



**Frequently Asked Questions: Bar Preparation Review Course
Updated August 6, 2009**

1. Why is Stetson requiring students to purchase a bar review course?

Law school teaches students the analytical and conceptual tools necessary to become an attorney. But learning to be an attorney, and passing the bar exam, are two related, but slightly different sets of skills and knowledge. In different courses throughout law school—and particularly in the required curriculum—students learn substantive knowledge to help them pass a bar examination. The purpose of a bar review course is to provide you with a refresher course just before you take the exam and to provide test-taking tips and techniques for this high-stakes examination.

Our graduates do well on the bar exam—in fact, they do extremely well. We are consistently ranked in the top four (out of eleven) law schools in Florida. Our historical first-time pass rate is around 86%. We routinely survey Stetson Law graduates who have failed the Florida bar examination, and the results consistently point to the same factors in all but a few unusual instances. These factors include 1) the student did not take a bar review course; 2) the student paid for a bar review course but did not regularly attend, or did not do all the homework assigned; 3) the student worked full-time between graduation and the time of the bar exam; or 4) the student had a significant personal or family emergency near the test date. In an effort to mitigate the first two factors, we have reached an agreement with KaplanPMBR, one of the oldest and most successful commercial bar review providers, to allow our graduates to take a three-day multistate bar review course after graduation at a significantly discounted rate.

2. How much is the fee, when does the new fee take effect, and how will the fee be collected?

All students in the J.D. or a J.D. dual-degree program and who will start at Stetson Law in or after Fall 2009 (including transfer students with a graduation date in or after December 2011) will be required to pay this fee. The 2009–2010 fee is \$375. The fee will be added to a student's bill; it will be paid in two equal installments during a student's first fall and spring semesters.

3. Why did the College decide to require a multistate course?

Our review of bar passage data reflects that our alumni who fail the bar examination fail at least the multistate portion. Indeed, many graduates who fail the bar examination pass the state law portion but fail the multistate portion.

Our students also tend to report that they have more difficulty with multiple-choice questions than essay questions. And while Florida is unusual in that the state portion of the examination includes both essay and multiple-choice questions, the multistate bar examination consists of 200 multiple-choice questions—and nothing else.

In addition, we selected a multistate course because the multistate bar examination is required in every jurisdiction, except Washington state. Therefore, the course is highly portable.

4. Why did the College choose KaplanPMBR over other providers?

Several Stetson Law faculty and administrators reviewed proposals from every major commercial bar review provider. In addition to some other excellent companies, KaplanPMBR and Bar/Bri are the two largest companies in the field, and both present an attractive set of options for students. For many decades, Bar/Bri has focused on a multi-week course reviewing the substance of every topic tested on the bar, while KaplanPMBR has focused on the challenges of taking the Multistate Bar Exam, a complicated multiple-choice test. Both Bar/Bri and KaplanPMBR compete heavily with one another and now offer courses in the other's areas of expertise. We selected KaplanPMBR due to its significant experience with multiple-choice bar exam preparation. You can read more about KaplanPMBR's success at www.kaplanpmbr.com.

We still believe all students should take a comprehensive (usually six-week) bar review course. KaplanPMBR and Bar/Bri both offer well-regarded courses in this category, as do several other companies. However, in considering these two course types in light of our awareness of how law school classroom testing is weighted in favor of essay questions, we felt additional multiple-choice exam preparation would be the most beneficial to our students.

5. Were Stetson graduates taking KaplanPMBR before this requirement?

Yes, about 70% of our graduates each year take KaplanPMBR courses.

6. What if I want to take a different KaplanPMBR course?

KaplanPMBR offers a six-day multistate bar review, and a multi-week substantive bar review course, similar to Bar/Bri and other companies. If a Stetson graduate decides to take a more expensive KaplanPMBR program, the fee will be credited toward that more expensive option; all additional costs, however, are each graduate's individual responsibility.

7. What if I want to take Bar/Bri, or some other commercial bar review course?

We think taking a substantive multi-week bar review course is a great idea. In fact, we urge you to do so!

For many years, dedicated students took Bar/Bri for substantive bar review, and KaplanPMBR for Multistate Bar Exam and multiple choice review. Other options exist

today, including taking KaplanPMBR's multi-week substantive bar review. But taking Bar/Bri in addition to Kaplan/PMBR is still an excellent choice.

8. I'm not planning on being in Gulfport after I graduate. What should I do?

Generally, if there is a major city or a law school, KaplanPMBR offers a course. Your fee is good for any three-day KaplanPMBR bar preparation course, anywhere the course is offered.

9. Where is KaplanPMBR offered?

As part of our agreement with KaplanPMBR, the three-day course will be offered in Gulfport. In some years, depending upon demand, KaplanPMBR may also offer the course in Tampa.

10. What if I decide to take the bar examination outside Florida?

Every state in the United States (except the state of Washington) requires the Multistate Bar Exam. The KaplanPMBR course is not Florida-specific. Graduates taking only the Washington state bar exam may request a refund from the Associate Dean of Academics.

11. What if I postpone taking the bar?

We give each graduate's name to KaplanPMBR and you can take the course once after graduation. KaplanPMBR has not given us any specific time limitations in which you must take the course. Once your plans are known, you should contact KaplanPMBR to discuss your desired time frame.

12. Does the College of Law keep any of this fee?

No. The cost is a pass-through only, meaning that the College of Law is charging you the discounted price we negotiated with KaplanPMBR, and nothing more.

13. Is \$375 a discounted price for the course?

At the time this FAQ is being initially published, Stetson's rate is \$75 less than anyone would pay KaplanPMBR directly. We were particularly excited to negotiate such a great rate! In addition, you will have access to materials not available if you had purchased the course as an individual.

14. Can my friends at other law schools take advantage of Stetson's relationship with KaplanPMBR?

No. This is a special, negotiated rate available only to Stetson graduates. In addition, you must remember that the materials you will be provided by KaplanPMBR are protected by federal copyright law. You must not reproduce, redistribute, share, sell, auction, or give away any such materials during or after your enrollment.

15. Will financial aid cover this fee?

Yes. Students can pay this fee from financial aid.

16. Will Stetson Law scholarships cover this fee?

No.

17. What happens to my fee if I withdraw, am excluded, or transfer to another law school?

Students graduating from Stetson in December 2011 or later are entitled to take the three-day KaplanPMBR course, regardless of however long it takes them to graduate.

Students who withdraw from the College of Law, are academically excluded from the College of Law, or plan to take only the Washington state bar, which does not include the multi-state examination, may apply to the Associate Dean of Academics for a refund.

The application should be in writing and should state the basis for the request. Students who transfer to another law school are still able to take the three-day course when they graduate at the special rate; they will not be entitled to a refund.

18. I'm graduating before December 2011. Is this course and discount rate available to me?

The course itself is available from KaplanPMBR. Unfortunately, the discounted rate is not available to students graduating before December 2011. Although we attempted to obtain an "opt in" rate for our other students, based on the level of discount KaplanPMBR has given our students, KaplanPMBR declined to extend the program scope beyond the terms we have described here.

19. What if I have other questions about the fee or the course?

Please address other questions to the Associate Dean of Academics.

Cross-reference: Fee for Bar-Review Course policy.

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