3L BAR EXAM INFORMATION WORKSHOP

***This is a basic overview of the bar application process, bar review courses, and bar loan information. It is not to be used in place of instructions provided by the Board of Law Examiners in your respective state. The Office of Career and Professional Development does not endorse any particular bar review course, product, or bar loan.***

University of Wisconsin Law School Office of Career and Professional Development
THE BAR EXAM

- Two or three days, depending on state
- The Exam:
  - Multistate Bar Exam (MBE)
  - Multistate (MEE) or State-Specific Essay Exam
  - Multistate Performance Test (MPT) or State-Specific Performance Test
MULTISTATE BAR EXAM

• A six-hour, 200 question multiple-choice examination covering Civil Procedure, Constitutional Law, Contracts, Criminal Law and Procedure, Evidence, Real Property, and Torts.

• Each jurisdiction determines its own policy with regard to the relative weight given to the MBE and other scores. (Jurisdictions that administer the UBE weight the MBE component 50%.)

• Used in ALL jurisdictions, EXCEPT: Louisiana & Puerto Rico.
ESSAY PORTION

- All states have some essay portion, but the number of questions and topics vary by state.
- The questions and model answers are usually written and graded by practitioners in that state.
- Multistate Essay Exam (MEE) used in the 30 jurisdictions.
MULTISTATE ESSAY EXAM

- Administered in all UBE jurisdictions and in 30 jurisdictions total, including Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Utah, and Washington.

- The MEE consists of six 30-minute questions covering the following topics:

- States who use the MEE may also create their own essay questions.
  - **BEWARE:** Even though the MEE is a multistate test, some states use it to test your knowledge of state law. While the questions are appropriate for any jurisdiction, your answers must be specific to state law. The guides usually used by the graders will be developed to specifically reflect state law.
  - BUT some states want MEE answers to be general jurisdiction, not state specific.
  - You will want to find out how your state administers the essay portion.
TIPS

• You can purchase MEE and MBE questions and model answers from www.ncbex.org. Also check law libraries in that state.

• Don’t just read the questions and answers!
  • Issue Spot
  • Draft your own answer and compare
  • Look for patterns of questions

• Maryland, Puerto Rico, and Wisconsin – No MPRE required, so you can usually count on a separate or embedded ethics question.
MULTISTATE PERFORMANCE TEST

- Two 90-minute skills questions covering:
  - Legal analysis, fact analysis, problem solving
  - Resolution of ethical dilemmas, communication
  - Organization and management of a lawyering task

- Administered in 41 jurisdictions, including Colorado, Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, and Ohio.

- Series of practical exercises in which you must perform tasks common for attorneys (e.g. memo, brief, client letter, wills).

- The MPT requires examinees to (1) sort detailed factual materials and separate relevant from irrelevant facts; (2) analyze statutory, case, and administrative materials for applicable principles of law; (3) apply the relevant law to the relevant facts in a manner likely to resolve a client’s problem; (4) identify and resolve ethical dilemmas, when present; (5) communicate effectively in writing; and (6) complete a lawyering task within time constraints.
Study tip: Gain easy points by paying attention to the assigned task.
- Is it a memo? Then put it in memo form. If it says lay it out for a client, put it in language as though you’re speaking to a client. If it says neutral memo, don’t overstate your case.

Each question includes a file and a library.
- The file contains a number of documents providing you with the relevant facts such as interviews, depositions, pleadings, correspondence, client documents, contracts, newspaper articles, medical records, police reports, and attorneys’ notes.
- The library provides legal materials such as statutes, rules, regulations, and case law. You must determine which legal principles are relevant, and apply those principles to the facts to resolve the client’s problem.

Each individual state grades the MPT. And if a state does not use the MPT, it may have its own version.
THE APPLICATION

- Where do you find it?
  - Most are online
  - For a few other states, you have to send in a written request and check w/fee.
- IMPORTANT: If required, did you submit your Law Student Registration as a 1L or 2L? If not, you MAY have to do it now. In some states you’ll pay a higher fee.
• **FEES**
  • Be aware of whether or not your state accepts personal checks. Some states require a bank cashier’s check or money order.
  • Some states now require a “Character and Fitness” investigation fee.
  • Laptop fees are common

• Know your deadline date. Fees go up with later deadlines.
• **NAME** – Must use legal name throughout process.
  • In some states, you must attach a copy of your Marriage Certificate (not license).
  • Other states, such as Oregon, have forms that you can fill out with updates.

• Some states require your LSAC # (You received it when you took the LSAT) If you don’t have it, there’s a website on the application where you can locate it.
APPLICATION ISSUES, CONT’D...

• **ADDRESSES**
  • Yes, include every address since age 18 or last 10 years, depending on the state, even if your permanent address was your parents’ house
  • Yes, include dorm addresses
  • Put in chronological order

• **TIPS**
  • Look at undergrad website, under Residence Life
  • Look at old mail in files
  • Call friends & family to look in their old address books
  • Look at old tax returns
APPLICATION ISSUES, CONT’D...

• **EMPLOYMENT**
  • Yes, include *every* job since age 18 or last 10 years, whichever is required—all those “I just needed money” jobs.
  • Don’t attach a resume unless requested.
  • Include volunteer positions and internships
  • For temp agency, include underlying jobs
  • You will need Employers’ Names & Addresses
    • Include most recent address
  • Give a reason for leaving (DON’T leave blank)
  • Explain employment gaps on application—“in school” or “unemployed”
APPLICATION ISSUES, CONT’D...

• Judicial & Administrative Proceedings, except criminal, bankruptcy and family issues (you’ll be asked about these later). These include, but are not limited to:
  • Car Accidents that were adjudicated
  • Small Claims, including landlord/tenant issues
  • You may have to attach documents (petition, answer and dispository orders)
CONFIDENTIAL QUESTIONS
- TIP: DISCLOSE, DISCLOSE, DISCLOSE!!
- Be honest, because serious repercussions if you are not, meaning delay in your Bar admission. If you disclosed something on your law school application, disclose it here, too.

- Includes child support/alimony, unsatisfied judgments and misconduct.
- Bad credit issues.
• Lack of candor is more of a concern than the fact that you haven’t led a perfect life.
  • “I didn’t think it was important enough.” Yes, it is.

• Nondisclosures follow you from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and from law school to bar authorities.

• If you disclosed something to the law school, disclose it to the Bar, too.
  • Many jurisdictions require you to submit a copy of your law school application. But you should disclose regardless!
Almost always, the state Bar wants you to disclose EVERYTHING but for parking tickets since the age of 18. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Seat belt violations, underage drinking, speeding, drug possession/sale, disorderly conduct, assault, domestic violence, disturbing the peace, etc.

Most states require that you disclose every occurrence, even if your record was sealed or expunged.

***Most states want you to provide a detailed explanation, NOT just a printout.***

If you’re unsure, check with the State Bar.
• Wisconsin court cases and speeding tickets are online at http://wcca.wicourts.gov/simpleCaseSearch.xsl
• After an exhaustive search, if you can’t find out-of-state tickets, explain the steps you took to locate them (checked online, called clerk of court, etc.)
• Call the Bar for more instructions.

AVOID:
AFFIDAVIT OF DEAN

- See Amy Arntsen on the 5th Floor.
- Give Amy your form – not the Dean!

Amy – Yes
AFFIDAVIT OF INTENT

• Some states (not all) require a Statement of Intent by Applicant – examples:
  • Job in that state – Give Details
  • Clients in that state
  • Family or own a home in that state – Give Details

• Persons who can verify your intentions - examples:
  • Supervisors or co-workers
  • Family
  • Mortgage Lender

• Some states, like Illinois & New York, require references.
MORE APPLICATION ISSUES

• **Signatures** – Your signature must be notarized in almost every state.

• **Non-Law Enforcement Record Check**
  • Be sure to sign WAIVERS and RELEASES.

• **Fingerprint Cards**
Transcripts - Some states require official copies

Accommodations
- Each state has a form that you must complete and send in if you are requesting special accommodations

Typing the Exam
- Most states have a form or a box to check if you are requesting to type the exam. There’s usually a fee for using Examsoft software.
- Most states have a laptop option.
- Make sure your laptop works. If it crashes during the exam, you will be required to finish by hand writing.
CALIFORNIA

- [http://admissions.calbar.ca.gov/](http://admissions.calbar.ca.gov/)
- Must register with State Bar
- Due April 1/ November 1
- Late filing with fees, but no later than January 15 and June 15.
- Law Student Registration Required
- $645, plus $525 for character and fitness
- $146 Laptop Fee
- MBE / Essay / MPRE
- 3 Day Exam
- 6 locally developed essay questions and 2 locally developed performance tests
ILLINOIS

- [https://www.ilbaradmissions.org/home](https://www.ilbaradmissions.org/home)
- Due February 15/ September 1
- Late filing with additional fees, but no later than December 31 for February exam and May 31 for July exam
- $950 without law student registration and on time/$500 with law student registration
- $100 Laptop Fee
- MBE / MEE / MPT / MPRE
- Illinois Essay Examination (IEE), consisting of 3 Illinois essay questions
- References required
MINNESOTA

- [http://www.ble.state.mn.us/bar-exam/](http://www.ble.state.mn.us/bar-exam/)
- Due March 15/ October 15
- Late apps with added fee accepted until May 1 for July exam and December 1 for February exam.
- Uniform Bar Exam
- $500 timely application fee/$100 laptop fee
- Signed passport photo
- Scaled score of 145 or higher accepted if achieved as part of and at the same time as the written bar exam of another jurisdiction, was obtained within 24 months of date of the qualifying exam, and applicant passed the exam and was admitted in that jurisdiction
NEW YORK

- http://www.nybarexam.org/TheBar/TheBar.htm
- April 30/ November 30
- Applications received between April 1 and 30 for July exam and between November 1 and 30 for February exam. No provision for late filing.
- $250 U.S. ABA-accredited / $750 foreign law school study
- $100 Laptop Fee
- MBE / MPT / NY Essay / MPRE
- “50 Hour Rule” – Pro Bono Requirement (Effective January 1, 2015)
- Require references
SPECIFIC STATES

- REST OF THE USA
  - Check out Comprehensive Guide to Bar Admission Requirements
  - Includes links to every jurisdictions’ bar admission websites

- See Emily with questions!
Many states require an MPRE score before you can file to take the Bar.

All jurisdictions require the MPRE for bar admission except: Wisconsin, Maryland, and Puerto Rico.

What if you can’t remember your score and can’t remember if you sent your score to the Bar?

https://secure.ncbex2.org/php/ncbe_number/views/home.php
BAR REVIEW COURSES

• Adaptibar [www.adaptibar.com](http://www.adaptibar.com)
• BarBri [www.barbri.com](http://www.barbri.com)
• MicroMash – Multistate Exams [www.micromash.net](http://www.micromash.net)
• Practising Law Institute – Multistate Exams - [www.pli.edu/barreview](http://www.pli.edu/barreview)
• Themis - [http://www.themisbar.com/](http://www.themisbar.com/)
BAR LOANS

- Compare interest rates and shop around
- Bar loans are private loans, so they may have higher interest rates.
LIFE CONSIDERATIONS

• Work vs. No Work
  • How did you do on law exams?
  • How are your time management skills?

• Give yourself some free time

• Do not get caught up in “Everyone is studying more than me”

• Don’t think about bar passage rates

• If allowed, come prepared to the exam with:
  • Earplugs, watch, aspirin/Tylenol, pens, pencils, Kleenex, mints, water, granola bar
  • Some jurisdictions (e.g., NY) only allow you to bring in what you can fit in a small Ziploc bag
  • Don’t eat anything for lunch that would give you an upset stomach
  • Wear layers. It may be hot outside, but freezing inside the building

• July v. February
DON’T GIVE UP! You could well be on the road to passing the exam. DON’T LEAVE!

- They’ve checked tests of people who gave up and left in the middle. Many had been passing up to the point they left.

- Give your best!