

should be simple, gender neutral terms should be used and professional responsibility issues should be addressed where they arise. Demonstrations may be live or videotaped and may demonstrate both written and oral skills.

## STATISTICS

### **An oversupply of law graduates? Putting the statistics in context.**

C Parker

4 *Legal Educ Rev*, 2, 1993, pp 255-271

It is often said that there are as many law students as there are lawyers. A closer look at the statistics indicates that the previous statement is an over-simplification of the situation and that the real story is less alarming. Firstly, defining the term lawyer is notoriously difficult. However, for the present purpose, lawyers are those recognised as legal practitioners by professional associations. Secondly, determining the number of law students is also difficult. Many universities offering combined law degree courses may or may not classify students in these courses as law students. Adding to the number of law students are those seeking legal qualifications by means other than enrolling in university degree courses. Thirdly, the number of law students is not indicative of the number of law graduates. For example, in 1991 13,370 law degree students enrolled, but only 2,500 completed their law degrees. Fourthly, the original assertion is flawed at a more fundamental level in that it assumes that all law graduates go into traditional legal practice, ignoring the fact that many law graduates will pursue a career in government, publishing,

community legal centres, teaching, corporations or on the bench.

Further dispelling the fear that there will be insufficient positions for law graduates is the fact that 96.3% of law graduates were employed six months after graduation. To finally lay to rest the "glut of lawyers" phobia, the statistics reveal that it is simply not true that there are as many law students as lawyers. The actual figure is two law students for every three practitioners.

## STUDENTS

### **Equal opportunities at the Inns of Court School of Law: Final Report**

Committee of Inquiry into Equal Opportunity Practices on the Bar Vocational Course

April 1994, 155 pages (107 pages of report, 48 pages appendices)

In the United Kingdom in 1989 the Bar Final Examinations were replaced by the Bar Vocational Course (BVC), designed to teach entrants to the profession the skills necessary for practice, rather than to supplement the academic knowledge gained through a degree. The report addresses the disparity in pass rates between black or ethnic minority students and white students taking the recently introduced BVC. This investigation necessitated an examination of the practices and policies of the Inns of Court Law Schools (ICLS) and the Council for Legal Education (CLE).

It was found that direct or indirect racial discrimination was absent from the BVC and so the disparity in pass rates was not due to the teaching methods of the CLE or the ICLS. The committee then sought to determine what other factors may

explain the disparity. Educational history of the candidate, gaining of pupillage, level of debt, absence of a library at the CLE, location of the CLE in London only and psychological isolation of students are a few of the factors that may contribute to the disparity.

The report is divided into sections detailing the membership of the committee, the conclusions and recommendations of the committee, statistical analysis, teaching, assessment and review, student welfare and counselling, student complaints, and an outline of an equal opportunities policy for the BVC.

## TEACHERS

### **Evaluation of teaching in law schools**

P T Wangerin

11 *J Prof L Educ* 1, pp 87-136 \*

Anecdotal evidence suggests that many law school teachers strenuously resist institutional attempts to evaluate teaching itself. Thus, anecdotal experience also suggests, most law school teachers respond favourably to essays such as the recent one by Richard Abel in the *Journal of Legal Education* (1990), an essay strongly critical of the use of "student evaluations" of teaching. Notwithstanding these facts, however, powerful forces from outside of the law school community seem likely in the near future to prompt many law schools at least to consider the creation of comprehensive teaching evaluation programs. The present analysis, which relies on ideas contained in literature describing teaching evaluation programs in many different kinds of schools, briefly

describes some of the things that cause teachers generally to resist the evaluation of their teaching and the outside forces that may now begin prompting change in this context. The analysis also describes at some length the general nature of comprehensive teaching evaluation programs.

## TEACHING METHODS & MEDIA

### **Problem-based learning and problem solving: interview with Stephen Nathanson of the University of Hong Kong**

M Gordon

11 *J Prof L Educ* 1, pp 137-143

In this interview Nathanson gives his views on the experience of problem-based learning in Hong Kong, the sorts of legal areas in which it is used, and how students acquire knowledge about the law using this method if the primary objective is to learn problem solving. He discusses the links between problem-based learning and the skill of problem solving, and assessment methods.

### **A case study of the "offices" project (teacher-less, co-operative learning groups) at Griffith University: implementing educational theory**

B Dick, L Golden, K Healy and MJ Le Brun with G Airo-Farulla and D Lamb

4 *Legal Educ Rev*, 2, 1993 pp 273-297

Law students at Griffith University are required to participate in the teacher-less, co-operative learning groups called "offices". The offices meet every fortnight and answer questions similar to those that would be encountered in legal

practice. The rationale for the offices is that they provide a forum where students can develop the various legal and non-legal skills associated with the graduate professional in law. These include coping with problems that do not fit into tight legal categories, interpersonal skills, recognition of group dynamics, networking and relationship building. In order to implement "office" learning it is recommended that an organisational psychologist be consulted in order to create an effective group learning environment, assist members of the group to work together and to set up processes for research and ongoing improvement of the program.

The experience at Griffith University Law School reveals that it is necessary to formally assess the offices program in order to get students to take it seriously. The project's goals, aims and objectives should be clear to curriculum designers, teachers and students alike. Evaluation of the offices project has revealed, among other things, that the experience should be as close to real life as possible, that student comments should be received openly, that the personal, social, ethical and professional implications of working in a group should be discussed, and that dynamics within the group should be monitored.

### **Chess strategies in law teaching**

G Miller

28 *Law Teacher*, 1, 1994, pp 22-35  
British law school graduates are often unable to analyse legal problems. The main approach in British law teaching is the lecture in which the role of precedent is demonstrated. Criticism of

authority is avoided. Consequently, given a set of facts students would reach a result similar to that of a judge. The author supports the analytical method of problem solving as it dispenses with the presumed legitimacy of authority.

Analysis by precedents is then proffered. An analogy of chess strategies and solving legal problems is made. The opening strategy involves collecting the arguments of the plaintiff and defendant. The middle game in legal analysis is a where the law and the facts are proved and manoeuvring in response to arising contingencies within the problem are performed. The end game indicates a solution to the problem allowing the student to understand what is necessary to solve the problem.

### **Specimen and model answers in law teaching**

C Cobley & S White

28 *Law Teacher*, 1, 1994, pp 36-55  
Law teachers do not generally provide model answers to students as it is thought that this "will lead to students simply copying or transforming it...to serve the purpose of any subsequent assignment with little being learnt from it about writing answers; the provision of a model answer will stifle literary creativity, experiment and individuality". This response overlooks the needs of weaker students and assumes that copying is a worthless exercise. Further, students' written work is rarely characterised by creativity, experiment and individuality.

At Cardiff Law School, students made judgements on answers to written assignments and then