

School of Law meets goals for bar exam with 80 percent pass rate

Liv Dubendorf
Senior Reporter

After receiving an 80 percent passage rate for this year's North Carolina Bar Exam, compared to the state average of 73 percent, Elon University's School of Law announced new priorities for the 2010-2011 academic year.

Given the success of this year's class, the School of Law has a number of goals for the coming academic year, which includes increases in scholarship and minority representation.

As indicated in the plan, the School of Law would like to achieve full approval of the American Bar Association, to have at least an 80 percent passage rate for the bar exam and accept 400 students for 2011-2012 with a median LSAT score of 156 and a median GPA of 3.25.

"We hope the law school's innovative approaches to legal education become models for other law schools across the country," said Philip Craft, director of communications for the School of Law. "In addition to a rigorous program of study, Elon Law students get practical experience in the profession from the moment they enter law school, including guidance from more than 50 attorneys in the region."

In addition, the School of Law would like to enroll 12 percent to 15 percent minority students for the academic year of 2011-2012 and raise \$400,000 for scholarship funds.

"The overall bar passage rate for members of the Class of 2009, including all exams taken in several states since July 2009, is 97 percent," Craft said.

"Many of the strengths of the School of Law derive from the university's values and vision for higher education, including Elon's nationally recognized emphasis on engaged learning and its focus on leadership development in the service of others," Craft said. "The successes of Elon Law are part of the university's legacy of academic excellence and innovation in higher education."

The rate of 80 percent compares to the rate of 73 percent for the entire state. Overall, 1,046 people took the state's bar exam administered in July.

Eighteen graduates took the exam outside North Carolina, sitting for the exam this summer in Georgia, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

In order to help students prepare

BY THE NUMBERS

BREAKING DOWN THE LAW SCHOOL

80% of School of Law graduates passed the bar exam in North Carolina

73% state average of law graduates who pass the bar exam

67% of people passed the North Carolina Bar Exam in 2009

400 the amount of students the School of Law hopes to enroll for 2011-2012

1,046 the amount of people who took the bar exam in the state

for the exam and in hopes to alleviate financial concerns, the university created a program called Project Pass last summer for recent graduates of the School of Law.

Project Pass provided graduates with cost-free room and board on Elon University's main campus during the months between graduation and the bar exam. Along with lodging, the program included a meal plan and access to campus facilities, such as Belk Library and Koury Athletic Center.

In addition to Project Pass, the School of Law offers third-year students preparation courses for the bar exam.

"Elon law faculty members and mentors are available to the graduates during the summer, aiding them in learning the substantive material and handling the stress of taking the bar exam," Craft said.

Commercial bar review courses were also available for graduates. Elon University School of Law offered loans to cover the cost of these courses.

Elon plans to get more students involved in Elon Academy

Becca Tynes
Senior Reporter

Elon University plans to expand the Elon Academy, a college preparatory program focused on helping Alamance County high school students gain access to higher education, by trying to get more students interested in participating in the program.

Although the academy isn't increasing class size numbers, other students in the Alamance County community are able to take advantage of what the program has to offer.

"We received a small grant and asked each of our students to bring a friend to one of the weekly Saturday meetings that focused on the college application process," Long said. "In that way, we've gone beyond the academy and reached out to other students in the system."

According to Long, other universities are becoming aware of the Elon Academy.

"Universities are sending admissions directors from schools such as Johnson C. Smith University and Appalachian State University to recruit our students," Long said.

Twenty-two students made up the program's first class that graduated this past spring. Twenty of those students now attend four-year colleges, while the other two attend two-year colleges.

"We're very happy that all of our graduated students are now attending a college or university," Deborah Long, director of the Elon Academy program, said. "The program is proving to be very successful."

Six students from the graduating class now attend Elon. Elon freshman and Elon Academy graduate Jessica Eller said the academy helped her in countless ways. Not only did she gain study skills from attending the academy, but she said she also gained a feel for the Elon campus.

"Because I'm a first-generation college student, the academy gave me resources and connections that I wouldn't have had otherwise," Eller said.

The program is made up of four phases. The first phase, titled "The Elon Academy College Access Program," was completed last year. The phase consisted of three four-week

residential and academic experiences at Elon during the summers prior to high school students' sophomore, junior and senior years of high school.

The second phase, titled "The Elon Academy Transitions to College Program," began this summer.

"During phase two, we offered our graduated seniors the opportunity to take ENG 110," Long said. "Eleven students took advantage of the opportunity, allowing them to develop important writing skills and obtain four college credits."

"The Elon Academy College Success Program," or the third phase, began this fall. According to Long, Darris Means, the assistant director of the Elon Academy program, plans to visit each graduated student three times during the academic year at his or her college or university.

The final phase of the program, titled "The Elon Academy Alumni Program," will begin in the fall of 2011.

"At that point, we will have two cohorts of students in college," Long said. "This is the beginning of what we hope will be a peer mentoring program. We hope the students at each university will form a network of support with one another."

According to Long, although the program itself is expanding, there is no plan to enroll more students.

"Expanding the academy would require additional staff and additional financial resources," Long said. "Last year, we took 29 students and it was really just too many. For right now, we're comfortable with 26 students per class."

Although the first graduated class is off at college, there are plans to incorporate them into the lives of current academy students.

"We'll be asking our college students to come back and tell the younger students about challenges they have faced," Long said. "We also hope that they will give us feedback on how we can better prepare them for college."

With the first two phases of the program complete and the third phase well under way, the program's directors are beginning preparations for the newest incoming class.

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-DEBORAH LONG
DIRECTOR OF THE ELON
ACADEMY PROGRAM

Economy professor loses 2010 primary for U.S. Congress, plans for campaign in 2012 election

Rachel Southmayd
Senior Reporter

New Elon University adjunct professor of economics Frank Roche recently ran for U.S. Congress in the fourth district of North Carolina. The district includes the areas of Durham and Chapel Hill, and is adjacent to Alamance County, where Elon is located.



Frank Roche
Adjunct Professor of
Economics

The New York Times reported that Roche received 41 percent of the vote in the Republican primary, compared to winner William Lawson's 46 percent. Although Roche lost, he plans to

resume campaign efforts for 2012 after the midterm elections in November.

"My economic expertise is what made me succeed the way I did," Roche said.

Before teaching at Elon, Roche spent 15 years in the banking industry in New York City, specializing in currency training. He said his career made him very familiar with public policy. He moved to North Carolina three years ago.

Roche said he was inspired to run by the Obama administration and decisions being made by "the left."

"The main issues were government living above its means," Roche said.

He said his main focus while campaigning was on economics.

According to Roche, his campaign raised \$125,000, and he had 420 volunteers, including

students at schools within the fourth district such as University of North Carolina, Duke University and North Carolina Central University.

"We had a really great support group, no question," he said.

"THE MAIN ISSUES WERE GOVERNMENT LIVING ABOVE ITS MEANS ... I'LL BE MORE AGGRESSIVE ON THE SAME ISSUES THAN I WAS THIS TIME."

-FRANK ROCHE
ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF
ECONOMICS

the nation is currently incurring will be "laid in the laps of the youth."

"Their future is in jeopardy," he said. "They have a voice, and they should use it."