

# Licensure Pass Rate Improvement Plans

## COLLEGE OF LAW

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FAMU Board of Trustees  
Special Committee on the Law College  
September 22, 2020



- Program Overview
- Key Performance Indicators
- Admissions / Retention
- Curriculum
- Externship Data
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- Accredited by the American Bar Association, Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar (ABA).  
*Must respond to Standard 316 letter by February 1, 2021.*
- Number of full-time faculty: 35
- Enrollment: 475
- Graduates/year: Three - year average (2017-2019) - 133

# Key Performance Indicators

Metric	Rationale for Use	Current Data		Goal	Trend
<b>Admissions</b>					
<b>LSAT (median)</b>	LSAT scores are correlated with Bar passage rates. COL scores are significantly lower than peers.	<u>FAMU</u> Fall 2020: <b>147</b> Fall 2019: 146 Fall 2018: 146	<u>SUS Peers</u> Fall 2020: TBD Fall 2019: 160 Fall 2018: 159.6	Fall 2021: 148 Fall 2022: 150	
<b>UG GPA (Median)</b>	Undergraduate GPAs are correlated with Bar passage rates. COL scores are significantly lower than peers.	<u>FAMU</u> Fall 2020: <b>3.26</b> Fall 2019: 3.11 Fall 2018: 3.09	<u>SUS Peers</u> Fall 2020: TBD Fall 2019: 3.71 Fall 2018: 3.66	<u>FAMU</u> Fall 2021: 3.30 Fall 2022: 3.35 Fall 2023: 3.40	
<b>Size of Entering Cohort</b>	Reducing the size of the cohorts will allow the COL to be more selective in admissions and increase the efficacy of resources allocated for instruction and academic support.	<u>FAMU</u> Fall 2020: <b>115</b> Fall 2019: 209 Fall 2018: 193		Fall 2020: 130 Fall 2021: 130 Fall 2022: 130	
<b>Retention</b>					
<b>Median GPA of First-Year Fall Cohort</b>	First-year GPA is strongly correlated with Bar passage rates (most Bar content is taught in first year of the law school curriculum).	<u>First Semester</u> 2019: 2.48 2018: 2.51 2017: 2.42	<u>First Year</u> 2019-20: TBD 2018-19: 2.55 2017-18: 2.44	Increase the number of students at or below the median utilizing support resources.	
<b>Non-Academic Attrition Rates</b>	Measures the percentage of students in good standing who leave COL after the first year (many are recruited by other law schools)	2019-20: 4.62% 2018-19: 8.8% 2017-18: 10.1% 2016-17: 9.8%		2020-21: <5%	
<b>Bar Exam Preparation and Outcomes</b>					
<b>Diagnostic Exam</b>	A diagnostic exam is administered to students after completion of the foundational curriculum to assess mastery of content that will be tested on the bar exam (Barbri product).	<u>Cohort Composite Score</u> 2020: 49.0% 2019: 51.5% 2018: 48.6%		TBD	
<b>Bar Exam</b>	The Bar Exam is administered two times per year. Students typically perform worse on the February exam.	<u>February</u> 2019: 45.5% 2018: 36.7% 2017: 46.2%	<u>July</u> 2019: 61.1% 2018: 50.6% 2017: 51.3%	2020: 70% 2021: 75% 2022: 80%	

- Students begin the program once annually, during the fall semester.
- Application Window: October 1 – May 31.
- National application platform – Law School Admissions Council
- Improving the quality of incoming cohorts:
  - Build the pipeline out of FAMU and other HBCUs by providing LSAT prep, reinvigorating / expanding the 3 + 3 program
  - Provide competitive funding to students both in and out of state

Year	Total applicants	Total Acceptances	1st Year Enrolled Students	Acceptance Rate	Yield Rate
2017	1247	659	219	52.85%	33.23%
2018	1230	602	187	48.94%	31.06%
2019	1204	604	210	50.17%	34.77%

- Fall 2020 beginning cohort provided with guaranteed scholarships as long as they maintain a 2.7 GPA
- Students with low entering credentials who excel in law school will also be provided with retention scholarships out of the \$1M provided to the College
- The Academic Standards Committee has been charged with considering the various models for supporting students in danger of failing the bar to bar success/first-time passage and recommending a model to the faculty

## FULL-TIME FOUNDATIONAL CURRICULUM

First Year - Fall	
Courses	Credit Hours
Civil Procedure	4
Criminal Law	3
Introduction to Analytical Skills I	1
Legal Research and Writing I	3
Torts	4

<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>15</b>
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First Year - Spring	
Courses	Credit Hours
Contracts	4
Introduction to Analytical Skills II	1
Legal Research and Writing II	3
Property	4
Constitutional Law I	3

<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>15</b>
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## PART-TIME FOUNDATIONAL CURRICULUM

Fall Semester	
Courses	Credit Hours
Contracts	4
Introduction to Analytical Skills I	1
Legal Research and Writing I	3

<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>8</b>
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Spring Semester	
Courses	Credit Hours
Civil Procedure	4
Criminal Law	3
Introduction to Analytical Skills II	1
Legal Research and Writing II	3

<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>11</b>
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2 <sup>nd</sup> Fall Semester	
Courses	Credit Hours
Constitutional Law I	3
Property	4
Torts	4

<b>Total Credits</b>	<b>11</b>
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### Other Requirements:

Business Organizations

Evidence

Professional Responsibility

Upper-Level Writing

Requirement

Curriculum: 90 credits over 6 (full-time) / 9 (part-time) semesters

- 6 experiential (defined by the ABA as Clinical, Field Placement or Simulation) credits required

- A cumulative GPA of 2.0 must be maintained.

# Externship Data

<u>Externship Site Type</u>	Summer 2018	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Summer 2019	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Summer 2020	Fall 2020
Private Firm	76	21	35	15	15	18	27	25
Legal Aid/Legal Services/Non-Profit	8	3	2		1	1	3	1
Public Defender	6	1	1	2				1
State Attorney Office	1		1		5	4	2	
Private Corporation	11	1	3		3	2	6	1
FL State Agency/Institution	8	2	2			2	2	1
FL Local Government/Agency			1	1			1	
Court Services	2					1		
Local Government/Agency - Out of State	1							
Federal Criminal Defense	2		1		2		1	
Federal Prosecution	2	1						2
Federal Agency	6		1	1			2	
Judicial Clerkship – State	5	3		4	1	1	2	
Judicial Clerkship – Federal			1				3	

## Key Strategies for Improvement:

- Hire a permanent Director of Legal Clinics and Field Placement Program
- Enhance relationships with area employers in order to institutionalize and render consistent externship opportunities



## 1. Year 1: Pre-matriculation Preparedness

- Invite all students below a 146 LSAT to participate in SCALE
  - Considering revamping SCALE to require attendance by those below a 146 and focusing on recruiting SCALE students with UGPAs above the prior year's median
- Provide all students with Lawyering Fundamentals / Foundations

## 2. Diagnostic after Foundational Curriculum:

- The Diagnostic is designed to provide students with an individualized assessment tool and corresponding feedback
- The Diagnostic is a three-hour exam with 120 questions covering subject matter covered in the foundational curriculum and tested on the bar exam
  - Considering adding an essay portion to the diagnostic in order to more closely mirror the bar
- Students receive an individualized report identifying strengths and weaknesses in skills and knowledge
- The vendor provides:
  - A workshop for students including strategies for enhanced performance
  - A review and discussion of the cohort results to the faculty
- Going forward, the diagnostic will be utilized to advise students about upper-level curricular choices

The College's bar preparation program begins at admission and continues until the graduate is successful on the bar exam. The program includes:

- SCALE
- Foundations
- Introduction to Analytical Skills
- Advanced Analytical Skills
- 3L Mastery Outlines / Barbri Online Question bank
- Campaign One and Done
  - Adaptibar
  - Kaplan / PMBR
- BEST Program
  - making sure all students have access to the requisite resources
  - assisting students in developing study plans
  - monitoring resource usage
  - providing reminders and incentives for use
  - workshops on MC strategies and essay writing
    - \* these are being enhanced in collaboration with LRW
  - subject-specific workshops developed in coordination with doctrinal faculty that cover each bar subject
- Campaign Raise the Bar provides support for retakers including: (1) a three day workshop with Jonathan Grossman, (2) access to Adaptibar and Kaplan / PMBR resources and (3) BEST Program

**Evaluation:** The University process for evaluating faculty has not been undertaken in several years. My plan is to meet with every member of the full-time faculty this semester to set goals for the year in line with the College's priorities including (1) recruiting and retaining more highly qualified students; (2) improving bar success; (3) improving placement outcomes; and (4) community engagement. At the end of the academic year I will evaluate each member of the faculty in light of their articulated goals.

## **Training**

While the College has provided intermittent opportunities for faculty development, a more comprehensive approach, focused specifically on best practices in pedagogy for institutions serving similarly credentialed student bodies to ours is needed. Some topics to be covered include:

- Writing valid and reliable multiple choice questions
- Integrating formative assessments into the law classroom
- Integrating skills into doctrinal teaching

## **The relevant faculty development initiatives which have taken place recently at the College include:**

- A workshop conducted by Laurie Zimet who discussed teaching methods, strategies, and student learning in the context of improving bar passage rates (November 2019)
- Michael Sims of Barbri presented the results of the longitudinal study the College had commissioned (Spring 2020)
- Canvas Training (Summer 2020)

## **Barry Currier**

- Agreement under review for final approval
- Engagement begins immediately and runs through May 2021
- Deliverables include:
  - \* Comprehensive report
  - \* Monthly one-on-one status meetings with Chair Perry

## Scope of work:

- Provide a comprehensive review of the College's academic and non-academic functions to identify areas of strength for further development and areas of weakness, which would require retooling, reinvigorating, or reimagining.
  - This analysis will be used to inform the College's strategic planning processes.
  - Most immediately, the analysis will be deployed to address the College's bar passage challenges.
  - Ultimately, this analysis will be utilized as a key element to chart the College's way forward to a sustainable future in which the College is recruiting, enrolling, and supporting to bar and career success, a cohort of students in line with its important access mission.
- The consultant will provide a comprehensive, big-picture, data-driven analysis that will serve as a starting point for that important, future-facing project.

## Peers

1	Florida International University (SUS)	6	North Carolina Central University (HBCU)
2	University of Florida (SUS)	7	Southern University Law Center (HBCU)
3	Florida State University (SUS)	8	Texas Southern University (HBCU)
4	Barry University (Orlando)	9	University of the District of Columbia (HBCU)
5	Howard University (HBCU)	10	St. Thomas University (Florida)

- The former Interim Dean consulted with Florida International University regarding. As a result of that contact the College engaged bar expert Johnathan Grossman who provided a three-day workshop for FAMU Law graduates intended to optimize bar study (2019)
- The College has existing relationships with peer schools at the decanal level and various administrative levels and will continue to utilize those relationships to address specific issues such as recruitment and retention, bar pass best practices, and the like.

	<b>Pass Rate</b>
1st Time Test Takers -FAMU	58.33%
1st Time Test Takers from Comparison Schools	<b>Pass Rate</b>
	69.27%

# Questions?



## FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1887 as the State Normal College for Colored Students, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) is the only historically state supported educational facility for African Americans in Florida. It has always been co-educational. In 1890, the second Morrill Act was passed. This enabled the school to become the Black Land Grant College for the State of Florida. west of its original location