

## Advising Bar Applicants

2022

- Bar Prep overview:
  - o Approximately 10 week study period (most VA courses one week longer than UBE courses)
  - o Bar exam on Tuesday & Wednesday, July 26 & 27, 2022
  - o New this year: Barbri is allowing students to pick their start date and “customize” their schedule. All lectures are prerecorded and on demand.
- Initial outreach:
  - o Advisee expectations
  - o Prioritize your time and energy as an advisor
  - o Encourage students to **start early** and start strong!
  - o Encourage *high-risk* students taking VA bar to meet weekly with Emmy for essay review and individual tutoring. This service is open to *all* grads but we particularly encourage high-risk students to participate. Emmy schedules her own appointments. We also have an adjunct professor, Kevin Frost, available approximately one day per week to advise students on the MBE portion of the bar and on the UBE generally (not VA). Kristina Bergey will be scheduling for Kevin Frost.
- Accountability:
  - o Regular follow up with students
    - Weekly with at-risk students
    - Bi-weekly with other students
  - o Bar review companies track students’ progress and will make that information available to us
  - o Interim deadlines
    - Simulated MBE exam(s)
    - Graded essay assignments
- Time management:
  - o Importance of scheduling, routine
  - o Treat bar prep like a full-time, demanding job
  - o Remind students that passage rates are substantially higher for students who complete at least 75-80% of their course
  - o Interim deadlines (see above)
  - o Prioritize PRACTICE, tempting to procrastinate practice
  - o Is student working? Other demands on time, e.g. childcare, etc.?
- Trouble shooting:
  - o Help students find assistance if issues arise
    - Common questions/concerns:
      - Substantive law questions
        - o The bar review courses have mechanisms for submitting substantive questions
        - o Is the students getting too “in the weeds?”
      - MBE performance
        - o How *should* a student be performing?
          - On the actual MBE, a student must answer about 65% of the question correctly to get a scaled score of 140 (passing in VA). The passing score is slightly lower in most UBE jurisdictions.

- The multiple-choice practice questions are written by the bar review companies and are not necessarily the same level of difficulty as the questions on the actual bar. Also, students should – and do – improve over the course of the summer.
    - The bar review courses provide targets scores for interim assignments during the summer. Also, some companies advise students how they are performing relative to others.
  - If a student is underperforming, refer him/her to Emmy and/or the contact person at his/her bar review course.
  - Excellent additional MBE resource: Strategies & Tactics for the MBE (Emanuel Bar Review) 7th Edition (available on Amazon)
- Essay Performance
  - How should a student be performing?
    - On the VA bar, an applicant must score an average of 7 out of 10 points on the MBE
    - The bar review companies assign a few – not nearly enough – practice essays for students to submit for grading. The grading is somewhat hit or miss.
    - The VA Bar Examiners release some example 10-point answers.  
<http://barexam.virginia.gov/bar/barsampleanswer.html>
  - If a student is underperforming or is at-risk, refer him/her to Emmy.
- Time Management (see above)
- Stress Management
  - Self-care
    - Exercise
    - Healthy habits
    - Balance
  - Positive outlook
- Advice:
  - PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!
  - Slow (but not too slow) and steady. Don't fall behind!