

UO School of Law Assessment Plan

Last year, we adopted performance measures for each of our eight learning outcomes. ABA Standard 315 requires us to “conduct ongoing evaluation of the law school’s program of legal education, learning outcomes, and assessment methods.”¹

Next Steps

The next step is for us to adopt an assessment plan and a timeline for evaluating our efforts. To do this work we will need to set a schedule for evaluating learning outcomes. Option 1 has us working through all eight learning outcomes before our next site visit. Option 2 has us evaluating all the ABA-mandated learning outcomes before the next site visit. The data gathering will be our annual process and the assessment work can occur in a cycle where not every learning outcome is evaluated every year.

Annual Data Collection Process

Fall

- In late August, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs meets with the Chair of Outcomes and Assessments to share the data that has been collected with regard to the learning outcome being evaluated.
- Through September and October, the Assessments and Outcomes Committee (AOC) evaluates the data and discusses possible implications.
- In November, the AOC submits a report to DFAC summarizing their findings, any suggested changes to the learning outcomes or performance measures, and possible implications.

Spring

- In January, DFAC reports out to faculty and facilitates discussion on possible implications, leading to the actionable items for the academic year.
- Through February – April, the AOC works to forward the actionable items identified by the faculty.
- In May, the AOC captures the academic year’s activities in the UO Departmental Annual Report.

Schedule for Evaluating Learning Outcomes

<i>Academic Year</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Learning Outcome</i>
AY 19-20	AOC gathers data and evaluates	Learning Outcomes 1-2
AY 20-21	AOC gathers data and evaluates <i>Prepare report for ABA site visit.</i>	Learning Outcomes 3-4
AY 21-22	AOC gathers data and evaluates <i>ABA Site Visit</i>	Learning Outcomes 5-6
AY 22-23	AOC gathers data and evaluates	Learning Outcomes 7-8
AY 23-24	AOC gathers data and evaluates	Learning Outcomes 1-2
AY 24-25	AOC gathers data and evaluates	Learning Outcomes 3-4
AY 25-26	AOC gathers data and evaluates	Learning Outcomes 5-6
AY 26-27	AOC gathers data and evaluates	Learning Outcomes 7-8

¹ ABA Standard 315 “The dean and the faculty of a law school shall conduct ongoing evaluation of the law school’s program of legal education, learning outcomes, and assessment methods; and shall use the results of this evaluation to determine the degree of student attainment of competency in the learning outcomes and to make appropriate changes to improve the curriculum.” Available at https://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_education/resources/standards/.

UO School of Law Assessment Plan Appendix

Purpose

The goal of the UO School of Law assessment activities is to regularly examine performance measures associated with our adopted learning outcomes and to evaluate iterative improvement in a consistent, conscious, and curious manner, consistent with ABA Standards 301, 302, 314, 315.²

Guiding Principles

Early in the process, we discussed a set of guiding principles for our work.

- There is value in being intentional in our teaching and student learning and in thinking clearly about our academic mission.
- We need to capture what we are doing and regularly assess the impact of our offerings on student performance.
- Faculty members may have differences in how they want to teach and engage in the learning outcomes and assessment process. We do not all have to do the same things, but it is worth coordinating our efforts.
- Collaboration is key. This process has to take into account costs, including the opportunity costs of faculty time. We want to avoid needless bureaucratization and standardization. The process should rely heavily on disclosure to students rather than mandates to faculty.
- We will benefit from and increase efficiency by aligning our annual process with annual ABA and UO Departmental reporting obligations.

Learning Outcomes

As a community, we have adopted eight learning outcomes listed below.

The University of Oregon School of Law expects that our graduates should be able to:

- (1) demonstrate the knowledge and ability necessary to practice substantive and procedural law and to understand the dynamic processes through which law is created, developed, and changed.
- (2) employ sound and articulate legal reasoning to identify, research, and analyze legal problems.
- (3) engage in and appreciate the importance of their professional and ethical responsibilities towards clients, the local community, our nation, and the world.
- (4) communicate effectively with clients, decision makers, and other relevant stakeholders.
- (5) recognize the responsibility of lawyers to serve as informed and professional leaders.
- (6) understand and appreciate diversity, equity, and inclusion as components of their personal and professional success.
- (7) appreciate the critical role that lawyers play in ensuring meaningful access to the legal system, promoting the just application of its laws, and serving their clients and the community.
- (8) understand the interrelationship between the creation, development, reform, and practice of law, the natural and social sciences, the humanities, and the arts.

² ABA Standards, Chapter 3, available at https://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_education/resources/standards/.

Performance Indicators and Performance Measures

Over the last two years, we have further elaborated and articulated performance indicators and performance measures for each learning outcome. The definitions, performance indicators, and performance measures below were adopted by the law faculty last May.

Learning Outcome #1

The University of Oregon School of Law expects that our graduates should be able to demonstrate the knowledge and ability necessary to practice substantive and procedural law and to understand the dynamic processes through which law is created, developed, and changed.

- 1.1 Understand, recall, and apply substantive law, including specialized terminology, fundamental principles and core legal concepts, appropriate doctrinal rules or framework, exceptions, and relevant defenses.
- 1.2 Understand, recall, and apply procedural law, including the structures and institutions of the legal system, applicable procedural rules or frameworks, and exceptions thereto.
- 1.3 Appreciate the dynamic processes through which law is created, developed and changed.

Students will demonstrate achievement of this learning outcome by doing the following:

- Completing degree requirements.
- Completing pre-graduation employment that involves substantive or procedural law.
- Completing a bar preparation course.
- Participating in or observing law or policy reform initiatives.
- Participating in student law journals.

Institutional efforts and opportunities to facilitate this learning outcome include:

- Providing a rigorous curriculum taught by knowledgeable faculty and practitioners.
- Academic Excellence Program.
- LRW and ACE Tutor Programs.
- Funding student bar preparation course through tuition.
- Supporting student law journals.
- Providing opportunities for students to observe or participate in law reform measures, through their classes, externships, and co-curricular opportunities.

Performance Measures

- Grades in law school courses.
- Performance on the bar exam.
- Employment in JD-required or JD-preferred positions.

Learning Outcome #2

The University of Oregon School of Law expects that our graduates should be able to employ sound and articulate legal reasoning to identify, research, and analyze legal problems.

- 2.1. Identify Legal Problems: spotting issues.
- 2.2. Research Legal Problems: locating relevant primary and secondary authority; marshalling relevant evidence.
- 2.3. Analyze Legal Problems: carefully and critically reading primary and secondary authorities to ascertain and explain their relevance, validity, and meaning; identifying key facts that satisfy or undermine the elements of legal claims or defenses; evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of legal arguments; synthesizing, summarizing, questioning, and applying legal principles and policies.

Students will demonstrate achievement of this learning outcome by doing the following:

- Completing law school examinations.
- Completing six credits of Legal Research and Writing.
- Completing a rigorous, faculty-supervised writing experience that demonstrates extensive research, analysis, original thought, organization, thorough editing, and a sound understanding of the topic.
- Engaging in class.
- Collaborating with peers in small groups inside and outside of class.
- Discussing course materials with professors and tutors outside of class.
- Supporting peers' analysis as tutors and peer research librarians.
- Participating in clinics and externships.
- Working as research assistants.

Institutional efforts and opportunities to facilitate this learning outcome include:

- Encouraging students to pursue voluntary legal research projects by writing research papers and publishable pieces; enrolling in advanced research courses; working as research assistants; and participating in moot court competitions.
- Creating opportunities for students to engage in such research and analysis.
- Incentivizing teaching methods that increase opportunities for all students to participate in classroom dialogue and to receive meaningful feedback regarding issue identification and analysis skills.
- Academic Excellence Program.
- LRW and ACE Tutor Programs.
- Law Library Peer Research Assistants Program.
- Supporting student law journals.

Performance Measures

- Bar passage rates.
- MPRE passage rates.
- Data from bar preparation providers (% of completion data and quality of performance).
- Grades.
- Participation in, and completion of, clinics and externships.
- Tracking performance on interim hypotheticals, quizzes, examinations, research projects, group projects, and drafting projects.
- Feedback from externship supervisors and employers.

Learning Outcome #3

The University of Oregon School of Law expects that our graduates should be able to engage in and appreciate the importance of their professional and ethical responsibilities towards clients, the local community, our nation, and the world.

Students will demonstrate achievement of this learning outcome by doing the following:

- Completing Legal Profession, the law school's professional responsibility degree requirement.
- Passing the MPRE.
- Conducting legal research on issues related to legal ethics.
- Completing the upper-level writing requirement on ethics-related topics.
- Working as Research Assistant on projects involving legal ethics.
- Participating in clinics or externships that include instruction in legal ethics.
- Participating in professional responsibility aspects of law school orientation.

Institutional efforts and opportunities to facilitate this learning outcome include:

- Discussing issues of legal ethics and professionalism in courses beyond the Legal Profession course, including the idea of lawyers as officers of the court, and their obligation to promote the rule of law.
- Supporting student groups in organizing and sponsoring events related to professional responsibility.
- Including professionalism in law school orientation.

Performance Measures

- Grades in the Legal Profession course.
- Successful passage rates of MPRE.
- Rates of participation in law school events discussing professional ethics.
- Graduates' discipline and disbarment rates.

Learning Outcome #4

The University of Oregon School of Law expects that our graduates should be able to communicate effectively with clients, decision makers, and other relevant stakeholders.

4.1 Producing written communication that is clear, concise, and appropriate to the audience and context:

- Making appropriate judgments with respect to tone, thoroughness, relevance and focus.
- Organizing the document in an order and format suitable to the audience and context.
- Applying correct rules of grammar and spelling.
- Using proper citation format in all documents.

4.2 Employing professional oral communication skills appropriate to various contexts such as interviewing, counseling, negotiation, mediation, arbitration, formal advocacy, and legal project management:

- Speaking in a manner appropriate to the audience and context.
- Practicing active listening and empathy to determine audience needs and them appropriate response.
- Employing self-awareness and management, social awareness, and relationship management when communicating with various audiences.

Students will demonstrate achievement of this learning outcome by successfully doing the following:

- Completing courses that teach interpersonal or communication skills.
- Completing the experiential learning requirement.
- Completing six credits of Legal Research and Writing.
- Completing the writing requirement.
- Participating in clinics and externships.
- Participating in events and groups that focus on developing communication skills.

Institutional efforts and opportunities to facilitate this learning outcome include the following:

- Providing a robust curriculum for teaching communication skills.
- Facilitating and coaching moot court competitions.
- Facilitating and coaching mediation and negotiation competitions.
- Providing classroom simulations and role plays.
- Providing guidance and feedback in classroom settings.
- Providing guidance and feedback through the Career Center.

Performance Measures

- Grades in experiential and writing courses.
- Grades in Legal Research and Writing.
- Enrollment and performance in upper level courses that teach interpersonal and communication skills.
- Feedback from the Career Center.
- Feedback from employers and prospective employers.
- Feedback from clinic and externship supervisors.
- Bar passage rate.

Learning Outcome #5

The University of Oregon School of Law expects that our graduates should be able to recognize the responsibility of lawyers to serve as informed and professional leaders.

Students will demonstrate achievement of this learning outcome by successfully doing the following:

- Assuming a formal leadership position at the law school, on the wider campus, or in the community (e.g. student bar association, public interest, community board).
- Completing a course in leadership at the law school, or offered elsewhere on campus.
- Completing courses that examine and discuss the leadership-related roles and responsibilities of lawyers.
- Completing a course in professional responsibility.
- Researching and writing on a leadership-related topic for their writing requirement.
- Modeling professional behavior among peers and colleagues.
- Participating in externships and clinics.
- Membership in a civic organization.
- Participating in the Frohnmayer Leadership Program.

Institutional efforts and opportunities to facilitate this learning outcome include the following:

- Providing opportunities for students to receive mentoring by alumni and other lawyers in the community.
- Maintaining the Frohnmayer Leadership Program.
- Inviting students to participate or attend community events and educational programs where administrators, faculty, or attorneys serve a leadership role.
- Encouraging faculty to provide opportunities for students to make presentations, work in teams and groups, and facilitate discussions.

Performance Measures

- Number of students appointed or elected to leadership roles in campus or national organizations, as reported by students in the climate survey.
- Student participation in Frohnmayer Leadership Program.
- Enrollment in courses with leadership-related content.

Learning Outcome #6

The University of Oregon School of Law expects that our graduates should be able to understand and appreciate diversity, equity, and inclusion as components of their personal and professional success.

Dimensions of diversity, equity and inclusion include, without limitation, race, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socio-economic status, and political ideology.

- 6.1 Thoughtfully engage in discussions on legal questions that implicate socially contested issues, including the ability to:
- Listen and demonstrate understanding;
 - Identify, articulate, and assess the strength of arguments;
 - Challenge, correct, respond, or concur; and
 - Provide and consider social and historical context.
- 6.2 Articulate the social and historical context that influence legal rules and contemporary debates, such as:
- the influence of cultural assumptions, cultural differences, and cultural rights on current and historical legal structures and disputes;
 - the history of power, privilege and biases based on race, ethnicity, socio-economic class, nationality, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, age, mental or physical disability, immigration status, history of incarceration, or membership in a disadvantaged or underrepresented group; and
 - current forms of discrimination, oppression or systemic bias.
- 6.3 Evaluate the ways in which the application of law achieves or fails to achieve equity, inclusion, or other aspects of social justice.

Students will demonstrate achievement of this learning outcome by successfully doing the following:

- Completing the law school's diversity course requirement.
- Enrolling in courses addressing diversity as a significant component of the covered materials.
- Completing the writing requirement on a diversity, equity or inclusion-related topic.
- Working as Research Assistant on projects examining equity-related issues.
- Participating in class discussions that involve socially contested issues or social, cultural and historical context.
- Participating in moot court competitions that involve socially contested issues or implicate social, cultural and historical context.
- Participating in clinics or externships whose primary concern involves social justice and equity.
- Completing the Legal Profession course.

Institutional efforts and opportunities to facilitate this learning outcome include the following:

- Implementing the law school's diversity course requirement.
- Developing robust course offerings that satisfy the diversity requirement.
- Facilitating class discussions that engage socially contested issues or provide social, cultural and historical context.
- Sponsoring and organizing events that engage socially contested issues or provide social and historical context.
- Supporting student affinity groups.
- Hiring and supporting a Director of Diversity, Inclusion and Leadership Development.

Performance Measures

- Grades in courses that satisfy the law school's diversity course requirement.
- Rates of participation in law school events that involve socially contested issues or implicate social, cultural and historical context.
- Responses to student climate survey.

Learning Outcome #7

The University of Oregon School of Law expects that our graduates should be able to appreciate the critical role that lawyers play in ensuring meaningful access to the legal system, promoting the just application of its laws, and serving their clients and the community.

Students will demonstrate achievement of this learning outcome by successfully doing the following:

- Participating in 1L Orientation, which includes professionalism programming.
- Completing 1L professional planning program.
- Completing Legal Profession course during 2L or 3L year.
- Completing other doctrinal courses that incorporate this learning outcome, for example, by including information about the need, opportunities, and strategies for law reform; public interest attorneys and private attorney general; and client-centered lawyering.
- Participating in clinics, externships (including judicial externships), and simulation-based courses.
- Interacting with formal and informal mentors who are members of the bench and bar.
- Working or volunteering for legal services organizations.
- Attending extracurricular events on access to justice and related topics.

Institutional efforts and opportunities to facilitate this learning outcome include the following:

- Giving the Outstanding Pro Bono Service Awards.
- Giving the Nicole Richardson Outstanding Public Service Award.
- Inviting guest speakers and sponsoring or planning special events involving access to justice.
- Creating and facilitating formal mentor-matching programs.
- Promoting clinics and externships.
- Supporting student organizations, including Oregon Law Student Public Interest Fund.

Performance Measures

- Law student pro bono hours.
- Participation in mentoring programs.
- Grades in courses that incorporate this learning outcome.
- Enrollment and performance in clinics and externships.
- Applications for public interest professional opportunities.
- Attendance at events relating to access to justice and related topics.

Learning Outcome #8

The University of Oregon School of Law expects that our graduates should be able to understand the interrelationship between the creation, development, reform, and practice of law, the natural and social sciences, the humanities, and the arts.

The threshold for “significant focus” is defined as:

- One of more readings that explores a concept, theory, or framework from another discipline
- A course level learning outcome that explores a concept, theory, or framework from another discipline
- A portion of the student assessment is related to demonstrating understanding of a concept, theory, or framework from another discipline

Students will demonstrate achievement of this learning outcome by doing the following:

- Completing dual degrees.
- Enrolling in relevant courses offered by other units at the university.
- Enrolling in law courses, clinics, or internships/externships in which a significant focus* of the covered materials consists of materials from other disciplines.
- Working on interdisciplinary research projects for at least twenty hours, including as a research assistant or a fellow.
- Writing interdisciplinary research papers.

Institutional efforts and opportunities to facilitate this learning outcome include:

- Encouraging participation in scholarly events organized by other university units.
- Encouraging participation in interdisciplinary scholarly events organized by the law school.

Performance Measures

- Events relevant to learning outcome
- Concurrent degree students
- Enrollment in courses in other units at UO or at another University
- Annual Student Survey
 - To what extent do you think law depends on other discipline?
 - In which of your classes?
 - Research papers?
 - What did you attend?
- Annual Faculty Survey
 - Do you teach any of your courses in a way that satisfies or approximates this learning outcome?
 - Do you engage in interdisciplinary research and hire research assistants or fellows?
 - What interdisciplinary opportunities did you make available to your students?

Learning Outcomes and Assessments Resources

Learning Outcomes and Assessments page on MyLaw: <https://mylaw.uoregon.edu/academic-affairs/learning-outcomes-assessment>

Learning Outcomes and Assessments Research Guide: <http://researchguides.uoregon.edu/learning-outcomes-and-assessment>