

Academic Program Assessment Report

SAMPLE COMPLETED REPORT: Juris Doctor Program

School/College	School of Law
Department	Department of Law, Ethics & Public Policy
Degree Program	Juris Doctor
Program Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The program equips students with the foundational knowledge and skills necessary to advocate effectively across diverse legal contexts and practice areas. 2. The program encourages a lifelong commitment to justice, public interest, and service to underrepresented or marginalized communities. 3. The program integrates rigorous academic study with practical experience to prepare students for the complexities of modern legal practice. 4. The program prepares students for successful completion of the bar examination and for responsible entry into legal practice.
Program Learning Objective (PLO) Statements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will be able to explain the principles and fundamental areas of American law, such as civil procedures, torts, contracts, property, criminal law, constitutional law, evidence, business organizations, trusts and estates. 2. Students will analyze specific legal problems by synthesizing legal texts and principles. 3. Students will draft written documents such as memos, motions, and briefs using proper structure, tone, and citation format. 4. Students will present oral arguments that are clear, organized, and supported by legal authority.

Program Learning Objective 1: Students will be able to explain the principles and fundamental areas of American law, such as civil procedures, torts, contracts, property, criminal law, constitutional law, evidence, business organizations, trusts and estates.	
Location in Curriculum	LAW 101: Foundations of American Law
Assessment Approach	Criterion-based assessment
Assessment Data/Evidence/Method	Embedded questions on LAW 101 final exam
Benchmark	80% of students will score at least 75% or higher on targeted exam questions related to the fundamentals of American law.

Benchmark Rationale	A 75% score benchmark aligns with bar exam performance expectations on multiple choice sections. As an introductory course in the program, a lower benchmark is appropriate here as well to support students who are still developing in this area.
Results/Findings	Assessed in 2022-23: 71% of students will score at least 75% or higher on targeted exam questions related to the fundamentals of American law.
Actions/Improvements	The LAW 101 instructor plans to integrate low-stakes weekly quizzes on foundational law topics to help students prepare for the final exam.

Program Learning Objective 2: Students will analyze specific legal problems by synthesizing legal texts and principles.	
Location in Curriculum	LAW 420: Legal Analysis and Writing II
Assessment Approach	Criterion-based assessment
Assessment Data/Evidence/Method	Legal Memorandum Assignment
Benchmark	80% of students will score “Proficient” or higher on the “Analysis and Synthesis” portion of the assignment rubric.
Benchmark Rationale	Since synthesis of multiple sources to form an analytical framework is essential to the legal profession, a benchmark of 80% at “proficient” or higher ensures that the majority of students are competent in this skill.
Results/Findings	<p>Assessed in 2023-24: 83% of students achieved a score of “Proficient” or higher on the “Analysis and Synthesis” portion of the assignment rubric.</p> <p>Of those who met the benchmark, 50% exceeded the requirement and achieved “Advanced Proficiency.”</p> <p>Students who missed the mark showed common pitfalls, including an insufficient explanation of how case law applied to the presented facts.</p>
Actions/Improvements	Although students exceeded the benchmark, faculty will incorporate scaffolded synthesis exercises earlier in LAW 420 and provide students with anonymized exemplars of high quality analyses from prior years.

Program Learning Objective 3: Students will draft written documents such as memos, motions, and briefs using proper structure, tone, and citation format.	
Location in Curriculum	LAW 445: Appellate Advocacy
Assessment Approach	Criterion-based assessment
Assessment Data/Evidence/Method	Final Appellate Brief
Benchmark	80% of students will score “Proficient” or higher in all three rubric dimensions: (1) organization and structure, (2) tone and audience awareness, and (3) legal citation accuracy.
Benchmark Rationale	This benchmark is appropriate for advanced legal writing courses where students are preparing for real-world legal practice. Legal employers and the bar exam require consistent proficiency in written advocacy, so all three components must be demonstrated.
Results/Findings	Assessed in 2024-25: 81% of students met or exceeded the benchmark in all three rubric dimensions. Students struggled most with citation format, especially pinpoint citations. Structure and tone were stronger overall.
Actions/Improvements	LAW 445 instructors plan to include more targeted citation workshops and assign peer citation review during the drafting process.

Program Learning Objective 4: Students will present oral arguments that are clear, organized, and supported by legal authority.	
Location in Curriculum	LAW 475: Advanced Trial Practice
Assessment Approach	Performance-based assessment during a simulated courtroom setting.
Assessment Data/Evidence/Method	Final Oral Argument at Simulated Trial
Benchmark	90% of students will obtain a total oral argument score of 80% or better.
Benchmark Rationale	This benchmark aligns with the standards of bar admission expectations, where candidates must demonstrate fluent, well-reasoned oral advocacy grounded in legal precedent. The benchmark’s difficulty level is also appropriate given that this is an advanced course in the program and a summative assessment method.
Results/Findings	To be assessed 2025-26
Actions/Improvements	To be assessed 2025-26

Closing the Loop

Reflect on Prior Year Results & Actions: Did the changes lead to student learning improvements?

PLO	Results/Findings	Actions/Improvements	Reflection on Changes
PLO 1: Students will be able to explain the principles and fundamental areas of American law, such as civil procedures, torts, contracts, property, criminal law, constitutional law, evidence, business organizations, trusts and estates.	Assessed in 2022-23: 71% of students will score at least 75% or higher on targeted exam questions related to the fundamentals of American law.	The LAW 101 instructor plans to integrate low-stakes weekly quizzes on foundational law topics to help students prepare for the final exam.	While students initially complained about additional weekly assignments, many noted in the final course feedback evaluation that the weekly quizzes were helpful tools to practice reviewing this content. Upon more recent reassessment, 74% of students scored 75% or higher on the targeted questions, demonstrating the student body's progress on attaining this PLO.
PLO 2: Students will analyze specific legal problems by synthesizing legal texts and principles.	Assessed in 2023-24: 83% of students achieved a score of "Proficient" or higher on the "Analysis and Synthesis" portion of the assignment rubric. Of those who met the benchmark, 50% exceeded the requirement and achieved "Advanced Proficiency." Students who missed the mark showed common pitfalls, including an insufficient explanation of how case law applied to the presented facts.	Although students exceeded the benchmark, faculty will incorporate scaffolded synthesis exercises earlier in LAW 420 and provide students with anonymized exemplars of high quality analyses from prior years.	The process of selecting exemplars to share with students also sparked refinement of the rubric to better assess students' ability to integrate and explain relevant legal sources as it relates to the legal problem. The rubric is now clearer and more explicit about these requirements, and student submissions show improvement. Formal reassessment of this PLO will be conducted next year.

Additional Outcomes Data (OPTIONAL)	
Admissions Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average LSAT Score of Incoming Cohort: 154 • Median Undergraduate GPA of Incoming Cohort: 3.56
Graduation Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-year graduation rate: 87%
Retention Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 to Year 2 retention rate: 94% • Year 2 to Year 3 retention rate: 97%
Internship Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 88% of students complete an internship by the end of 2L year.
Career Placement Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 92% of graduates are employed in JD-required or JD-preferred roles within 1 year of graduation.
GPA Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Median final JD GPA: 3.42
Equity Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28% of the student body self-identify as URM. • 31% of the student body self-identify as a first-generation student. • Climate Survey: 77% of students of color feel “supported” or “very supported” by faculty
Inclusive Teaching Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of full-time faculty have completed inclusive teaching pedagogy training. • 60% of part-time faculty have completed inclusive teaching pedagogy training.
Faculty Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty-to-student advising ratio: 1:15
Research Productivity Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 64 faculty publications in peer-reviewed or legal journals in the past academic year.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bar exam pass rate (first attempt): 89%
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni satisfaction: 93% report satisfaction with program preparation for legal practice one year after graduation.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average pro bono hours per student at graduation: 58 hours