PASS THE BAR!

Nuts and Bolts of Bar Exams for 3Ls
September 2009
What is a “Bar Exam”? 

- A test required by the individual states that must be passed in order to practice law.

- Administered by state bar admission authorities (Bar examiners).
  - To ensure a minimum level of competence in the legal profession.
Why is the Bar Exam hard?

- Limited/ancient exposure to tested subjects
- Volume of subjects
- Time pressure
- Stakes are high
Components of the Bar Exam Overview

- Bar Exams are state-specific
- Bar Exams have similar components
  - By subjects
    - Multi-state exams (created by NCBE)
      - MBE (fundamental subjects)
      - MPRE (professional responsibility)
    - State-created exams
  - By question style
    - Multiple choice
    - Essay
    - Performance Test ("MPT") fundamental lawyering skills
Exam Components Created by NCBE

- NCBE – National Conference of Bar Examiners
  - An entity that creates standardized exams to assist state bar examiners
- Four major exams created
  - MBE
  - MEE
  - MPT
  - MPRE
MBE

- Adopted by almost every state
- 200 multiple choice questions
- 6 hours
- Tested subjects
  - Contracts
  - Constitutional Law
  - Criminal Law/Procedure
  - Evidence
  - Property
  - Torts
MEE

- Adopted by a third of the states
- 6 essay questions
- 3 hours
- Tested subjects
  - Agency and partnership, corporations, trusts and estates, family law, sales, federal civil procedure
MPT

- Adopted by more than half of the states
- 3 90-minute MPT questions per exam
- Each state may include one, two or all of the questions
- Test on problem solving, fact finding, analysis and writing skills
MPRE

- Adopted by almost every state
- 60 multiple choice questions
- 2 hours 5 minutes
- Test knowledge of professional responsibilities
- Must pass to be admitted to the state Bar
- Passing score state-specific (range 75-86)
State-created Exams

- Created by the state as part of the State Bar Exam
- Tests substantive law of the state
What’s the first step?

- Understand your state’s licensing requirements
- Directory of state bar examiners
Planning for the Bar Exam

● Which state will you take it in?
● Ask the following questions
  – Requirements
  – Application deadlines, exam dates, fees
  – Exam format
  – Subjects tested
  – Exam locations
One Example: California

- **Fees**
  - General applicant $529
  - Attorney applicant $769

- **Exam Format**
  - 3-day exam
  - Day 1: 3 essay Q, 1 MPT Q
  - Day 2: MBE (35% of overall score)
  - Day 3: 3 essay Q, 1 MPT Q
California (continued)

- Subjects Tested
  - Civil Procedure, Corporations, CA Community Property, CA Professional Responsibility, Remedies, Trusts, CA Wills & Succession
  - All MBE subjects

- More information on CA Bar
  - http://www.calbar.ca.gov
MPRE

- Exam given three times a year
  - March, August, November

- Next Tests
  - Sat. Nov. 7, 2009
    - Application deadline: Sep. 29, 2009
    - Late application deadline: Oct. 15, 2009
  - March 2010 & August 2010

- Online registration
  - http://www.ncbex.org/mpre.html
How to study for the Bar Exam?

- Self study
- Take commercial bar prep course
  - Video/Live
  - Audio
  - Books
- In your state/in Durham
Final Words

- Time management
- Stress management
- Studying and test-taking skills
- Planning