

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Plan

Vision, Mission, and Program Learning Goals

Our vision is to be one of the nation's great law schools, and a leader in the quality and impact of our teaching, in legal scholarship, and in public service. We seek to realize that vision through a three-part mission:

- To teach students rigorous analytical skills, assist them in developing their understanding of the law and legal process, and enhance their professional judgment through a dynamic and innovative learning environment with the goal that they become outstanding legal professionals equipped to aid and improve society.
- To offer insights on the impact of law and legal institutions on individuals and communities and advocate for changes in law that improve the well-being of people and society.
- To contribute expertise in the public conversations and initiatives that lead to the improvement of law and the administration of justice in Ohio, the nation, and the world.

To further the first part of this mission, the College has established seven Program Learning Goals relating to:

1. Legal Doctrine and Substantive Knowledge;
2. Ability to Use Law-Related Materials and Processes;
3. Critical Thinking and Problem-solving;
4. Communication;
5. Skills for Continued Development (Meta-cognition);
6. Interpersonal Skills and Professionalism; and
7. Professional Judgment

ABA Standard 301 requires every law school to “establish and publish” learning outcomes. Under ABA Standard 302, a law school’s outcomes must include, at a minimum, competency in: “[k]nowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law”; “[l]egal analysis and reason, legal research, problem solving and written and oral communication in the legal context”; “[e]xercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system”; and “[o]ther professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession.” The ABA’s interpretation of Standard 302 provides that “a law school may also identify any additional learning outcomes pertinent to its program of legal education.”

In October 2017, the faculty of the Moritz College of Law approved [specific learning outcomes for each of the seven Program Learning Goals](#).

Assessment Plan

ABA Standard 315 requires “[t]he dean and the faculty of a law school” to “conduct ongoing evaluation of the law school’s . . . learning outcomes”; the dean and faculty are directed to “use the results of this evaluation to determine the degree of student attainment of competency in the learning outcomes and to make appropriate changes to improve the curriculum.”

The College’s assessment plan implements this requirement by setting out a four-year schedule for evaluation of the College’s Program Learning Goals and the student outcomes associated with these goals. Each year, the College’s Assessment Committee, a subcommittee of the Academic Affairs Committee, will **evaluate** one or two of the College’s learning goals and outcomes.¹ The Assessment Committee will then **take action**, if necessary, following the evaluation. Specifically, the Assessment Committee will:

1. Meet in the fall of each year to discuss data collection methodologies for the goals and outcomes to be assessed during the academic year.
2. Collect and review data. Sources of data include, but are not limited to, direct measures such as bar passage data and classroom assessments, and indirect measures such as student surveys, employer feedback, alumni surveys, student evaluations of teaching, and job placement data.
3. Report data to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Academic Affairs Committee, and make recommendations to the Academic Affairs Committee, as appropriate, to assessment methodologies and/or to the curriculum; the Academic Affairs Committee and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will then review any recommendations from the Assessment Committee and, as appropriate, the Academic Affairs Committee will bring these recommendations to the full faculty.

¹ In summary, the Learning Goals and Learning Outcomes include:

Learning Goal 1 (Legal Doctrine and Substantive Knowledge) and Outcomes 1.1 (core concepts of 1L and upper-division courses), 1.2 (analyze unsettled issues), and 1.3 (understand legal change);
Learning Goal 2 (Ability to Use Law-Related Materials and Processes) and Outcomes 2.1 (effective legal research), 2.2 (applying legal sources), 2.3 (legal practice skills);
Learning Goal 3 (Critical Thinking and Problem-solving) and Outcomes 3.1 (critical thinking) and 3.2 (real or simulated client problem-solving);
Learning Goal 4 (Communication) and Outcomes 4.1 (written communication), 4.2 (factual development), and 4.3 (spoken communication);
Learning Goal 5 (Skills for Continued Development (Meta-cognition)) and Outcomes 5.1 (self-reflection) and 5.2 (adapting knowledge and skills to unfamiliar situations);
Learning Goal 6 (Interpersonal Skills and Professionalism) and Outcomes 6.1 (effective work in groups), 6.2 (culturally-aware and inclusive communication), and 6.3 (professional and respectful communication); and
Learning Goal 7 (Professional Judgment) and Outcomes 7.1 (rules of professional conduct), 7.2, (client-centered lawyering) and 7.3 (lawyer’s responsibility to seek improvement of the law).

Assessment Schedule

In developing the assessment plan and the assessment schedule, the College considered both the content of the goals and outcomes and the context in which the goals and outcomes might be assessed.

Goal 1—assessed in the first year of the plan—has significant substantive content (and outcomes that relate to core concepts of 1L and required upper-division curriculum, analyzing unsettled issues, and understanding legal change).

Goals 2 and 4—assessed in the second year of the plan—relate to legal research, legal communication, and legal practice skills, and are appropriate to assess in tandem, as many of these skills are taught in the same courses. These goals also relate to a clear set of courses that all our students take. The College has a well-defined legal research and writing curriculum, including the LAW I and LAW II courses and the second-year writing requirement. As well, the requirement that all students have a rigorous upper-level writing experience provides opportunities to assess these goals and outcomes.

Goals 6 and 7—assessed in the third year of the plan—cover professional skills and values acquired continuously throughout the J.D. curriculum, including professional conduct and communication, awareness of others’ perspectives, client-centered lawyering, and understanding the lawyer’s role in improving the law.

Finally, **Goals 3 and 5**—assessed in the final year of the plan cycle—are more abstract: they involve critical thinking, problem solving, self-reflection, and adapting one’s knowledge/skills to new situations. Because these goals and outcomes may be achieved in many places in the curriculum and in many different ways, assessing them allows for creativity but will also require a level of ease with the assessment process.

Learning Goals and Associated Outcomes							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
'18-'19	Evaluate						
'19-'20	Action	Evaluate		Evaluate			
'20-'21		Action		Action		Evaluate	Evaluate
'21-'22			Evaluate		Evaluate	Action	Action
'22-'23	Evaluate		Action		Action		
'23-'24	Action	Evaluate		Evaluate			
'24-'25		Action		Action		Evaluate	Evaluate
'25-'26			Evaluate		Evaluate	Action	Action
'26-'27	Evaluate		Action		Action		
'27-'28	Action	Evaluate		Evaluate			