare for the bar. Each student has a faculty mentor who monitors the student's progress to make certain he or she is on course.



PHOTO BY NICK KOON

They analyze their work. They give them additional bar-related questions.

The Fort Lauderdale, Fla.-based school enrolls a good number of first-generation law students and boasts a diverse student body. However, these students aren't necessarily ones that rock LSAT tests. Still, they are not outliers, Garon said.

For the exceptional student who has

a 90 percent chance of passing the bar, what a law school offers in bar preparation hardly matters, he said. Those students may look at law schools for specialty courses and other reasons. But they are the true outliers, he said.

"The vast majority [of law students] need help from their law schools to achieve success," he said.



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How to choose a school for:

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND TECHNOLOGY LAW

BY LAIRA MARTIN

The field of intellectual property and technology law — which focuses on protecting intellectual creation, discovery and invention — continues to grow at law schools. Those interested in trademarks, copyrights and patents will also find growing demand for lawyers in this field.

When evaluating schools, begin by looking at the range of courses offered, said Jessica Silbey, an intellectual property (IP) professor at Suffolk University Law School.

“Look for a school that offers a range of diverse courses in IP law, copyright, patent and trade, and also look for a school that offers big lectures as well as smaller



PAVEL IGNATOV/SHUTTERSTOCK

This list includes law schools that offer both a concentration and clinical opportunities and/or externships in the specialty. While some schools offer certificates, (a specific designation on the diploma) many do not as a matter of policy. A center is a grant-supported program with exclusive resources for the study of the subject matter.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

| Law school | Certificate | Center | Clinic | Externship |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------|--------|------------|
| Albany Law | | | | ✓ |
| American University | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Arizona State University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Boston University | | | | ✓ |
| Brooklyn Law School | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| California Western School of Law | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Campbell Law School | | | | ✓ |
| Cardozo School of Law | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Case Western University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Catholic University | | | | ✓ |
| Chapman Fowler School of Law | | | | ✓ |
| DePaul University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Drake University | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Drexel University Kline School of Law | | | | ✓ |
| Duke University | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Emory University | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Fordham Law School | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| George Mason University | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| George Washington University | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Georgia State University | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Golden Gate University | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Hamline University | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| IU Maurer School of Law | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| IU McKinney School of Law | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| The John Marshall | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Lewis & Clark Law School | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Louisiana State University | | | | ✓ |
| Loyola Law School, Los Angeles | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

| Law school | Certificate | Center | Clinic | Externship |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------|--------|------------|
| Loyola University Chicago | | | | ✓ |
| Michigan State University | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| New England Law | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| New York Law School | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| New York University | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| North Carolina Central University | | | ✓ | |
| Northeastern University | | | | ✓ |
| Pacific McGeorge School of Law | | | | ✓ |
| Penn State Law | | | | ✓ |
| Penn State University - Dickinson Law | | | | ✓ |
| Pepperdine University | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Quinnipiac University | | | | ✓ |
| Santa Clara University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Seattle University | | | | ✓ |
| Southern Illinois University | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| St. John's University | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Stanford Law School | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Suffolk University | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| SUNY Buffalo Law School | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Texas Tech University | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| The John Marshall | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Thomas Jefferson School of Law | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| UC Berkeley School of Law | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| UC Davis Law | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| UC Hastings | | | | ✓ |
| UCLA | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| UMKC School of Law | | | | ✓ |
| University of Akron | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

| Law school | Certificate | Center | Clinic | Externship |
|---------------------------------|-------------|--------|--------|------------|
| University of Cincinnati | | | | ✓ |
| University of Connecticut | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Dayton | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Denver | | | | ✓ |
| University of Detroit Mercy | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Florida | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| University of Idaho | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Iowa | | | | ✓ |
| University of Louisville | | | | ✓ |
| University of Maine | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| University of Minnesota | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Mississippi | | | | ✓ |
| University of New Hampshire | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of New Mexico | | | | ✓ |
| University of Oregon | | | | ✓ |
| University of Pennsylvania | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| University of Pittsburgh | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| University of Richmond | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of San Diego | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of San Francisco | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Toledo | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| University of Utah | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Virginia | | | ✓ | |
| Washburn University | | | | ✓ |
| Washington and Lee University | | | | ✓ |
| Washington University | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| West Virginia University | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Whittier Law School | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Willamette University | | | | ✓ |
| William Mitchell College of Law | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| WMU-Cooley | | | | ✓ |

seminars,” Silbey said. “The diversity and breadth of classroom experience is super important.”

Both Silbey and Greg Vetter, co-director of the Institute for Intellectual Property & Information Law at the University of Houston Law Center, stress the importance of researching the full-time faculty in your specialization of choice.

“Make sure important classes are taught by full-time faculty,” Silbey said. “Is the faculty engaged in the legal community?

Are they writing and visible on the national level? I would also look at alumni, the people that graduated from the program, and what they go on to do. Are they people you want to be?”

Vetter recommends reaching out to the admissions department, professors or alumni to ask any questions you may have that cannot be answered through research.


“Contact the admissions department and say you want to talk to an IP professor,” Vetter suggested. “Don’t feel shy. You are

making a big investment. Getting some tactile, human, organic information by interacting with professors in your desired field is

TECHNOLOGY

| Law school | Certificate | Center | Clinic | Externship |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------|--------|------------|
| Albany Law | | | | ✓ |
| Arizona State University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Brooklyn Law School | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| California Western School of Law | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Cardozo School of Law | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Case Western University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| DePaul University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Emory University | | | | ✓ |
| Fordham Law School | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| George Washington University | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Georgia State University | | | | ✓ |
| Golden Gate University | | | | ✓ |
| Louisiana State University | | | | ✓ |
| Loyola University New Orleans | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| New York Law School | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| New York University | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Northeastern University | | | | ✓ |
| Penn State Law | | | | ✓ |
| Penn State University - Dickinson Law | | | | ✓ |
| Pepperdine University | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Santa Clara University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| St. John’s University | | | | ✓ |
| Stanford Law School | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Suffolk University | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Thomas Jefferson School of Law | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| UC Berkeley School of Law | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| UC Davis Law | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| University of Connecticut | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| University of Dayton | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| University of Idaho | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| University of Kansas | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| University of Maine | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| University of Minnesota | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of New Hampshire | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| University of Pennsylvania | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| University of Pittsburgh | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| University of Richmond | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of San Diego | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of San Francisco | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Utah | | | | ✓ |
| Washington University | | | ✓ | |
| Whittier Law School | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| William & Mary Law School | | ✓ | | ✓ |

This list includes law schools that offer both a concentration and clinical opportunities and/or externships in the specialty. While some schools offer certificates, (a specific designation on the diploma) many do not as a matter of policy. A center is a grant-supported program with exclusive resources for the study of the subject matter.



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qualifies you to take the patent bar exam, which one must pass in order to file patents or represent clients before the United States Patent Office. The exam is not required for patent litigation, Vetter said.

"This constant question comes up of, 'Can I go into IP without a science background?' Fundamentally, the answer is yes, you can, by becoming a great lawyer first," Vetter said. "Some students take the patent

bar just as an option for the future. If you can take and pass it, it is a fairly impressive credential and can be a leg up in the hiring process."

The trend in law schools continues to be on building practical skills, and IP and technology specializations are no exceptions. Make sure to research each school's clinical offerings, as IP clinics are not as common as other areas of the law, Silbey said.

"IP clinics are still fairly new in law schools," she said. "More have them now, and the opportunity to work with local and national clients in your second and third year is invaluable."

Geographic location can also influence the depth of a school's IP or technology program, availability of externships and future career opportunities.

"Legal work in a region will follow the activity in that area," Vetter said. "Hollywood has a lot more information-based law work in publicity and copyright than in a market like Houston, which has

major industries in health care and software. Location is an important factor."

In 2013, Suffolk University launched the Institute on Law Practice Technology & Innovation, which educates students on the technologies and tools lawyers use on the job, including document collection and fee allocation software.

"The program helps students be more effective lawyers," Silbey said. "Especially if you think you're going to be a litigator on cases with a gigantic amount of documents, learning those tools that organize documents can be very helpful."

Any student can take and benefit from legal technology courses at the institute, but the concentration itself is very different from IP law, Silbey said. The program is geared toward students who want to start their own firms or become legal consultants.

"There is a whole new industry now of lawyers who consult with other lawyers to set up a business," she said. "It is creating different opportunities for lawyers."

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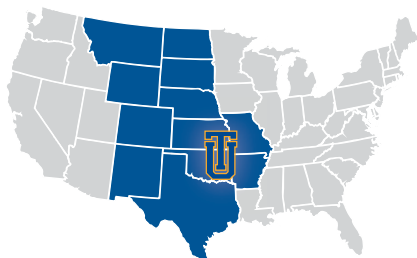
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How to choose a school for: ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Environmental law, while a specialization on its own, has several sub-specializations, including energy, climate, land use, national and state politics, pollution control and more. It is not imperative that you know exactly which sub-specialization you want to pursue just yet, law school officials say. But having an idea of what interests you can be advantageous.

"I think they can figure it out along the way," said Professor Mary Wood, director of the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Program at University of Oregon School of Law in Eugene. "Anyone who figures out what they want to study early on will be at an advantage. You do have time. It's not that you're closing doors, but there may have been some open doors you could have walked through."

Some schools have become well known for specific specialties or types of law. University of Oregon's program, for example, is very public-interest oriented, while University of Maryland Francis King Carey

School of Law's environmental law program is internationally focused.

Professor Robert Percival, University of Maryland's environmental law director, takes students on international field trips



WDG PHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

to work abroad and attend environmental law conferences.

"A real growth area is global environmental law," he said. "We want to give students an international experience. Every year we take 40 environmental law students on a field trip to China. This year, I am taking a group of multidisciplinary students

| Law school | Certificate | Center | Clinic | Externship |
|------------------------------|-------------|--------|--------|------------|
| Albany Law | | | | ✓ |
| American University | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Appalachian School of Law | | | | ✓ |
| Arizona State University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Barry University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Baylor University | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Boston College | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Brooklyn Law School | | | | ✓ |
| Catholic University | | | | ✓ |
| Chapman Fowler School of Law | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Chicago-Kent College of Law | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Drake University | | | | ✓ |
| Duke University | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Emory University | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Florida State University | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Fordham Law School | | | | ✓ |
| George Washington University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Georgetown University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

| Law school | Certificate | Center | Clinic | Externship |
|--------------------------------|-------------|--------|--------|------------|
| Georgia State University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Golden Gate University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| IU Maurer School of Law | | | ✓ | |
| IU McKinney School of Law | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Lewis & Clark Law School | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Louisiana State University | | | | ✓ |
| Loyola Law School, Los Angeles | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Loyola University New Orleans | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Michigan State University | | | | ✓ |
| New England Law | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| New York Law School | | | | ✓ |
| New York University | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Northeastern University | | | | ✓ |
| Ohio Northern University | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pace University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pacific McGeorge School of Law | | | | ✓ |
| Roger Williams University | | | | ✓ |
| Saint Louis University | | | | ✓ |

continued from previous page

| Law school | Certificate | Center | Clinic | Externship |
|---------------------------------|-------------|--------|--------|------------|
| Santa Clara University | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Seattle University | | | | ✓ |
| Southern Illinois University | | | | ✓ |
| St. John's University | | | | ✓ |
| Stanford Law School | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Stetson University | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| SUNY Buffalo Law School | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Texas Tech University | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Touro Law Center | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Tulane University | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| UC Berkeley School of Law | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| UC Davis Law | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| UCLA | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Colorado | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Connecticut | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| University of Denver | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Florida | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Hawaii | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Houston | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| University of Idaho | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| University of Maine | | | | ✓ |
| University of Maryland | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Miami | | | | ✓ |
| University of Minnesota | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
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| University of New Mexico | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
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| University of Pittsburgh | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Richmond | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| University of San Diego | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
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| University of Toledo | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| University of Utah | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Virginia | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| University of Wisconsin | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| University of Wyoming | | | | ✓ |
| Vermont Law School | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Washburn University | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Washington University | | | ✓ | |
| Wayne State University | | | ✓ | |
| West Virginia University | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Whittier Law School | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Widener Law, Delaware | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Widener Law, Harrisburg | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Willamette University | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| William & Mary Law School | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| William Mitchell College of Law | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| WMU-Cooley | | | | ✓ |

This list includes law schools that offer both a concentration and clinical opportunities and/or externships in the specialty. While some schools offer certificates, (a specific designation on the diploma) many do not as a matter of policy. A center is a grant-supported program with exclusive resources for the study of the subject matter.

to Israel and Jordan to work on Middle Eastern water issues.”

Law school officials say students should look for large and well-developed course offerings and a certificate program. When choosing a school for environmental law, make sure the law school has a strong general law program as well.

When evaluating schools, look for programs with rich externship, clinical and simulation opportunities, said Michelle Nowlin, supervising attorney of the Environmental Law and Policy Clinic at Duke University School of Law. The live client clinic covers an array of issues from water resources to endangered species. Students gain litigation, regulation and

policy-oriented skills.

“There is a seriousness to the clinical endeavor that really enhances the learning experiences and brings those lessons home,” she said. “You get real experience applying law on the books with real time consequences.”

Like other specializations, location can affect the number of externship and job opportunities available to students. But Wood said access to nature itself is critical for environmental law students.

“There’s a lot to be gained from immersing oneself in the culture of a location that dovetails with one’s interests,” she said. “Eugene has a complete dovetail with the environment.”

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Let's make a deal: Can you negotiate your scholarship to law school?

BY HILLARY MANTIS

Jane was offered a \$20,000 merit scholarship by Law School A. But she really wants to go to Law School B, which only offered her a \$10,000 scholarship. Can she negotiate with the admissions office at Law School B and ask the school to match her scholarship?

Conditions have rarely been better for applicants to negotiate. Applications are down. I've seen law schools offer all sorts of new programs to tempt people to apply. Some have extended deadlines. I've even seen several schools accepting June LSAT scores.

With more consumer power on their side, applicants have been expecting more. But there are limits. Can you negotiate with Admissions? Yes and no. It has to be done the right way. How can you effectively talk with them without alienating them?

Do you tell them what other schools have offered, or keep it to yourself? Should you call them, or is it better to email? Will you be alienating them by asking at all? When you are trying to make a good impression, it's hard to know where to draw the line.

I asked two assistant deans for admissions, Charles Roboski at Michigan State University College of Law and Barbara Weinzierl at The University of Akron School of Law, how they would suggest Jane approach admissions.

Here's their expert advice:

Weinzierl said it's fine to ask.

"We receive requests for reconsideration of scholarship offers all the time," she said. "Law schools have come to expect these requests so she should definitely negotiate."

She suggests applicants provide the details of their scholarship offers.

"Generally, students send an email to me, letting me know that they are very interested in Akron Law but that they have received larger scholarship offers from other schools. We then require them to send to us the other scholarship offers that they have received so we can verify these offers. Before doing this, though, your student should do her homework. Make sure she is truly comparing apples to apples: What is the total tuition at each of the schools? What is the requirement to renew her scholarship after her first year? (This should be in the American Bar Association Required Disclosures section of each law school's website). What is the overall reputation of the various schools, and their employment and bar passage rates?"

Roboski agrees that it's perfectly fine to approach admissions

about your scholarship award.

"I believe it's completely acceptable for an admitted candidate to ask about the possibility of aid or increased aid. While law schools generally try to offer the most competitive awards up front, it's also true that schools are making projections about the size and quality of their applicant pool, as well as the rate that admitted candidates will accept offers of admission and scholarship aid. Not all law schools will reconsider awards, but many will."

With all of the recent ups and downs in the admissions process, sometimes it can be hard for law schools to predict available funding.

"At Michigan State in the last two admission cycles, we have been able to increase dozens of awards because our projections were not on target and we had funds that we could redistribute."

Roboski cautions that it is crucial to approach Admissions politely.

"If an admitted candidate chooses to approach a law school for additional aid, it's best to make the request in such a way that it won't be seen as presumptuous or demanding," he said. "I'm not certain that it makes a difference as to the form of the request — phone, in person or email. The tone, however, should be deferential. The

prospective student requesting the aid should not be under the impression that they are negotiating, such as 'I'll commit to your school only if my award matches School X.'"

Roboski also suggests providing actual copies of awards letters the applicants have received from other schools. "At Michigan State Law, when an admitted candidate asks for scholarship reconsideration, we suggest that it could be helpful to provide copies of award letters from other schools. I think most people, certainly those on our scholarship committee, respond more favorably when they have specific information available."

So, with this excellent advice in mind, as you make your final law school decisions this spring, don't be afraid to politely negotiate.



HILLARY MANTIS consults with pre-law students, law students and lawyers. She is a director of the pre-law program at Fordham University and the author of "Alternative Careers for Lawyers." You can reach her at altcareer@aol.com.

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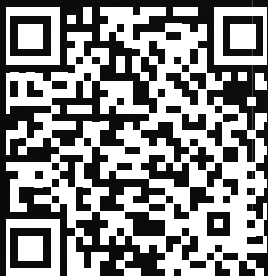
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