The mission of the College of Law is to create an intellectual environment that prepares students in the legal practice of their choice, enhances the College’s regional and national reputation for academic excellence, fosters a spirit of community, provides individual attention, promotes professional values and encourages participation in the life of the University, Northwest Ohio and Southern Michigan and in the States of Ohio and Michigan.
College or Unit Structure

The dean appoints the College of Law Assessment Committee. The Associate Dean for Faculty is the primary point of contact for the College of Law Assessment Committee and the College of Law Administration.

Associate Dean, Daniel Steinbock, is the overall administrator responsible for gathering, analyzing, and preparing reports based on assessment data. Professor Llewellyn Joseph Gibbons chairs the College of Law Committee on Assessment. As the College of Law faculty point person, Professor Gibbons is assigned to College of Law Committees where assessment expertise is especially useful.

Each College of Law committee plans and engages in assessment and measurement as necessary or appropriate for the efficient functioning of that committee. Accordingly, each committee and committee chair performs some assessment functions, as do the assistant deans for admissions, career services, and financial aid.
Assumptions on Which Plan is Based

The College of Law's assessment plan and polices are designed to be consistent with the American Bar Association's Standards for Approval of Law Schools, Rule I of the Rules for the Government of the Bar of the Ohio Supreme Court, and the Bylaws And Executive Committee Regulations Pertaining To The Requirements Of Membership of the American Association of Laws Schools.
Methodology for Undergraduate and Graduate Level Assessments

A. Coursework

The goal of all instruction is to build the intellectual competence and communication skills important to the successful practice of law. All law students take a common first year curriculum. These core first year courses are supplemented by a rigorous course focusing on legal analysis, writing and research skills. After the first year, law students engage in at least two demanding writing experiences and have opportunities to take seminars, directed research, small classes, and obtain practical learning experiences either through either externships, clinical legal education, or simulations.

Student competency is assessed in a manner appropriate to the knowledge or skills that the course is designed to teach. Most traditional law schools courses have one long final examination that often simulates a problem that a student may encounter in practice. Seminar courses are graded on class participation and a long substantive writing assignment requiring the student to demonstrate independent research, rigorous analytical skills, and professional writing skills. Skills courses such as the clinical offerings, law review, moot court, externships, simulations or any other course stressing practical skills are graded based on the student’s mastery of the skills taught in the course, and may be graded based on practical written work, oral skills, or any other manner appropriate to the course.

For all courses that cover material tested on the bar examination, the subject matter that is potentially tested on the bar examination defines the minimum scope of the material covered in the course. The bar examination in most states consists of three parts. The first day is the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) is a six-hour, two-hundred question multiple-choice examination covering contracts, torts, constitutional law, criminal law, evidence, and real property. The second day is a six-hour series of essay examinations that test the specifics on the laws of the jurisdiction the student is seeking admission to, i.e. state law. The third day is a three-hour examination testing practical writing and research skills. Accordingly, required and standard program courses must cover by the breadth of national law and principles and the depth of Ohio and our neighboring states. The scope of elective courses is determined by the professor’s substantive knowledge of the field, the coverage in the casebook (text-book), applicable statutes and regulations, professional publications, and feedback from practitioners. In some fields, for example, patent law, there are specialized bar examinations. The subject matter covered on specialized bar examinations is reflected in the course content. Also, some states have specialize examinations or procedures to be certified as a specialist in an of law, for example family law. Our course offerings reflect whenever possible the requirements for certification or admission to specialized bars.

Upon completion of a course, a student completes an anonymous survey. Completed surveys are reviewed by the Dean and Associate Dean for Faculty.

B. Retention data.

The College of Law gathers retention data through personal individualized exit interviews between the associate dean and the student seeking to transfer, to take a leave of absence, or who is facing academic proceedings that may result in the student being prohibited from continuing at the College of Law.
The Associate Dean for Students is the principle person responsible for reviewing administrative records and identifying students who may be at risk or who may other require more individualized attention in order to succeed.

C. Student Satisfaction Assessment

The administration and faculty of the College of Law have an open door policy. Students are encouraged to bring their concerns to individual faculty, relevant administrators, and the associate dean for students as appropriate. Concerns that represent a persistent problem are referred by faculty and staff to the relevant administrator or faculty committee for further investigation.

The Dean, Associate Deans, and Faculty meet regularly with the Student Bar Association, leaders of student clubs and activities, and with the student body to address issues of concern to the students.

Each student upon entering the College of Law is appointed a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor is a resource to the student.

D. Employer Satisfaction Assessment

The Assistant Dean for Career Services maintains a dialog with potential employers as to their experiences with the recruiting process. The Assistant Dean meets with on-campus interviewers as they arrive at the law school and attempts to de-brief them at the end of the day. The Assistant Dean attends meetings of various bar associations, makes presentations, and solicits their advice on the placing law students in a changing job market. The Assistant Dean also attends alumni events to informally gage bar perception of the quality of current and recent hires. Students are surveyed via interviews and questionnaires regarding their experiences with the Career Services, job interviewers, and the job seeking process.

2. How is this assessment data used?

Assessment data is used in all aspects of College of Law planning. The assessment process is so integral to all aspects of College of Law planning that it is difficult to tease out all the examples. The following are two illustrative examples. The College of Law compared first year grades with bar passage. We noticed that students who received a D grade in a first year subject had a higher probability of failing the bar. While a “D” is passing in many law school courses, students who receive below a “C” in a first year course, must repeat the course until he or she earns a “C” or better. Examination methodology has been changed. All courses that are tested on the bar examination must give a bar style examination with multiple-choice and as bar style essay question in addition to whatever other examination the professor intends to use to evaluate class performance.

3. What kind of college infrastructure supports continuous assessment and reportage of data in the College?

The College infrastructure supports assessment through its use of a committee system. The College of Law has an extensive committee system. Each committee is charged with advising
the dean or faculty on issues within its subject matter jurisdiction. These committees make reports to the faculty as a whole or to the administration, and require data that demands on-going assessment. In addition to the data collected and used by the administration or committees on daily basis, the College of Law engages in on-going assessment activities as part of its accreditation process provided for by the American Bar Association and the requirements of membership in the American Association of Law Schools. This information is reflected in the on-going self-study and intermediate and long term planning for the College of Law.
Feedback Loop

Assessment is a part of the process leading to the self-study required by the American Bar Association as part of our accreditation process. In the self-study, the faculty and administration consider our mission statement, the program of legal education, the strengths and weaknesses of the program in light of the school's mission, goals to improve the program, and means to accomplish the school's unrealized goals.

Because of the size of the student body, the associate dean meets with students individually and performs an individual assessment of student satisfaction with law school life, student services, and if necessary individual faculty members. The Associate Dean brings systemic problems to the attention of the Dean or Faculty when necessary. This is in addition to the Faculty and Administration's open door policy.

The College of Law course examinations are designed to test subject matter that is commonly tested on the bar examination and in part tested in a format similar to that used by the bar examiners. This assures that students are mastering the materials required to pass the bar examination.

After graduation, most students take a bar examination. The dean and the faculty consider bar success rates. The College of Law examines past bar examinations to assure that courses adequately reflect the material on the bar and interviews students who have failed the bar to determine what the College could have done differently to assist the student.
Synthesis of Department / Program Plans
Action Plans