Annual Academic Assessment Report Cover Sheet

Assessment reports are due the 1st Wednesday after the Fall Term

Email to: assessment@unlv.edu

Program Information:

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<th>Juris Doctorate Degree</th>
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<td>College</td>
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<td>Department Chair</td>
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<td>Assessment Coordinator</td>
<td>Ngai Pindell</td>
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<td>Date Submitted</td>
<td>4/16/2016</td>
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Contact Person for This Report

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Please attach a narrative (not to exceed 4 pages, excluding appendices) addressing the following:

- What are the student learning outcomes? Please provide a numbered list.
- Which learning outcomes were assessed?
- How were they assessed? (Programs must use at least one direct assessment of student learning.)
- Undergraduate programs should assess at least one University Undergraduate Learning Outcome (UULO) each year, which may or may not overlap with a program learning outcome.
- Graduate programs should assess at least one outcome related to one of the following graduate level requirements each year:
  - student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression and/or appropriate high-level professional practice.
  - activities requiring originality, critical analysis and expertise.
  - the development of extensive knowledge in the field under study.

- What was learned from the assessment results?
- How did the program respond to what was learned?

Please limit the narrative portion of your report to no more than four pages. You may attach appendices with data, tables, charts, or other materials as needed. Please explain the relevant conclusions from any appendices in your narrative. Please contact the Office of Academic Assessment if you have questions or need assistance.
William S. Boyd School of Law  
2015 Academic Assessment Report – Juris Doctorate Degree

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Problem Solving  
2. Legal Analysis and Reasoning  
3. Legal Research  
4. Factual Investigation  
5. Communication  
6. Counseling  
7. Negotiation  
8. Litigation and Alternative Dispute Resolution Procedures  
9. Organization and Management of Legal Work  
10. Recognizing and Resolving Ethical Dilemmas

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

The law school curriculum requires students to complete eight foundational courses in the first year: Property, Torts, Civil Procedure, Criminal Law, Contracts, Constitutional Law, and two courses in Legal Writing. The courses in the first year curriculum assess all of the student learning outcomes in part, and successful completion of the first year courses is one indicator of successful attainment of these outcomes.

The law school’s elective courses and graduation requirements assess these learning outcomes with more precision and rigor in the students’ second and third years. These elective courses are designed to provide students with both breadth and depth. Some students may choose to master a specific topic by taking a number of courses in one area. For example, a student may take multiple courses in environmental law, health law, business law, or litigation. Other students may take a variety of courses in different areas or complementary areas to prepare themselves for a more generalized practice. For example, a student might take administrative law, health law, and immigration law in preparation for a career in regulatory compliance. The upper level curriculum supports either curricular pathway, and the electives as a whole focus on learning outcomes one through five (though some touch on outcomes six through ten). The law school has adopted four graduation requirements that focus more directly on learning outcomes six through ten: (1) a professional skills requirement, (2) a capstone writing requirement, (3) a third legal writing course, and (4) a professional responsibility course. Finally, the law school measures learning outcomes through performance on the Nevada bar examination and the results of a national Law School Student Survey Engagement (LSSSE).

(1) Professional Skills Requirement

Our Professional Skills Requirement assesses the Counseling, Negotiation, Litigation and Advanced Dispute Resolution, Organization and Management of Legal Work, and Ethics
student outcomes. All students must complete a professional skills course or courses, amounting to a minimum of two credit hours, before graduation. Courses should engage each student in skills performances that are assessed by the professor.

In 2015, the law school offered 43 professional skills courses with a total enrollment of 420 students (some students enrolled in more than one course). Students’ successful completion of these courses is one indicator of successful attainment of these outcomes.

(2) Capstone Writing Requirement

The Capstone Writing Requirement assesses the Legal Research and Written Communication learning outcomes. This Requirement can be satisfied by any analytical, intellectually rigorous law-related writing project that requires research, drafting, and revision and all law students must complete it before graduation.

(3) Legal writing course

Each student must complete a third legal writing course, Lawyering Process 3, after the first year. Though the substantive coverage of each course varies from securities law to advanced advocacy to rhetoric and persuasion, the course provides another opportunity for students to master legal communication and research learning outcomes. Completion of the legal writing course is one indicator of successful attainment of these learning outcomes.

(4) Professional responsibility course

A required course in professional responsibility assesses the ethics student learning outcome.

(5) Performance on the Nevada Bar Examination and LSSSE results

Performance on the Nevada Bar Examination assesses Problem Solving, Legal Analysis and Reasoning, Written Communication.

75% of first-time takers from the law school passed the October 2015 bar exam compared to 69% of first-time takers statewide.

Students also complete a Law School Survey of Student Engagement each year. In 2015, Boyd students ranked the law school favorably in three categories:

- Learning to think like a lawyer – the average ratings of first year law students was significantly higher than the ratings of students at other regional law schools.
- Student advising – the average ratings of first, second, and third year law students were significantly higher than the ratings of students at other regional law schools and substantial in magnitude.
• Law school environment - the average rating of third year law students were significantly higher than the ratings of students at other regional law schools and substantial in magnitude.