Summary

USD School of Law Learning Assessment

USD School of Law is dedicated to teaching students to think critically and flexibly by providing a sound grounding in core doctrinal legal subjects. The law school trains its students in the skills of legal research, analysis and clear and precise writing, in addition to practice-based, experiential training, equipping graduates for the real world of legal practice.

The law school provides multiple opportunities for students to receive formative and summative assessments, thus informing the faculty of progress in achieving certain learning outcomes. The most common assessments are conducted twice a year in the form of end-of-semester examinations, but many courses have mid-term examinations, written assignments, “clicker” pop quizzes or questions, and other interim assessments. Students are typically provided syllabi with learning outcomes indicated specific to the course.

Overall educational effectiveness of the law school programs can be measured by USD’s high employment and state bar exam pass rates. In the spring of 2014 the law school faculty instituted the Faculty Grading and Assessment committee to consider and recommend measures to increase the frequency and effectiveness of formative assessments. This committee, along with the Faculty Curriculum Committee will continue to review the learning objectives of law school courses and the effective use of assessment in measuring these objectives.