Passing the Bar: A Quick Reference Guide For Today’s Law Student  
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Take A Commercial Bar Review Course

Students often ask whether they really need to take a commercial bar review course. The answer is yes. Bar review courses provide a plethora of resources that you will need to succeed.

First, bar review companies provide you with the law that you need to know. They have teams of people who extensively study bar exams, and will help you prioritize your work by identifying what is most heavily tested. This is especially critical if you are taking the Uniform Bar Exam because the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) use a variety of sources for determining the “general principles of law” that they test on. There is no single place you can go to find the testable law, and the commercial bar review courses have developed a detailed compilation of laws based on their painstaking research of bar exams. NCBE suggests that one look at their older essays to determine the sources of law that are used. However, studying solely from past essays will only provide you with a limited picture of what can be tested and will therefore not be sufficient. You need a more comprehensive source, which is where the bar review companies come in.

Additionally, the commercial bar review companies provide you with practice materials. As is discussed elsewhere in this book, the key to passing the bar exam is plentiful and strategic practice. The bar review companies will give you essays, MBEs, and MPTs to practice from. They all license questions from the NCBE, and many develop additional multiple-choice questions and essay questions for practice as well. Further, many companies will provide you with individualized feedback on a number of essay and MPT assignments during the bar study period.

This is far from an ideal or equitable system, but it is the system we have. Unless someone has the resources to create an entirely open source bar review company, applicants must pay for a commercial bar review course in order to have a strong chance of passing the bar the first time.

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