Title: Why the Bar Exam Blues?

Author: Katie Thisdell and Jack Crittenden

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Date Published: January 17, 2016

Synopsis: Many feel that the ABA standard requiring schools not to admit students who don’t “appear capable of satisfactorily completing their programs” boils down to not accepting students with low LSAT scores. However, others say that the LSAT measures success in law school, not on the bar exam.

Talking Points:

* Ave Maria School of Law was notified this summer that it was not in compliance with ABA standards, which was a surprise because 11 ABA accredited schools have bar passage rates lower than Ave Maria’s 59.1%
  + This happened because the Department of Education threatened to strip the ABA of accrediting powers after bar passage rates dropped nationwide from 79% in 2011 to 70% in 2015
  + The ABA appears focused on the low LSAT scores of Ave Maria, and other schools like it.
* John McClanahan, assistant dean of the North Carolina School of Law, says that the LSAT is “moderately predictive” of success in law school, and success in law school is “extremely predictive” of success on the bar exam. Class rank is the most important factor.
* Richard Gaffney of Duquesne University states, “give me a student with a 148 and I can get them to pass the bar if they’re disciplined. But a student who lacks discipline may come in with an LSAT score of 169 and still fail the bar”