

**University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Assessment Progress Report Form / Spring 2009 (covering assessment
activities from fall 2007 to spring 2009)**

William H. Bowen School of Law

Degree Program: Juris Doctor (J.D.)
Department and College: Law, William H. Bowen School of Law
Prepared by: 2007-2008 Bowen School of Law Assessment Committee:
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Use of Assessment for Program Building and Improvement:

The most important goal for any assessment project is to provide information to build and improve programs. This section should, therefore, be weighted the most heavily of all in your overall score evaluation.

Please discuss how you have used assessment findings this past year to understand, improve, and/or make decisions regarding the program. What have been your main findings? How did you analyze them? How do you interpret them? Have these findings led to making any significant changes in your program? If so, what are they? Please focus on evidence for or proposed changes that will lead to improvements in student learning outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

From the fall of 2007 to the spring of 2009, members of the 2007-2008 Assessment Committee of the Bowen School of Law (“the Committee”) researched and analyzed a number of components of institutional and student assessment. Each member wrote a report, and those reports are attached to, and are part of, this Report. They are also available on line through the website of the Bowen School of Law. The Committee’s recommendations appear on pages 12-15 of this Report.

In addition to the topic-specific sources each member of the Committee read to write his/her report, all members read relevant chapters from the following sources: *Legal Education and Professional Development – An Education Continuum*; *Report of the Task Force on Law Schools and the Profession: Narrowing the Gap (“MacCrate Report”)*, American Bar Association Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar (1992); Gregory S. Munro,

Outcomes Assessment for Law Schools, Institute for Law School Teaching, Gonzaga University School of Law (2000); Roy Stuckey and Others, *Best Practices for Legal Education*, Clinical Legal Education Association (2007); and William M. Sullivan *et al.*, *Educating Lawyers – Preparation for the Profession of Law*, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2007).

The combined research conducted by the Committee and additional activities related to assessment at the Bowen School of Law during the period of time covered in this Report, which are also included in this Report, are significant steps in the process of institutional and student assessment to which the Bowen School of Law is committed.

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

For institutional assessment, the Committee focused its work on the following areas: faculty achievement; bar examination; *U. S. News and World Report* ranking; and the Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE). Following is a summary of the reports written by the Committee.

Faculty Achievement – Professor Terrence Cain’s report

Prof. Cain reviewed standards and other data regarding expected levels of faculty performance in teaching, scholarship, and public service to determine the extent to which that information would assist the Committee in developing a list of outcomes to measure faculty achievement. Faculty visits to other law schools was another factor Prof. Cain considered in his research.

Prof. Cain read, reviewed, and analyzed the institutional document and reports listed below.

Law Faculty Handbook (Rev. Mar. 13, 2007)

UALR Provost’s Annual Reports for 2005, 2006, and 2007 prepared by the administration of the Bowen School of Law

American Bar Association Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar Law School Annual Questionnaires for 2004, 2005, and 2006 prepared by the administration of the Bowen School of Law

Prof. Cain’s report describes the standards that faculty must meet with regard to teaching, scholarship, and public service; how faculty performance is evaluated in each of these areas; and the role of faculty visits to other law schools as a component of institutional assessment. His report also offers recommendations for improvement of assessment in each of these areas.

Prof. Cain was unable to assess faculty achievement against these standards, because he did not have access to individual faculty members’ Professional Activity Reports, which are prepared annually and submitted to the administration of the Bowen Law School. The research

he conducted, however, provides valuable context to formulate a list of outcomes to measure faculty achievement.

It is important to note that the 2008 Bowen School of Law Strategic Plan, which Prof. Lynn Foster wrote after Prof. Cain wrote his report, states that faculty productivity greatly increased in recent years, and that between 2004 and 2008 faculty members published twenty-three books and eighty-five major articles.

Bar Exam – Clinic courses as a factor in first-time bar passage rates -- Professor Alicia D. Mitchell

Prof. Mitchell reviewed the Bowen School of Law's most recent American Bar Association Self-Study. Although the self-study reflects institutional and faculty accomplishments, those accomplishments are not tied to specific goals; therefore, the information may not be as valuable an indicator of achievement as it might otherwise be. Bar passage and job placement are important measurement factors in the self-study.

Prof. Mitchell was informed by Prof. Kenneth S. Gould, Chair of the Curriculum Committee, that recommendation and development of a list of core competencies for Bowen School of Law students will be the task of the Curriculum Committee.

Prof. Mitchell's work also included statistical research of bar passage rates from 2002-2008 to determine the effect Clinical courses may have on first-time bar passage rates. Prof. Mitchell compared Bowen School of Law first-time bar passage rates with the first-time passage rates of students who took at least one Clinic class (Mediation Clinic, Tax Clinic, or Litigation Clinic) or participated in the Bowen School of Law's Externship Program. Although the numbers for each year are statistically insignificant, Prof. Mitchell's research revealed that the passage rates of students who had taken any of the Clinic classes (taking into consideration those students who tested out of state) were consistently either equal to or higher than the overall Law School's passage rate. Because the Externship Program is relatively new, its impact on first-time passage rates cannot yet be determined.

Prof. Mitchell attended three conferences on assessment.

Oct. 2007 – UALR's Assessment Expo – The program discussed the importance of establishing core competencies for a curriculum to achieve the University's stated mission and goals.

Feb. 2008 – Atlanta, Georgia – Conference on the Future of Legal Education – The conference was also attended by Dean John DiPippa. National and international legal educators and administrators gave presentations about changes their institutions are considering or implementing to incorporate more practice in their respective curricula. Three important questions seem to have triggered these changes: 1) Whether the changes are needed to accomplish the institutional objectives; 2) whether law schools are measuring "the right things"; and, perhaps most important from the perspective of assessment, 3) whether the outcomes law schools are seeing are consistent with the stated mission, goals, and objectives of those law schools. Student methods of assessment were also discussed, with particular focus on incorporating additional assessment tools to enhance student learning.

September 2008 – Seattle, Washington – Conference “At the Crossroads in Legal Education” – The conference discussed the changes in legal education proposed by the Carnegie Report, including an emphasis on outcome-based assessment. Participants in, and attendees of, this conference were faculty and administrators of law schools in the United States. Professor Kenneth S. Gould was one of the presenters at this conference.

Bar Exam – Its effectiveness as a method of assessment – Assistant Dean Andrew M. Taylor

Dean Taylor’s report begins with an overview of the bar exam, both as administered in Arkansas and as administered in other jurisdictions in the United States, in which he discusses the components of bar examinations (multiple-choice, essay, and performance components). Against this background, Dean Taylor discusses the question of whether the bar exam is an effective method of assessment, and addresses the criteria of validity, reliability, and fairness. Dean Taylor concludes that the bar exam is at least as effective a method of assessment as law school itself, if not more (based on the bar exam’s equating process). Dean Taylor proposes a goal of having a first-time pass rate for Arkansas bar exam applicants that consistently meets or exceeds the state-wide average first-time pass rate.

Dean Taylor’s report also addresses the status of the eight recommendations made by the 2004-2005 Long Range Planning Committee to improve the bar passage rate based upon its study of bar passage results. Six of these recommendations have been fully or partially implemented.

***U. S. News and World Report* ranking – Professor Richard J. Peltz**

Prof. Peltz’s research focused on the annual *U. S. News and World Report* rankings as a measure of institutional assessment. He states that the ranking a school is given is an important assessment device to determine public perception of how well the institution is fulfilling its mission, and of how well, in fact, the institution is fulfilling its mission. Prof. Peltz reports that, based on data derived in 2005 and 2006, the Bowen School of Law is ranked in the third-tier of law schools in the 2007 *U. S. News* survey. However, in its last re-accreditation self-study, the Bowen School of Law established as a goal to achieve “second tier” status (which it has already achieved once).

Prof. Peltz’s report analyzes the data components (categories) of the Law School’s *U. S. News* ranking and makes observations regarding the Law School’s potential to effect improvement. These components are assessment, selectivity, placement, and resources. It is important to note that Prof. Peltz’s analysis of the data he collected reflects that the Bowen School of Law ranks very close to the second tier in the most heavily weighted category, which is peer assessment in legal education. Prof. Peltz believes that two principal factors may have contributed favorably to this ranking. These are, first, the participation by some members of the faculty in national organizations and conferences, and, second, the national recognition of the Law School’s *Journal of Appellate Practice and Process*, which is circulated among the bench nationally.

Prof. Peltz's conclusions are that the Bowen School of Law should undertake to improve its *U. S. News* rankings and, at the same time, improve its performance in fulfillment of its expressed mission. He identifies placement services and external assessments in legal education, the bar, and the bench to be critical areas for improvement. He concludes that the *U. S. News* survey data must be annually obtained, analyzed, and incorporated into the Law School's assessment strategies, including assessment of the Law School's performance of past and present goals, and the setting of future goals.

Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE) as an institutional assessment tool – Professor June Stewart

In her report, Prof. Stewart explains that the Bowen School of Law participates annually in the LSSSE, and receives a yearly report summarizing students' responses to a variety of questions. The responses are broken down by class (first-year, second-year, and third-year) and are compared to responses from students at other law schools, which are comprised of selected peer schools; schools with less than 500 students; public law schools; and all LSSSE respondents (all law schools participating in the survey).

Prof. Stewart analyzed the data provided in the 2007 LSSSE survey as it relates to four specific questions identified by the 2007-2008 Long Range Planning Committee as Bowen School of Law's long-range goals. The questions are:

1. Does the law school provide a rigorous program of study which provides students with the knowledge, skills, and character to succeed either as attorneys or in other chosen fields of endeavor?
2. Does the law school provide sufficient help for students who are looking for professional positions?
3. Does the law school foster a welcoming, open, and tolerant community of diverse individuals and intellectual viewpoints?
4. Do the students value the quality and excellence of the law school educational program?

Prof. Stewart's analysis of the responses given by Bowen School of Law students reveals that, for some questions, our students' responses were more negative than those of students in other schools, but that, for other questions, the reverse was true. For example, for Question 1, overall, responses from students at the Bowen School of Law were in line with responses from other law schools, but in those instances in which our students' responses varied from responses at other schools, our students' responses were generally lower. Responses from students at the Bowen School of Law were generally more positive from first-year students than from second- and third-year students.

This institutional assessment tool reveals that the Bowen School of Law should undertake to improve the level of satisfaction of its students, particularly second- and third-year students.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

**A one-time, summative evaluative tool as the predominant method of assessment –
Professor Ranko Shiraki Oliver**

One of the charges given to the Committee by the Bowen School of Law administration was to develop a list of outcomes to measure Bowen School of Law student achievement. Because the use of one comprehensive final examination at the end of the semester is the predominant assessment tool to measure student achievement in doctrinal courses, Prof. Oliver's research focused on the question of whether this form of assessment is an effective way to measure student outcomes and achievement.

Much has been written about the problems of measuring the level of student learning based on students' performance in one essay examination at the end of the semester. End-of-the-semester final examinations are said to be invalid, unreliable, unfair, inaccurate, and undemocratic assessment tools of student learning. The literature discussing this form of assessment proposes that student outcomes can be measured more effectively through a formative process of assessment, which consists of a number of evaluations of student learning throughout the semester, often also including essay examinations at the end of the semester.

Prof. Oliver's report summarizes arguments for moving away from the practice of administering only a one-time, comprehensive final examination at the end of the semester and arguments for implementing a formative process of assessment to measure student learning. It also describes possible assessment tools that could be components of a formative process of assessment, including classroom assessment tools. Finally, it offers comments regarding the feasibility of instituting a formative process of assessment at the Bowen School of Law and makes recommendations to enhance faculty teaching and improve assessment of student learning.

Faculty and Stake Holder Involvement:

Please describe how faculty, students, and other stakeholders have been involved in the assessment process and the decisions arising out of assessment findings. How have you shared the results and your interpretation with your stakeholders?

A. Work of the Committee from the fall 2007 to the spring 2009 described in the preceding section

B. Classroom Assessment

1. Socratic Dialogue Method of Instruction

Faculty members at the Bowen School of Law continue to follow the Socratic Dialogue method of instruction as the predominant and most effective classroom assessment tool. It is a teaching technique employed in varying degrees in most, if not all, law school classes in the United States. This in-class question and answer dialogue with students permits the faculty member to assess whether students have read the material assigned for class, the level of students' understanding of underlying theoretical and policy themes, and the degree of maturation of student critical thinking skills. When using the Socratic Dialogue method of

teaching (and assessment), faculty members can make immediate adjustments in their teaching techniques and course coverage in response to the level of student learning and understanding revealed during the dialogue.

2. Other Classroom Assessment Activities

Another often-used form of classroom assessment at the Bowen School of Law is the problem method of instruction and assessment, which consists of problems professors assign to students at the beginning or end of discrete sections of the substantive material being covered. The problems are based on hypothetical scenarios designed to assess students' ability to identify and formulate the legal issues presented by the facts, identify the relevant rules, and apply those rules to the facts of the problem. Students are asked to prepare oral answers to the problems, which the professor elicits from students during class. This method of instruction and assessment permits the professor to assess student learning from answers students give, and provide feedback to clarify points about which students may be confused.

Other forms of classroom assessment that continue to be used by the faculty are faculty-directed reviews, reflective writing assignments, and specialized techniques of student self-assessment.

The inherent nature of skills courses (legal research, legal writing, trial and appellate advocacy, and legal clinics, for example) creates opportunities to administer frequent assessments through written assignments and demonstrations of acquired skills, on the basis of which professors give feedback to students. In this connection, a significant number of faculty members participate in the process of preparing upper-level students to participate in national moot court and trial court competitions by coaching and judging a number of oral arguments during the weeks (approximately six weeks) preceding the national competitions. In addition, a number of faculty members and members of the local bar judge oral arguments presented by first-year law students in the introductory course to appellate advocacy.

C. Assessment of Legal Clinic Program Activities

In Litigation Clinic, students complete evaluations of clinic orientation. In Mediation Clinic, Tax Clinic, and Litigation Clinic, students assess the entire clinical experience at the end of the semester. Students are asked to assess the supervisor's competence, the class component, and the general clinical experience itself.

In the Litigation and Mediation Clinic, clients and the individuals who participate in mediation are given satisfaction surveys at the conclusion of the service. These surveys are used to help the Clinic Director and the supervisors in the individual clinics assess how effective the services were to the population receiving them.

D. Student evaluations of courses and effectiveness of professors

Students at the Bowen School of Law quantitatively evaluate courses and professors' effectiveness by use of the IDEA Diagnostic Form Report. The IDEA Report contains numerical scores of student ratings in three areas: "Student Ratings of Learning on Relevant (Important and Essential) Objectives"; "Description of Course and Students" (relating to level of difficulty of

the subject matter, student interest in the course, and student opinion regarding amount of work required in the course); and “Teaching Methods and Style.” The Report provides ratings on forty-three areas that relate to teacher effectiveness and quality of the course. The Report gives average scores, a summary evaluation, and a comparison of each professor’s averages with all classes in the IDEA database.

E. Tenured faculty assessment of untenured faculty members

Members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee (all tenured faculty members) conduct annual evaluations of classes taught by untenured faculty members and write a report of the classroom visit. Although the evaluator does not assign numerical scores, his/her report contains the evaluator’s answers to specific questions relating to teaching effectiveness. These written reports are reviewed by the faculty and the administration of the Bowen School of Law in connection with faculty members’ application for promotion and/or tenure, as well as the renewal of non-tenure track faculty members’ annual contract.

F. Strategic Plan of the Bowen School of Law

Prof. Lynn Foster wrote the 2008 Bowen School of Law Strategic Plan, the faculty approved it, and it was subsequently submitted to the UALR’s Office of the Provost. The Strategic Plan includes the activities listed below, which describe faculty, student, and stakeholder involvement in the process of assessment.

1. Activities to enhance the quality of faculty teaching and student learning

The Faculty Development Committee has sponsored programs whose goal is to enhance the quality of teaching, for example a program on how to teach “Millennial” students.

The administration allocated the funds to install a heavily used video capture and projection system in the larger classrooms and courtrooms.

Students now have wireless access to the Internet in classrooms.

In the fall of 2008, the administration sponsored a faculty workshop on Diversity in the Classroom, presented by Professor Dorothy Brown of the Washington and Lee Law School, which was well attended and well received.

In the spring of 2008, Professor and Carnegie Fellow Judith Wegner conducted a workshop on the Carnegie Report entitled *Educating Lawyers*.

The creation of the Externship Program at the Bowen School of Law has been a significant accomplishment to enhance student learning, because it bridges the gap between theory and practice to enhance student learning and it creates opportunities for periodic assessment of student learning. Each semester the program places twenty-seven students in positions with government agencies and nonprofit entities, such as the Arkansas Supreme Court and Court of Appeals, the General Assembly, the office of U.S. Senator Blanche Lincoln, the U. S. Bankruptcy Court, and Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families.

2. Significant achievements in recognition of the high quality of teaching at the Bowen School of Law

In 2007 and 2008 the Bowen School of Law's legal writing program was ranked in the top 20 of all law schools by *U. S. News and World Report*.

In 2008, the Bowen School of Law's Legal Clinic was ranked in the top 50 regarding the number of spaces available for students.

3. Faculty involvement in activities that relate to institutional assessment

In 2008, the Bowen School of Law's Long Range Planning Committee assumed primary responsibility for conforming to the New Standard 203 of the American Bar Association. Standard 203 requires law schools to demonstrate that they 1) regularly identify specific goals for improving their programs; 2) identify means to achieve the established goals; 3) assess their success in realizing the established goals; and 4) periodically re-examine and revise their goals.

The *Journal of Appellate Practice and Process*, a faculty-edited publication of the Bowen School of Law, is distributed to every United States state and federal appellate judge, selected foreign judges, members of the American Academy of Appellate Lawyers, and members of the American Bar Association's Council of Appellate Lawyers, among others.

The new *Arkansas Real Estate Review* is co-edited by faculty and practitioners, and involves approximately thirty-five students in each issue.

Faculty involvement in law reform efforts includes

- a) participation in Bowen School of Law-sponsored symposia on varied topics, such as children of embattled divorces; obesity and

the role of the law in decreasing its prevalence; Arkansas's new judicial article; and issues affecting the immigrant population and the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual population;

- b) participation of individual faculty members in hearings before legislative bodies at both the state and federal levels; and
- c) participation of faculty in state, national, and international activities, such as the revision of the Arkansas Criminal Code; the ABA Business Law Section UCC Committee's Subcommittee on Payments; the drafting of a constitution for the Criminal Bar of the International Criminal Court; and the appointment in the fall of 2008 of one faculty member to the Arkansas State Advisory Commission to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights.

4. Anticipated activities related to institutional and student assessment

By 2011, the Curriculum Committee will recommend to the faculty curriculum reform that is responsive to the Bowen School of Law's mission and further integrates skills training into the curriculum. The Curriculum Committee will also recommend to the faculty ways in which the faculty can receive training to enhance its teaching skills, particularly in view of the anticipated curriculum reform.

Over the five-year period between 2008 and 2013, capitalizing on its location in the state's largest and capital city, the law school will establish more externships and clinics.

By 2011, the Faculty Development Committee will organize workshops addressing the issues of increasing students' active learning in class, employing better assessment methods, and requiring more writing of students beyond the first year.

During 2009, the Curriculum Committee will recommend to the faculty reforming the grading scale and will consider changes such as a uniform curve or the graduate school model.

During 2009, the Readmissions Committee will recommend to the faculty implementing higher readmission standards.

Plan No. 103

During 2009, the Faculty Appointments Committee and Associate Dean will report to the faculty with recommendations for increasing the oversight of adjunct faculty.

The Bowen School of Law will continue to provide, and will enhance, sufficient support to students to enable them to succeed academically.

By 2013, the Admissions Committee will report to the faculty on offering a program for entering students based on the national program sponsored by the Council of Legal Education Opportunities.

By 2010, the Assistant Dean for Academic Support will report to the faculty on his plans to expand the first-year orientation program.

By 2011, the Curriculum Committee will recommend to the faculty the implementation of a program to improve students' writing skills.

Approach:

Help place your efforts for the time period reported here in context for your reader by briefly summarizing the goals and student learning objectives of your program. Were there any significant changes since last year's report?

The goal of the Bowen School of Law is to provide a challenging legal education that equips its graduates with the skills, analytical ability, and sense of ethical and professional responsibility that is essential to counsel and represent the public successfully, competently, and professionally throughout their careers in law. The Bowen School of Law's goal for graduates who will not use their degrees as practicing attorneys is that the skills, values, and knowledge gained in law school will enhance their effectiveness in other occupations. The central learning objectives at the school of law are for each law student to

- (a) be able to identify and formulate the legal issues and theories that apply to the facts of a described situation or problem;
- (b) have knowledge of, and ability to use, fundamental tools of legal research, including understanding the process of devising and implementing a coherent and effective research design;
- (c) possess basic knowledge of the nature and sources of ethical standards of the legal profession and processes for recognizing and addressing ethical dilemmas;

(d) show an understanding of the significance of being a member of the legal profession by striving to promote justice and fairness through the tradition of leadership and public service in a wide range of professional and other community involvement; and

(e) have confidence in legal problem-solving skills and concepts, including identifying and diagnosing a problem, determining the need for planning factual investigation, identifying and formulating relevant legal theories, generating alternative solutions and strategies, and developing and implementing a plan of action.

Since the spring 2007 Assessment Report, the Bowen School of Law has made no changes in the goals and student learning objectives of its program. However, the Curriculum Committee is in the process of formulating a list of core competencies for Bowen School of Law students, which will require careful consideration of the goals and student learning objectives stated above. In addition, the faculty and administration of the Bowen School of Law will consider these goals and student learning objectives in view of the recommendations made in the Carnegie Report.

What methods did you use to measure the student learning outcome objective(s) assessed since last year's report? Have there been any significant changes here? If so, please explain why. What measures do you propose to use next year? How are you addressing the reliability and validity of those measures?

The predominant method to measure student learning continues to be the method employed at most law schools, which is one comprehensive, three-hour essay examination at the end of the semester. However, many faculty members also administer a graded or ungraded mid-term examination. In addition, many faculty members also employ the methods of assessment described on pages 6-7 of this report.

The Committee anticipates that the faculty and administration of the Bowen School of Law will be receptive to the idea of carefully considering whether a summative evaluative tool is pedagogically sound and an effective method to assess student learning. The Committee also anticipates that, in this connection, the faculty and administration will carefully consider other methods for assessing student learning described in the attached report written by Professor Ranko Shiraki Oliver, and the feasibility of moving toward a formative process of assessment with the resources currently available or anticipated to be available in the near future.

The Committee anticipates that the administration at the Bowen School of Law will be receptive to the idea of creating opportunities for the faculty to receive training on creating and scoring assessment tools that are reliable and valid. In this regard, please see Prof. Oliver's recommendation on page 20 of her report, which is attached to this Report.

How does what you did this past year fit into the overall assessment plan for your program? Please include any changes you may have made to your plan in response to last year's feedback. Do you plan to make any changes in your assessment plan itself? What will your targets be for the coming assessment year?

The combined and comprehensive research of the Committee is a significant step in the Bowen School of Law's continued effort to enhance its overall assessment plan. No changes in the assessment plan have been made since the Spring 2007 Assessment Report was submitted. However, with the benefit of the significant amount of information gathered and analyzed by the Committee, the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 Assessment Committees should be able to consider realistic changes, given existing resources, in the overall assessment plan at the Bowen School of Law.

The Committee anticipates that its work will highlight important aspects of institutional and student assessment at the Bowen School of Law, and that its recommendations (contained on pages 12 -15 of this report) will be the basis for formulating realistic targets for the coming assessment year.

Assessing Assessment (for information purposes only—not to be rated by readers panels):

a). What changes, if any, would you recommend in the assessment process in your college or in the university as a whole?

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

Professor Cain:

Quantitative student and peer evaluations can be used to measure teaching effectiveness; extent of faculty participation in committee work and attendance at faculty meetings; and contributions to the University, the community, and the profession. Placing a quantitative value on faculty teaching and faculty service provides a means to easily determine whether a faculty member is adequately fulfilling this component of his/her job responsibilities.

Service can be measured by counting the entries on a professional activity report that fit within the definition of service, or by multiplying the hours of service by the hourly rate the faculty member could bill for the service if it were done on a fee basis. Contributions to the law school can be measured by examining or counting the entries on professional activity reports that fit within the definition of law school contributions. Scholarship accomplishments can be measured objectively by determining whether the faculty member publishes an article every two years.

Professor Mitchell:

Create a list of core competencies

Develop a system to better combine the data that is being collected from different areas of the Bowen School of Law. This should permit more efficient analysis of certain areas to determine whether the Bowen School of Law is meeting its stated goals and outcomes, or what areas need improvement. Much information is being gathered by different areas of the Bowen School of Law that could be brought together in one place to provide a more comprehensive picture of how successfully the Bowen School of Law is achieving its stated objectives and where improvement is needed.

Continue discussion of the Carnegie Report in the context of the Bowen School of Law's stated objectives and long-range goals.

Professor R. S. Oliver:

The faculty of the Bowen School of Law should continue to enhance its knowledge and understanding of the concept of "Assessment," effective teaching methodologies, principles of adult learning theory, and, generally, ways through which it can more effectively reach students.

The administration of the Bowen School of Law should create opportunities for the faculty to learn about the learning process and effective teaching methodologies by bringing experts in the field to present at the law school and/or funding faculty attendance and participation at such programs off campus.

The faculty of the Bowen School of Law should continue to establish (and revise) teaching and student learning goals and objectives, which is a preliminary step to the process of creating and grading effective assessment tools.

The administration of the Bowen School of Law should create opportunities for faculty to learn how to create, administer, and grade effective assessment tools, as well as how to provide meaningful feedback to students.

The faculty and the administration of the Bowen School of Law should carefully and thoughtfully determine the feasibility of gradually adopting a formative process of assessment.

The faculty and the administration of the Bowen School of Law should engage in thoughtful consideration and discussion of the recommendations made by each member

of the Committee (contained in this Report), concerning aspects of institutional and student assessment.

Professor Peltz:

Statistical information from *U. S. News and World Report* rankings should prompt critical examination of resource allocation decisions. Specifically, greater resource allocation should be given to categories in which the Bowen School of Law is close to tier thresholds, such as Peer Assessment, to increase the chances of the ranking in that category being favorably affected by the greater allocation of resources. By contrast, fewer resources should be allocated to categories whose ranking will likely not be affected by greater allocation of resources, for example, those categories that are not close to tier thresholds.

Promotional mailings about the Bowen School of Law are important for reputational rankings; therefore, the administration should send these promotional mailings nationally, not just within the state.

Improve selectivity of entering law students through more attractive admissions packages, including better marketing or scholarship offers.

Impose a modest application fee to generate revenue to support a national marketing mailing, which would likely not affect the stellar rating the Bowen School of Law enjoys in the category of applicant acceptance, but which would enhance the Bowen School of Law's performance in critical categories, such as peer assessment.

The process for employment of graduates must be significantly overhauled, because the ratings for that category are disturbingly low – firmly in the fourth-tier range.

Professor Stewart:

Undertake to improve the numerical ranking of student responses in the LSSSE.

Dean Andrew Taylor:

A professional statistician should be employed to examine the effectiveness of the new course "Preparing for the Bar Exam," which Dean Taylor teaches. Preliminary numbers look promising, but a statistical analysis might confirm that link, and might reveal ways in which the course can be improved.

What additional resources could the University provide that would be of most help to you in your assessment efforts?

In view of the Committee's significant recommendations, assessment funds provided by the University would permit the Bowen School of Law to bring in speakers, conduct workshops, and otherwise enhance the level and quality of its assessment activities.

c). Please estimate what resources you have spent on assessment this last year, including both time and money.

The Bowen School of Law has received no funding to support assessment activities. Because the Committee does not request that individuals involved in assessment activities report time and money expended, the Committee is unable to estimate the amount of time or money spent on assessment activities during the period covered in this Report. However, in view of the depth and breadth of this Report and individual members' reports, it is evident that the time the Committee and other members of the faculty and the administration of the Bowen School of Law have devoted to assessment activities has been significant.

d). Courses offered through distance learning technologies are becoming a part of more and more programs. These courses should be treated like any other course offered by a department—including being part of the assessment of the program. For example, if students are supposed to include something from every upper-level course in their major, then they need to include distance as well as on-campus courses. What guidelines have you put into place to be sure that courses offered through distance learning technology are included in the assessment of the program?

The Bowen School of Law does not offer any distance learning course or courses utilizing distance learning technologies.

Respectfully submitted,

Ranko Shiraki Oliver, Chair
2007-2008 and 2008-2009 Assessment Committee

March 31, 2009

ATTACHMENTS

Reports written by Professors Cain, Mitchell, R. S. Oliver, Peltz, and Stewart, and Assistant Dean for Academic Support Andrew Taylor.