

# Syllabus

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**Course Title:** Bar Exam Skills and Tactics

**Course Number:** WRI 7352

**Teaching Professor:** Jessica Durkis-Stokes

**Course Description:** Skills-development course designed to provide students with the analytical, test-taking, writing, and study skills that are critical to students' success on the bar exam and in the practice of law. The course consists of an intensive substantive and analytical review of major multistate bar exam subjects and of numerous writing and practice assignments.

**Course Credits:** 3

**Required Textbooks:**

Clearing the Last Hurdle, 2nd Ed, Wanda Temm (2017) – ISBN: 9781454892250

Critical Pass MBE FlashCards - <https://criticalpass.com/products/critical-pass-mbe-flashcards>

***Optional Materials***

Strategies & Tactics for the MBE, 7th Ed, Steven Emanuel (2019) – ISBN: 978-1543805727

## Learning Information

### Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Discover the structure and application process for the bar exam in your jurisdiction by completing “My Bar Exam” Information Sheet.
- Develop the skills to answer bar style multiple choice and essay questions through completing practice questions with feedback.
- Test your understanding of highly tested substantive areas through completing practice questions with feedback.
- Create study tools that you will be able to use during bar study.
- Devise a plan for creating the time and structure needed to succeed on the bar exam through completion of summer calendar and review of bar prep company schedule.

## Instruction and Evaluation Activities

A variety of learning activities are designed to support the course objectives, facilitate different learning styles, and build a community of learners. Learning activities for each module include the following:

### Methods of Instruction | Readings and Multimedia

This course will use a variety of instructional materials including journal articles, reports, content from web sites, and videos on a variety of topics.

## Methods of Instruction | Interaction and Discussions

Discussions will be a major tool of communication and interaction in this program, specifically in conjunction with your mind map assignments.

## Methods of Evaluation | Writing Assignments, Projects, and Assessments

Assignments in this course include a multitude of mind mapping assignments and associated discussion forms, along with questions sets and quizzes based on the MBE, MME and MPT question styles. Additionally, some MBE and MEE submissions will also have a corresponding discussion board to discuss the material covered.

## Due Dates

Due dates for all instructional and evaluation activities are provided in the **Course Schedule**.

## Grading Policy

Each student's academic standing is determined at the end of each semester and at the end of the academic year in accordance with the following grading system and in accordance with the Academic Standards in the [Student Handbook](#):

All assignments in this course are graded on a 0-10 point scale.

- 10 = Assignment completed on-time and in-full. Responses were thoughtful and represented a good faith effort.
- 5 = Assignment submitted late (at professor's discretion) or incomplete. Responses were lacking or did not represent a good faith effort.
- 0 = Assignment not submitted or late submission not accepted by professor.

**IMPORTANT** - for multiple choice questions and essay submission, your score will NOT be the number right or wrong you score. Rather, your score will be based on timely good faith submission and follow-up autopsies of answer choices. You WILL NOT lose points for a wrong answer.

The grading for this course is Honors Pass, Pass, Low Pass, and Fail.

- HP is the highest grade in class (minimum 95%)
- P is above 70%
- LP is between 60%-70%
- F is below 60%

Your Professor reserves the right to adjust up or down one based on participation.

# Course Expectations

## Student Expectations

Students are expected to complete all modules in the course, and to participate in all assignments and activities sufficient to demonstrate engagement with material and with the technology.

## Faculty Expectations

I will be online and available to answer email, posts to Ask the Professor, and other asynchronous inquiries every day of the week during our course. I will endeavor to answer questions as quickly as possible. I am happy to set up office hours to meet with students via Microsoft Teams. Email is the best way to get a response to questions about assignments—please allow up to 24 hours for a response.

I will provide feedback on assignments and will be available to answer questions about that feedback. I will post timely announcements as appropriate to this course, including any changes to the schedule or assignments. **I will not actively monitor the Hallway Discussions**, but I will post messages there occasionally, and welcome your discussion.

# Academic Policies

## Participation

You are expected to participate in all course activities except where religious observance, serious illness, personal emergency, or a reason that is adequate in the judgment of the professor prevents such participation. "Attendance" means posting answers to discussion questions, participating in the online community, and submitting all assignments in a timely fashion. This course is purposefully designed to get you started on the road to Bar Exam prep. While all grades are complete/incomplete, you will only get out of this class, what you put in.

## Attendance

You are expected to participate in all course activities except where religious observance, serious illness, personal emergency, or a reason that is adequate in my judgment that prevents such participation. "Attendance" means posting answers to discussion questions, participating in the online community, and submitting all assignments in a timely fashion.

## Late Work

All of your activities in this course must be completed by the identified deadlines in the **Course Schedule**. If you do not submit an assignment, complete a discussion, or participate as outlined in the **Learning Modules** and **Course Schedule**, it will not be accepted, and you will earn a zero as the grade. This late policy does not apply if I approve an extension. If you have an emergency or some other extenuating personal circumstance, it is important that you inform me as soon as possible. It is only with notification that I will be able to discuss a possible extension.

If there is a medical or family emergency or other extraordinary or extenuating circumstance, you should contact both me and the administration to make alternative arrangements. Again, prompt communication is key, and that is your responsibility.

## Add/Drop and Incomplete Policy

Please refer to the **Student Handbook** to review these policies. The handbook can be found on the **Online Resources** page, linked [here](#).

## Academic Honesty

The Vermont Law School Honor Code and the Code of Ethics applies to all activities, assignment submissions, and conduct in this course. You are required to be familiar with the Honor Code. Student conduct in this course may not violate the Prohibited Conduct classes of violations recognized in the Honor Code (located in the [Student Handbook](#)).

Plagiarism is a class one violation of Vermont Law School's Honor Code. The school uses various software programs to detect plagiarism in all of its forms. Any suspected cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Vice Dean for Students.

## Netiquette

All communications in this course (email, discussion boards, and assignments) should use good netiquette. For an overview and explanation of this, visit the [Netiquette Home Page](#) and follow the [Core Rules of Netiquette](#).

## Accessibility

We encourage students with disabilities, visible or hidden, to seek appropriate accommodations. Discussions regarding accommodations are confidential. The VLS student handbook authorizes me to make some accommodations, but others may require an additional request. Please visit the accommodations page within the [Academic Success Program](#) to seek more information and contact the Vice Dean for Students. Accommodation resources are not retroactive, so please inform us as early as possible if you need accommodations. We will provide reasonable access in line with the [Disability Policy](#).

## Other Policies

All student handbook policies and procedures apply to this course. For more information about student academic and institutional policies, read the [Student Handbook](#).