

# SCHOOL OF LAW BLUEPRINT FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AY 2014-15

## I. Executive Summary

### (1) Academic Dashboard Targets

Because the School of Law enrolls only post-baccalaureate students and because legal scholarship does not typically rely on external grant funding, most of the eight elements of the University Academic Dashboard are either inapplicable to the School of Law or do not provide an effective quality comparison with other law schools. However, at least some of the University Dashboard elements are easily translated into law school equivalents.

The School of Law uses the following elements for the Law School Academic Dashboard, selected to provide the best objective indicators available of the School of Law's performance as compared with peer and peer aspirant schools. Each reflects a University performance parameter, as indicated in italics.

- (1) Median entering full-time student LSAT scores; (*quality of students*)
- (2) Number of full-time J.D. students; (*enrollment*)
- (3) Student-faculty ratio; (*quality of the academic experience*)
- (4) Bar passage rate of graduates taking the bar exam for the first time in the state in which the largest percentage of graduates take the bar exam; (*outcome measure*)
- (5) Annual per capita average of faculty publications authored by full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty and published in top-50 law reviews or top-three specialty journals within a field (as defined by the Washington and Lee University Law School annual rankings of legal journals). (*scholarship productivity and quality*)

The attached charts indicate performance of the School of Law in each regard. Although these are useful measures, we emphasize that they are not exclusive measures of the quality of the School of Law, its students, or its faculty. Improvements in factors (3) and (4), along with strong placement statistics, have helped fuel a two-year rise in US News ranking from 109 to 93.

### (2) Key Performance Parameters

The School of Law's goal of developing a strong national reputation as a vibrant educational institution with excellent teaching and a curriculum designed to prepare its graduates for modern practice is consistent with the key performance parameter of teaching excellence. The recent hiring of excellent classroom teachers, and changes in curriculum to emphasize the skills and knowledge needed for transition into practice, indicate progress in this regard.

The goal of developing a strong national reputation for scholarship quality and productivity is consistent with that key parameter of the University. Three faculty are finalizing books for major University presses, several are drafting major national casebooks, and a number of faculty have been invited over the past year to present papers at well-respected law schools. The respect given by other academics to South Carolina faculty for their scholarship is a significant indicator of progress, along with the number of books and articles published in major law reviews.

Law School faculty continue to serve in major roles on national and state law reform projects regarding non-profit organizations, commercial law, and probate law. The dean recently was appointed to an ABA Task Force on the Financing of Legal Education. Other faculty have raised law school involvement in key state and local advisory and service roles, advancing the service parameter of the University. Active consideration is being given to the effective use of technology and other assets to ensure sustainability of programs.

## **II. Meeting Academic Dashboard Targets**

### University Academic Dashboard

The School of Law contributes directly to only three of the University's eight Academic Dashboard Components: Student-Faculty Ratio, Research Expenditures, and Faculty Productivity. The hiring of additional faculty has improved the student-faculty ratio within the School of Law in each of the past two years. That ratio should improve further in the next two reporting years as new faculty begin to teach, with no change in enrollment. The Children's Law Center continues to be the School of Law's primary contributor to overall University research expenditures, and no major change is anticipated immediately in that regard. Faculty continue to seek prestigious appointments such as Fulbright Awards, and the School is committed to encouraging those efforts. Professor Susan Kuo was recently selected as one of the nation's very best law teachers in the classroom. The Law School is more aggressively nominating faculty for other awards, in an effort to build recognition leading to increased future consideration of our faculty for major national awards.

### School of Law Academic Dashboard

#### **(1) Median entering full-time student LSAT scores**

Given the decrease in the national and local applicant pools over the past two years, the goal for Fall 2014 again is to enroll an entering class with a steady or only slightly decreased median LSAT score as compared to Fall 2013. Through March 4, 2014, applications to South Carolina are down 4.3% from the same time in 2013. By comparison, through February 28, 2014, the national pool was down 12.5% and the southeast regional pool was down 16.9% from 2013. Although it is encouraging that the applicant pool to South Carolina has not diminished at the same rate as at other schools, those schools are competing aggressively for students through awards of significant scholarship funding. South Carolina is at a significant competitive disadvantage in that regard and must attract students for other reasons. Faculty are calling admitted students, and the school has recruited alumni both in and outside of South Carolina to contact admitted students, encouraging the applicants to matriculate at South Carolina.

Curricular depth created by the hiring of new faculty, strong employment numbers, and national recognition of our school as a "top-20 value" have positioned the school to address concerns of prospective students about employment after law school and to assure students of the opportunity to engage in specific areas of academic inquiry.

#### **(2) Number of full-time J.D. students**

A number of schools have responded to the diminished applicant pool by shrinking their entering class (so as to maintain entering statistics) and relying more heavily on transfer students to recover lost income. We believe that the better long-term strategy for our school is to maintain our class size, even at the cost of some short-term deterioration of entering statistics. Given our current resources and our goals as a flagship state university, we anticipate remaining at our current enrollment size for the near future.

**(3) Student-faculty ratio**

This element is discussed under the sub-heading for University Academic Dashboard.

**(4) Bar passage rate of graduates taking the bar exam for the first time in the state in which the largest percentage of graduates take the bar exam**

The slight slippage in the South Carolina bar passage rate of our graduates, noted in the 2013 BluePrint, has been reversed. A year ago, among May 2012 graduates taking the July 2012 South Carolina bar exam, the pass rate was 81%. This year, among May 2013 graduates taking the July 2013 South Carolina bar exam, the pass rate increased to 88%. The overall state pass rate for all exam takers (regardless of school) was 69.17 % in July 2012 and 76.38% in July 2013. Partial information received from other states continues to indicate that graduates leaving South Carolina also pass the bar exam in high percentages. A full-time staff member at the School of Law has developed a voluntary program designed to assist third-year students in preparing for the bar exam.

**(5) Annual per capita average of faculty publications authored by full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty and published in top-50 law reviews or top-three specialty journals within a field (as defined by the Washington and Lee University Law School annual rankings of legal journals)**

It remains difficult to identify a single reliable measure of scholarship quality and quantity. Difficulties arise both in acquiring equivalent data from other law schools and in ensuring that the parameters chosen are the best for the measures sought. In 2013, we were able to obtain data from two peer schools, but in 2014 only one school would provide similar data. The count of articles can vary because of productive faculty becoming involved in a longer-term project such as a book. Three faculty currently are drafting major books under contracts with NYU Press (Zug), Oxford University Press (Said), and Yale University Press (Crocker). Others are drafting major national casebooks. Associate Dean Eichhorn has instituted “works in progress” luncheons and has worked closely with faculty to assist in their publication efforts. New faculty receive senior mentors, and the School of Law has encouraged and funded faculty travel to speak at other schools and develop national reputations.

### III. Law School Goals and Contribution to the University's Key Performance Parameters

#### *Goal 1*

**Fully integrate new faculty into the academic program in a manner that provides students with adequate courses to complete graduation requirements and desired elective study within six semesters, provides adequate support for student academic success, ensures the long-term quality of the J.D. and LL.M. programs, and provides faculty with adequate support and opportunity to engage in robust scholarship production. [Teaching Excellence, Scholarship Reputation and Productivity]**

#### **Progress to Date:**

- Hired one tenured professor (white female), one tenure-track assistant professor (white male), and one tenure-track law librarian (minority female) who joined the School of Law in Summer 2013, and a visiting assistant professor (minority female) who accepted a tenure-track position beginning in January 2014.
- Hired a visiting assistant professor (minority female) from 2012-13 to continue as a visitor in Spring 2014. She is expected to seek a tenure-track position in 2014-15. Hired four additional tenure-track faculty (3 white male, 1 white female) with outstanding academic credentials for Fall 2014. One offer is outstanding at this time. Three faculty are retiring in Spring 2014, and up to five hires are expected in 2014-15 for Fall 2015.
- Started one-week KickStart program for 35 first-year students prior to orientation
- Implemented a professionally run 1L voluntary tutoring program and 3L voluntary bar-preparation program
- Created a “speed-advisement” program to bring faculty advisement services to the student public spaces and encourage student use of advisement services
- The Associate Dean for Faculty Development implemented regular programs at which faculty share works in progress and faculty have increased their sharing of works in progress for collegial feedback
- In 2013, faculty published 12 articles in top-50 journals or top-three specialty journals by field
- Required and reviewed summer research proposals and progress reports to ensure faculty production from summer stipends
- The School hired an additional administrative support position, dedicated in part to assisting production of faculty scholarship
- LL.M. program approved by faculty and awaiting University approval
- Created additional courses to enhance the transition to practice

#### **Plans for Upcoming Year:**

- Enhance coordination and enhance the number of clinics, capstones, externships, and other upper-level courses providing students with practical learning experiences
- Evaluate the optimal enrollment size of introductory core courses, balanced with the need for a robust selection of advanced or specialized electives
- Add courses addressing the use and impact of technology on the legal profession
- Identify specific electives to be available to students enrolled in the LL.M. program

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- Create an online legal writing course as a pilot for larger scale development of an online summer program
- Better integrate faculty participation in the student academic success program
- Create an online academic advisement program

**Goal 2**

**Implement a clear strategic plan for increasing both the quality and quantity of the first-year applicant pool and enhancing the yield rate for matriculation of admitted applicants. For Fall 2015 admission, receive completed applications from not less than 75% of the total number of persons who register with the Law School Admission Council, identify themselves as South Carolina residents, and have an LSAT score of at least 155. [Service to State, Sustainability]**

**Progress to Date:**

- Implemented a faculty calling program to encourage admitted students to matriculate
- Purchased modelling software to assist in most effectively utilizing limited scholarship resources
- Established scholarship funding as the primary goal of development efforts
- Contacted all potential applicants who had registered with LSAC and met certain criteria, encouraging them to apply to South Carolina
- Attended major regional and national events and visited individual colleges within the region to provide information about South Carolina
- Hosted Liberty Fellow Middle School Pipeline Project

**Plans for Upcoming Year:**

- Focus recruitment on selected schools with good quality graduates and students likely to have an interest in South Carolina
- Visit 20 new schools in region to build relationships with pre-law advisors and pre-law organizations
- Target prospective students with interest in our areas of curricular strength
- Continue to develop accuracy of modelling outcomes
- Reinforce faculty and alumni contact with admitted students
- Provide some travel subsidy to encourage strongest applicants to visit campus
- Improve student ambassador contact with prospective students
- Develop range of printed materials highlighting aspects of academics and student life
- Develop undergraduate pipeline proposal

**Goal 3**

**For 2014 graduates who are admitted to a bar, achieve an employment rate 9 months after graduation of not less than 75% in full-time, long-term jobs requiring bar passage. [Service to Profession, Sustainability]**

**Progress to Date:**

- For class of 2012, nearly 71% of *all* graduates were employed in full-time, long-term jobs requiring bar passage, which was 26<sup>th</sup> best in the nation

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- Established a separate interview day for employers in Charleston
- Proactively contacted small to mid-sized South Carolina law firms and South Carolina judges regarding employment needs
- Encouraged all students, beginning in the first year, to utilize career services assistance and continued existing programs to assist students

**Plans for Upcoming Year:**

- Develop new relationships with 20 mid-sized to large-sized out-of-state law firms not currently interviewing on campus, offering to make law students available for video interviews
- Develop new relationships with at least 10 additional judges in North Carolina and Georgia regarding the availability of South Carolina graduates for judicial clerkships

**Goal 4**

**Grow existing non-tuition revenue streams and develop additional sources of funding for the academic programs of the School of Law. [Sustainability]**

**Progress to Date:**

- Faculty approval of LL.M. proposal
- Creation of South Carolina Legal Writing Academy
- Hired part-time development officer to develop annual giving program

**Plans for Upcoming Year:**

- Depending upon success of initial Legal Writing Academy, consider growth of offering to 32 fellows in 2015
- Increase alumni percentage giving annually to the School of Law to 9% in FY 2015
- Ensure that each alumnus or alumna has not fewer than six contacts per year with the School of Law through the School's alumni or development efforts
- Explore possibility of student entrepreneurial efforts to create intellectual property with the School of Law as a participant

**Goal 5**

**Increase programmatic efforts of the Rule of Law Collaborative with goal of creating a body of work to support grant funding for a Center. [Scholarship Reputation, Service to State, Nation and World]**

**Progress to Date:**

- The School of Law has hired a full-time tenure-track faculty member to work in the field of Rule of Law and a second with relevant expertise in policing; Professor Joel Samuels has been appointed as next director of the Rule of Law Collaborative
- The School is sponsoring visits to campus by various individuals with expertise in Rule of Law issues.

**Plans for Upcoming Year:**

- Develop strategic plan for implementation and funding of Rule of Law Center

## **FIVE-YEAR GOALS**

### ***Goal 1***

**Significantly elevate the national stature of the School of Law while fulfilling the Law School's public mission within the State of South Carolina. [Service and Scholarship Reputation]**

- Achieve annual faculty placement of 15-20 articles in top-50 law reviews or top-three specialty journals within a field (as defined by Washington and Lee Law School annual rankings of Journals) (or equivalent success in book placements with major law publishers)
- Establish a nationally recognized, endowed Rule of Law Center; obtain approval of and fully implement a nationally recognized certificate program in Children's Law involving the Children's Law Center. (Latter Goal Achieved in 2014)
- Develop a unified marketing and communications strategy for the School of Law
- Encourage active faculty leadership in professional and academic associations or in similar professional service activities related to their field of expertise
- Develop a schedule for hosting national and regional conferences in the new law school facility

### ***Goal 2***

**Fully staff a curriculum that meets core needs; provides each student with a clinic, practicum, or externship opportunity while in law school; and provides greater depth of study in children's law, business counseling and entrepreneurship, environmental law, rule of law, and professional leadership. [Teaching Excellence, Service to State and Profession]**

- As hiring of 10 new tenured or tenure-track full-time faculty is completed by 2015, departing and retiring faculty will be replaced
- Additional tax and clinical faculty are a hiring priority, as are additional capstone courses and externships

### ***Goal 3***

**Construction (scheduled to begin in 2014) and occupation of new law school building designed to enhance academic programs and reputation; raise \$5 million in new gifts and pledges for scholarship endowment in addition to annual scholarship contributions. [Sustainability]**

### ***Goal 4***

**Develop entrepreneurial post-J.D. and community education program, including revenue-producing LL.M. program (awaiting University approval). [Sustainability, Service to State, and Profession]**

### ***Goal 5***

**Develop a clear, comprehensive strategic plan for future development of the School of Law. [Sustainability]**

**APPENDIX A**  
**Resources Needed**

<b>Goal No.: 2013-14 Goal 1; Five-Year Goal 2</b>			
<b>Type of Resource</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Additional</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Add'l Faculty	Provost Commitment; Replace Retiring Faculty		To fill critical needs in tax and clinics, strategic areas of focus

<b>Goal No.: 2013-14 Goal 2; Five-Year Goal 4</b>			
<b>Type of Resource</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Additional</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Staff (Assistant Admissions Director)	Operating funds saved as senior faculty retire	Tuition income from LL.M. program	Recruitment and retention of international LL.M. students and assist J.D. admissions, including pipeline program.

<b>Goal No.: 2013-14 Goal 4; Five Year Goal 2</b>			
<b>Type of Resource</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Additional</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Part-Time Fellows to Work with Center	\$250,000 private funds already pledged		To enhance reputation and encourage student entrepreneurship
Adjunct Faculty	Operating funds saved as senior faculty retire	Solicited annual or endowed contributions	Staffing of each course requires 3 adjunct faculty at \$5,000 each

<b>Goal No.: Five-Year Goal 4</b>			
<b>Type of Resource</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Additional</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
1 Add'l Faculty	One Regular Hiring slot	Income from LL.M. Tuition	Offer pending for business law faculty member
Technology		Income from LL.M. Tuition	Exact needs not yet known.

<b>Goal No.: Five-Year Goal 5</b>			
<b>Type of Resource</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Additional</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Consultant			No current funding strategy.

**APPENDIX B**  
**Benchmarking Information**

***Top-10 Public Law Schools.*** In March 2014, the top-ten public law schools (eleven with ties) as ranked by *U.S. News and World Report* were as follows (the parenthetical number indicates the school's overall ranking among all law schools, public or private):

University of Virginia (8)  
University of California-Berkeley (Boalt Hall) (9)  
University of Michigan (tied for 10)  
University of Texas (15)  
UCLA (tied for 16)  
University of Minnesota (tied for 20)  
University of Alabama (23)  
University of Washington (tied for 24)  
University of Iowa (Tied 27)  
University of Indiana – Bloomington (Tied 29)  
University of Georgia (Tied 29)

***Peer Law Schools.*** The School of Law has selected the following peer law schools by considering the following factors: (1) peer institutions of the University; (2) connection with a major public research university; and (3) number of full-time J.D. students enrolled. (The parenthetical indicates the school's March 2014 *U.S. News* ranking.)

University of Kentucky (Tied 58)  
University of Missouri-Columbia (Tied 64)  
University of Kansas (Tied 68)  
Louisiana State University (Tied 72)  
University of Tennessee (Tied 72)

**APPENDIX C**  
**Top Strengths and Important Recent Accomplishments**

1. Expanded curricular offerings. New capstone courses and renewed emphasis on clinical education and skills training, including the children's law certificate program, place the School of Law near or in the vanguard of curriculum reform nationally. Our students also have unique access to educational opportunities at the National Advocacy Center.
2. Faculty have book contracts with major academic presses (Yale, NYU, Oxford) and are authoring major national casebooks in several fields.
3. University investment in the School has attracted high quality new and lateral faculty hires. Retention of existing faculty has stabilized.
4. Graduates are in positions of national leadership in the profession, including presidents-elect of the American Bar Association and the American Board of Trial Advocates, raising the profile of the School.
5. Recent graduates have established and maintained a record of excellence as graduate students at the leading national graduate tax (LL.M.) programs at NYU, Florida, and Georgetown.
6. School has maintained national leadership in lawyer mentoring.
7. School has an energized and engaged student body; expanded career services efforts have enhanced individual counseling and assistance for students in their job search.
8. School remains a national leader in pro bono student volunteer opportunities, with expanding pro bono offerings for students in the community.
9. Law students serve as the editorial board of one of the nation's most widely circulated law reviews, the American Bar Association Real Property, Trust & Estate Law Journal.

**APPENDIX D**  
**Weaknesses and Plans to Address Needs**

1. *Shrinking National Applicant Pool* – We have adjusted entry criteria to maintain class size in light of reduced national applicant pool. We are developing additional marketing materials and have enhanced our web and social media presence to make potential students aware of the opportunities available at South Carolina and to publicize favorable hiring and bar passage information. We have acquired new analytic tools to predict yields more efficiently and have engaged faculty, alumni, and students in personal recruitment of students. Plans have been made to build relationships with more regional undergraduate schools likely to produce good applicants. Major scholarship donations have been solicited and promised, but additional funds remain a *critical* need. The need continues to exist for one additional admissions recruiter.
2. *Low National Ranking: Impact on Student and Employer Recruitment* – The last two US News rankings have moved the law school from 109 to 93 in two years, but peers have also moved forward. Strong placement statistics, an improving student-faculty ratio, and favorable bar passage numbers compared to the state average are responsible, at least partly, for the improvement in rankings. A communications director hired in 2013 is working aggressively within available resources to establish a clear identity for the school. We are encouraging faculty leadership in national academic and professional organizations to raise the School’s profile. Career services will begin to aggressively market the use of technology to encourage interviews of our students by out-of-state employers who do not come to campus.
3. *Condition of Facility* – Construction of the new facility will begin in Summer/Fall 2014.
4. *Lack of Communications Strategy* – We have upgraded our social media presence and have upgraded our web site prior to University conversion in order to improve communications with prospective students, current students, and alumni. We have developed a semi-annual alumni magazine and have hired a part-time annual giving director to enhance contact with alumni. National marketing efforts to academic audiences have focused on announcements of major conferences, symposia, and hiring.
5. *Bar Passage Rate* – We have hired a full-time staff professional to provide academic assistance and voluntary bar preparation assistance. Bar passage rates improved in 2013, when compared with the prior year.
6. *Student Academic Advisement* – A disconnect currently exists between information availability and student awareness of the information. Student use of advisement services has been almost non-existent. An experimental offering of “speed advisement” in the Law School Lobby is being tested in March 2014 in an effort to better engage students in available advisement services.

**APPENDIX E**  
**Statistical Data for School of Law**

**1. Number of Entering Freshmen**

Not Applicable

**2. Freshman Retention Rate**

Not Applicable

**3. Sophomore Retention Rate**

Not Applicable

**4. Number of Majors Enrolled:**

First Professional\*

Fall 2010	696
Fall 2011	686
Fall 2012	648
Fall 2013	621

\* Data retained by Law School and reported to ABA differs, apparently due to differing reporting dates

**5. Number of Entering First Professional Students and Median LSAT:**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>LSAT</u>
Fall 2010	240	159
Fall 2011	213	158
Fall 2012	213	157
Fall 2013	209	155

**6. Number of Graduates:**

First Professional

Fall 2012	8
Spring 2013	203
Summer 2013	6

**7. 4-year, 5-year, 6-year Graduation Rates**

Not Applicable

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**8. Total Credit Hours Generated by Unit Regardless of Major:**

Fall 2012	9,339
Spring 2013	9,033
Summer 2013	531

**9. Percent of credit hours by undergraduate major taught by faculty with highest terminal degree**

Not Applicable

**10. Percent of credit hours by undergraduate major taught by full-time faculty**

Not Applicable

**11. Number of Faculty**

	<u>Fall 2011</u>	<u>Fall 2012</u>	<u>Fall 2013</u>
<b>Department of Legal Studies</b>			
Tenured/Tenure Track			
Professor	12	15	16
Associate Professor	13	14	16
Assistant Professor	5	3	1
Non-Tenure Track Legal Writing Instructors (Full-Time)	7	7	7
Adjunct	19	22	22
<b>Department of Clinical Legal Studies</b>			
Tenured/Tenure Track			
Professor	1	1	1
Associate Professor	2	2	3
Assistant Professor	1	1	1
<b>Law Library</b>			
Tenured/Tenure Track Law Librarian	8	8	7

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**12. Current number and change in the number of tenure-track and tenured faculty from underrepresented minority groups from FY 2012.**

	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Fall 2013</b>	<b>Change Fall 11/Fall14</b>
Black or African/ American	4	4	4	None
Asian	1	2	2	+1
N/R Alien	1	1	1	None
Female	9	10	11	+2

**APPENDIX F**  
**Statistical Research Data for School of Law**

Total External Award Funding FY 13: \$3,742,735

Children's Law Center	\$ 3,717,109
School of Law	\$ 25,626

Sources of Funding:

Federal:	\$3,217,736
State:	\$ 499,999
Philanthropy	\$ 25,000

Information from <http://sam.research.sc.edu/awards.html>

# SCHOOL OF LAW

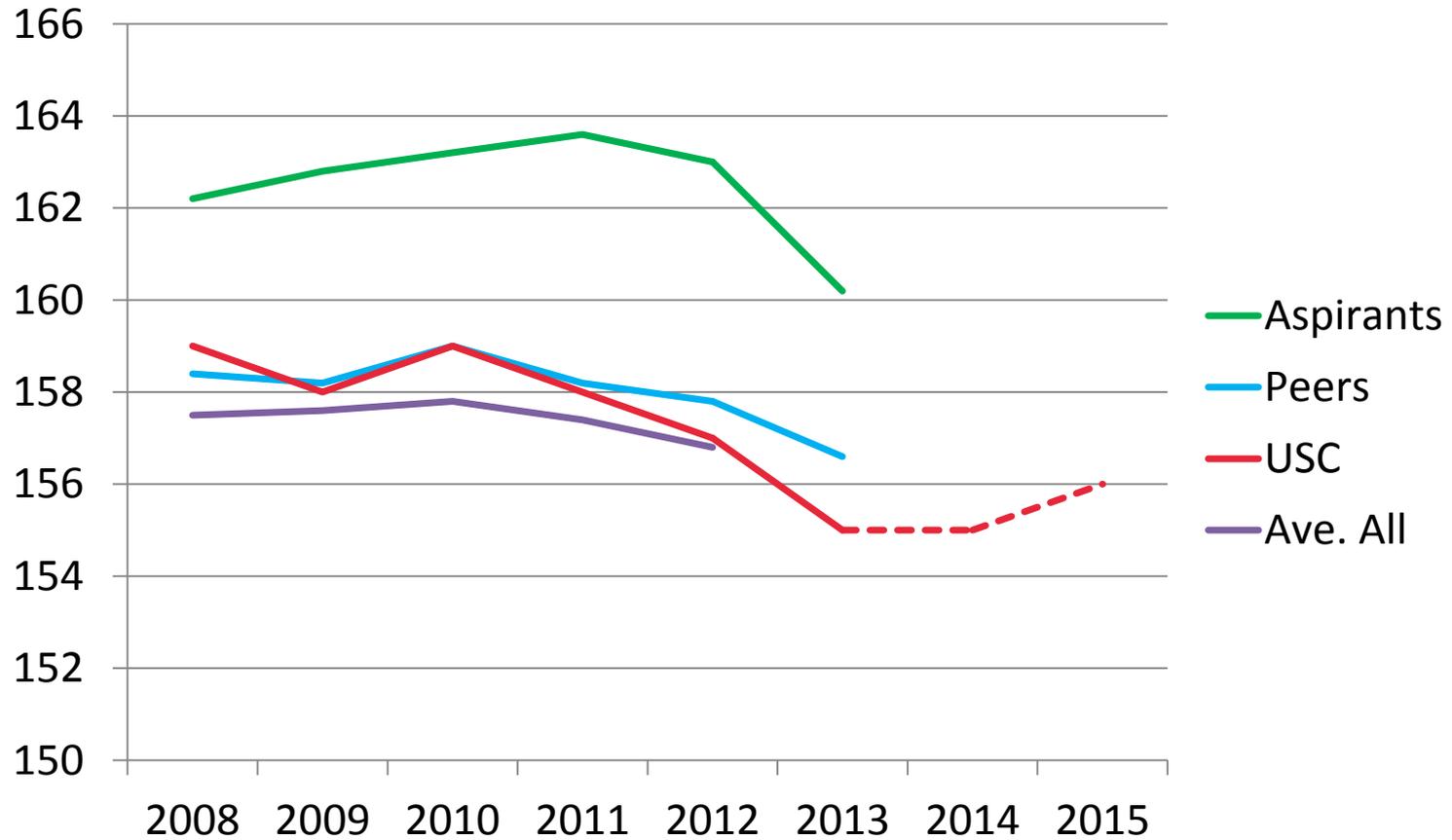
## Peer Aspirant Law Schools

University of Maryland  
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill  
University of Georgia  
University of Alabama  
The Ohio State University

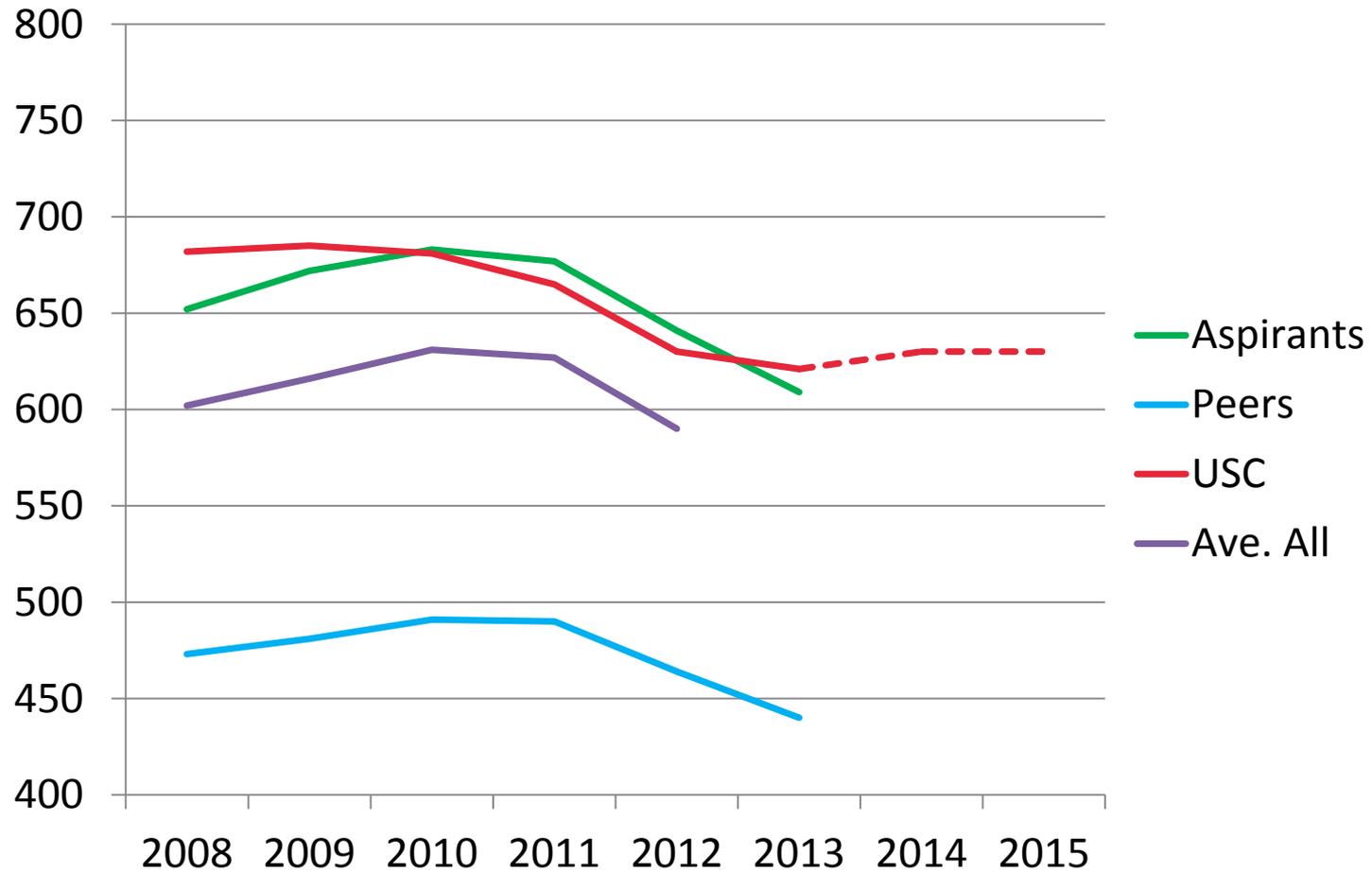
## Peer Law Schools

University of Kentucky  
University of Tennessee  
University of Missouri-Columbia  
Louisiana State University  
University of Kansas

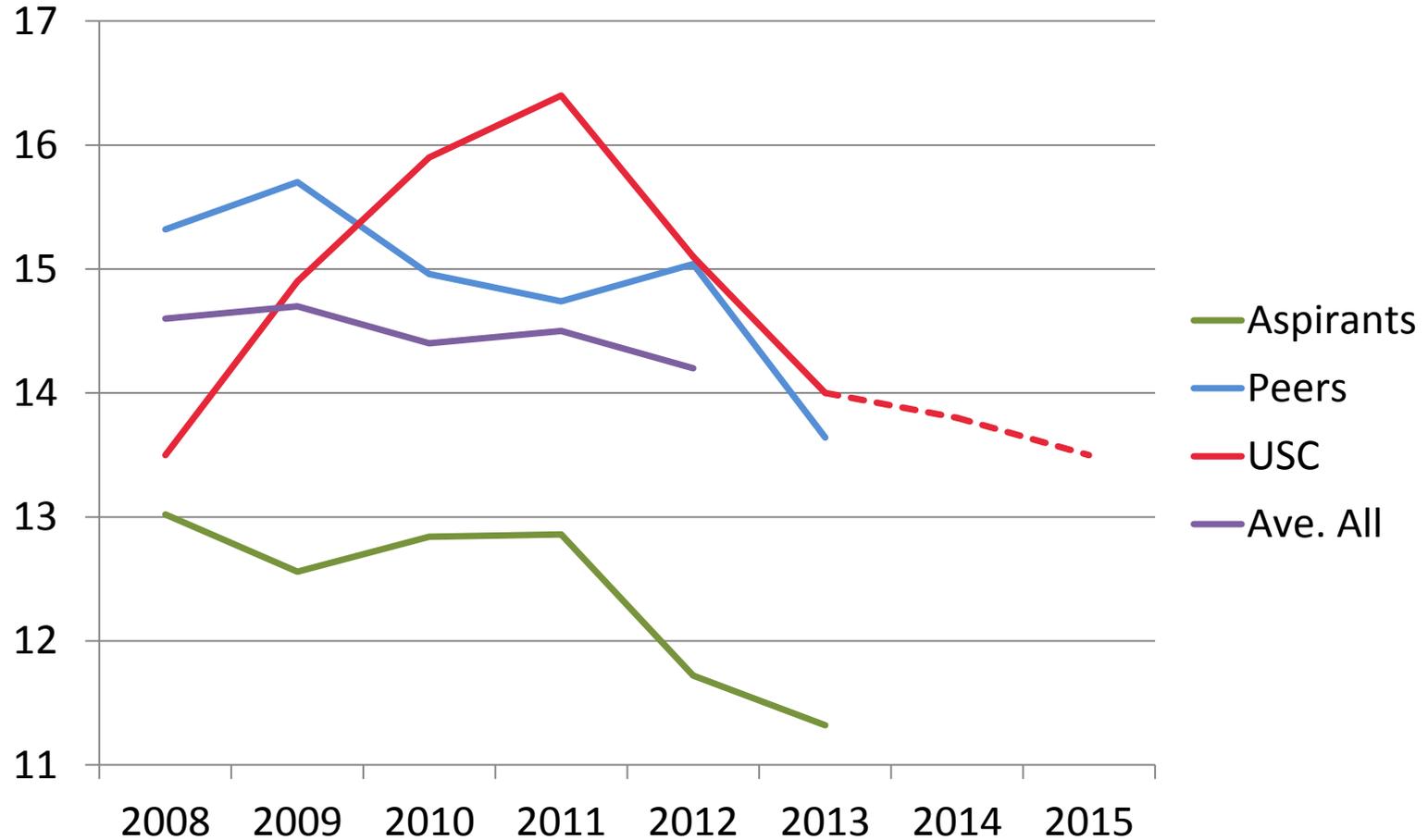
# No. 1: Median Entering-Class LSAT



# No. 2: Total Fulltime JD Enrollment



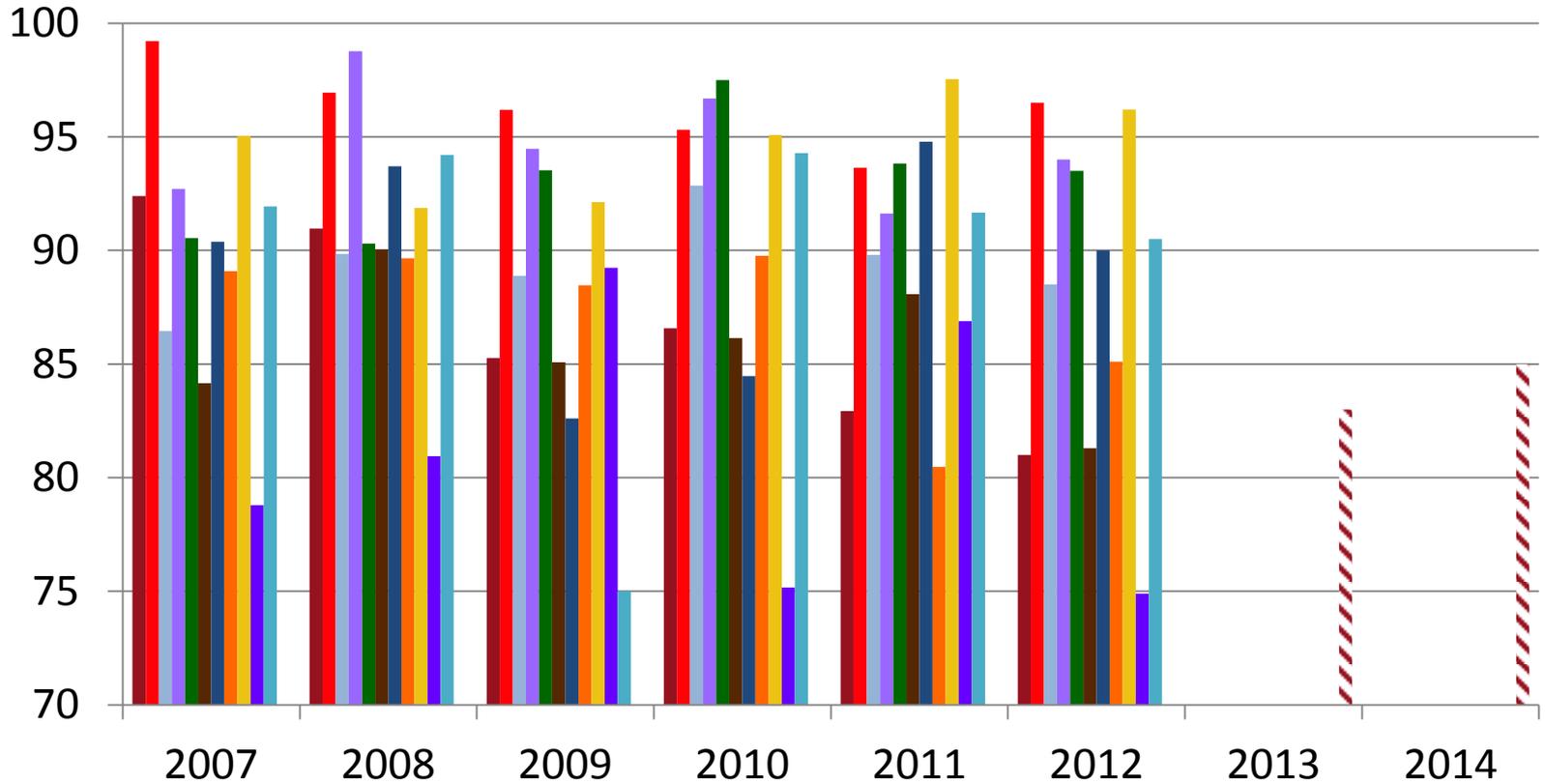
# No. 3: Student-Faculty Ratio



# Bar Passage Rate

This number reflects the school's bar passage rate in the state with the most graduates of that school taking the exam.

# No. 4: Bar Passage Rate

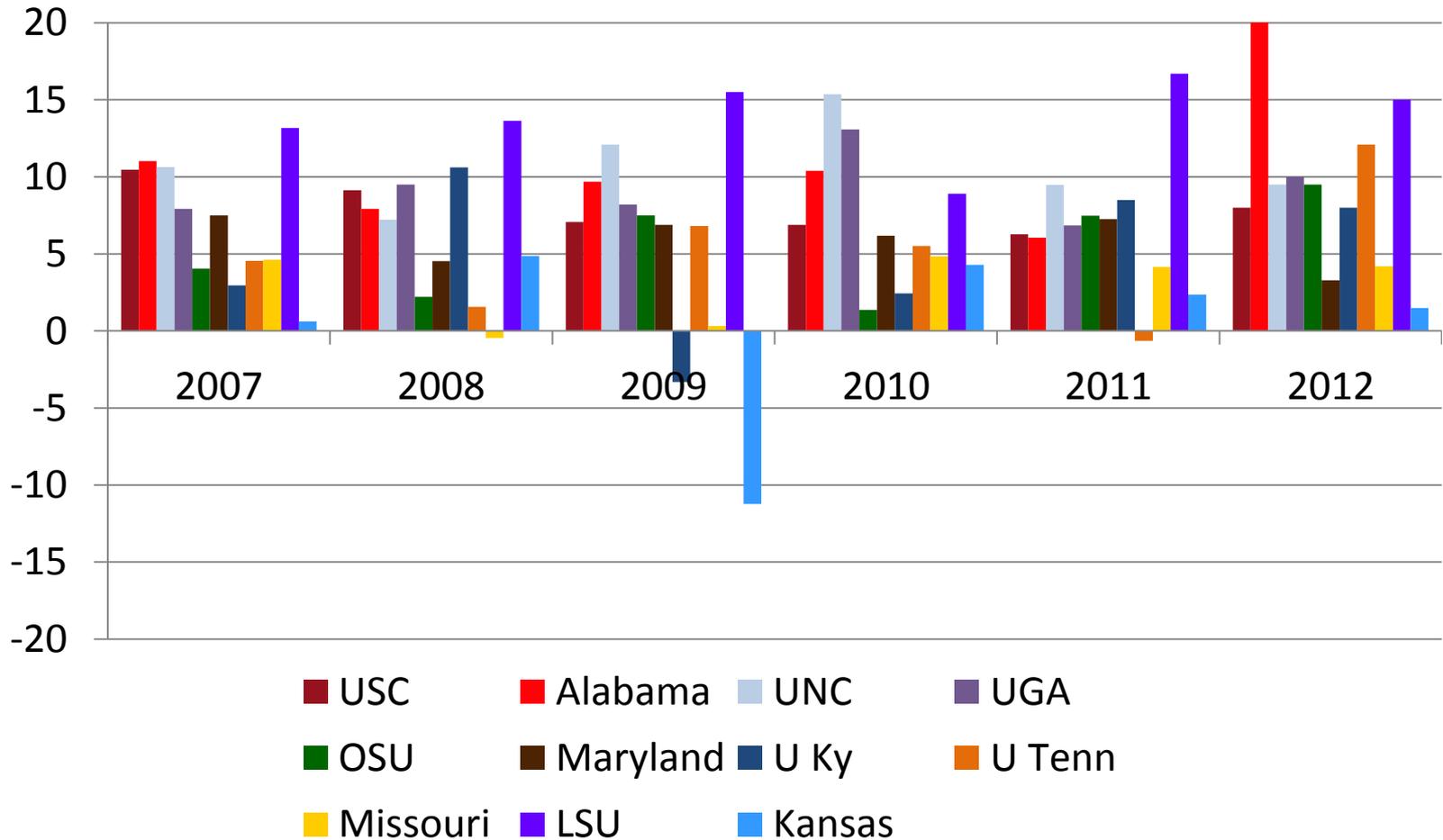


- USC
- Alabama
- UNC
- UGA
- OSU
- Maryland
- U Ky
- U Tenn
- Missouri
- LSU
- Kansas
- USC Proj

# Bar Passage Rate Differential to State Average

This number reflects the difference between the school's bar passage rate in the state with the most graduates of that school taking the exam and the overall bar passage rate in that state.

# No. 4: Bar Passage Rate Differential to State Average



# No. 5: Publications in Top-50 Law Reviews and Top-3 Specialty Journals

