



# The State Bar of California

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**OPEN SESSION**  
**AGENDA ITEM O-200**  
**OCTOBER 2020**  
**COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS**

**DATE:** October 16, 2020

**TO:** Members, Committee of Bar Examiners

**FROM:** Lisa J. Cummins, Program Manager III, Examinations

**SUBJECT:** Approval of Technical Report on the June 2020 First-Year Law Students' Examination

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A technical report for the June 2020 administration of the First-Year Law Students' Examination that was prepared by the Committee's psychometrician, Roger Bolus, Ph.D. Staff requests that the Committee approve the report, after which it will be received and filed.

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## **BACKGROUND**

After results from the First-Year Law Students' Examination are released, the Committee of Bar Examiners' (Committee) psychometric consultant prepares a technical report on the examination. The report includes information about the scoring process and summarizes the statistics for that exam taker population.

## **DISCUSSION**

Attached is the technical report prepared by Roger Bolus, Ph.D., on the June 2020 administration of the First-Year Law Students' Examination.

## **FISCAL/PERSONNEL IMPACT**

None

## **AMENDMENTS TO RULES OF THE STATE BAR**

None

## **AMENDMENTS TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES POLICY MANUAL**

None

## **STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

Goal: None - Core business operations

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the technical report be approved, then received and filed.

## **PROPOSED MOTION**

Should the Committee of Bar Examiners agree with staff recommendation, the following motion would be appropriate:

**MOVE** that the technical report on the June 2020 First-Year Law Students' Examination dated August 27, 2020, which was prepared by Roger Bolus, Ph.D., be approved, and thereafter received and filed.

## **ATTACHMENT LIST**

- A.** Technical Report on the June 2020 First-Year Law Students' Examination

**TECHNICAL REPORT ON THE JUNE 2020  
FIRST-YEAR LAW STUDENTS' EXAMINATION**

. Roger Bolus, Ph.D.

August 27, 2020

The First Year Law Students' Examination has two parts, multiple choice and essay. The multiple-choice section consists of 100 items dealing with Contracts, Criminal Law, and Torts. Multiple-choice raw scores (i.e., number of items answered correctly) were equated to the June 1998, October 2012, June 2015 and October 2017 exam using 20 items that were common to each of these exams. The resulting equating formula was as follows:

$$\text{Multiple Choice Scale} = (3.4306 \times \text{raw multiple-choice score}) + 27.2648$$

The essay section consisted of four questions in the same subjects as the multiple-choice test. Scores were assigned to answers on a 40 to 100-point scale in 5-point intervals. The candidates' raw total essay scores were scaled to a score distribution that had the same mean and standard deviation as their multiple-choice scores using the following formula:

$$\text{Essay Scale} = (2.3217 \times \text{raw essay total score}) + -338.2075$$

A candidate's total scale score was the sum of that candidate's multiple choice and essay scale scores. Candidates with total scores of 560 or higher pass and those with scores below 540 fail. Candidates in the 540 to 559.9999 range have their essay answers and all their scores reviewed by a member of the Committee's Examination Development and Grading Team.

Of the 267 candidates who took the exam, 47 had total scale scores of 560 or greater and 201 had total scale scores that were below 540. The latter count includes 4 failing candidates who did not complete the exam. Of the 19 candidates in the reappraisal range, 13 passed. The total number passing (60) was 22% of the total number of takers (see General Statistics report printout for details). The table below summarizes the main test statistics for the multiple-choice, essay, and total scores for the 263 applicants completing the exam. There was a .60 correlation between their essay and multiple-choice scores.

Score	Raw Scores		Scale Scores		Score Reliability
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	
Multiple-Choice	61.56	14.30	238.46	49.06	0.91
Essay	248.38	21.13	238.47	49.06	0.65
Total			476.93	87.84	0.86

The mean raw scores on the Contracts, Criminal Law, and Torts sections of the multiple choice test were 20.38, 21.66, and 19.52. The corresponding standard deviations were 5.65, 4.93, and 5.16.