**WHAT IS THE BAR EXAM?**

The Bar Exam is an examination given in each state to decide whether or not a candidate is able to practice law in that state. The format for each state's bar exam is different, but usually is broken into two parts that are taken on two separate days.

In 1738, Delaware created the first bar exam with other American colonies soon following suit.

The bar examination in most U.S. states and territories is at least two days long (a few states have three-day exams) and usually consists of:

Essay questions:

All states administer several such questions that test knowledge of general legal principles, and may also test knowledge of the state's own law (usually subjects such as wills, trusts and community property, which always vary from one state to another).

Some jurisdictions choose to use the Multistate Essay Examination (MEE). Others may draft their own questions while some states both draft their own questions and use the MEE.

**WHY IS IT CALLED THE “BAR” EXAM?**

The bar is the partition (small wall) separating the seats of the spectators in the courtroom from the rest of the court. Students having attained a certain status used to *be called from the room to sit within the bar*, to take part in the proceedings of the court.

To “disbar” is to exclude from the bar, meaning you may no longer practice law.

**WHEN DO EXAMS OCCUR?**

Each state controls where it administers its bar exam.

Two states, Delaware and North Dakota, may administer their bar exams only once, in July.

Most bar exams are administered on consecutive days.

Louisiana is the exception, with the Louisiana Bar Exam being a three-day examination on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Also, Louisiana's examination is the longest in the country in terms of examination time, with seven hours on Monday and Wednesday and seven and one half hours on Friday for a total of 21.5 hours of testing.

The bar exams in California, Delaware, Nevada, South Carolina, and Texas are also three days long.

**HOW TO PREPARE TO TAKE THE EXAM**

Most law schools teach students common law and how to analyze hypothetical fact patterns like a lawyer, but do not specifically prepare law students for any particular bar exam.

LAW CLASS

What is the Bar Exam?

**Answer the questions in the space below:**

1. What is the purpose of the bar exam?

2. How long does it take to complete the exam?

3. Are all state bar exams alike

4. What kind of questions appear on the exam?

5. Why is it called the “bar” exam?

6. Do all states give their bar exam at the same time?

7. How do law students prepare for the exam?