# Memo

**TO:**   Research Partners, AccessLex Bar Exam Success Analyses

**FROM:**   AccessLex Research Team

**DATE:**   November 2023

**RE:**   **Guidance on Data Collection and Instructions for Data Transfer**

Below are descriptions of the data points that will be collected in the accompanying Excel spreadsheet and, ultimately, used in each school's analyses. For several of the items, we have included examples and guidance to assist you in completing the spreadsheet. Data should be provided for students who matriculated in Fall 2015 through Fall 2020.

The preferred deadline for submitting data is March 1, 2024; however, we understand that this is a sizeable data request and can be flexible if you need more time. Please note that data received after the deadline will be analyzed on a first come, first served basis.

Please contact us at research@accesslex.org with any questions.

## STEP 1: ENTER RECORDS FOR COLUMNS STARTING IN ROW 5

### Section 1: Student Demographic and Background Information

**Column A: Student ID** or other anonymized identifier such that we can communicate with questions regarding specific students without needing their names.

**Column B: Race/Ethnicity** of student. Enter data according to ABA definitions of race/ethnicity.

- **Hispanic or Latino/a of any race.** A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

- **American Indian or Alaska Native.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
- **Asian or Asian American.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- **Black or African American.** A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- **Two or more races.** A non-Hispanic person who selects two or more of the other racial categories.
- **Caucasian or White.** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.
- **Nonresident alien.** A person who is not a citizen or national of the United States and who is in this country on a visa or temporary basis and does not have the right to remain indefinitely.
- **Race Ethnicity Unknown.** A person whose race and ethnicity are not known.

**Column C:** **Gender** of student. Enter data according to ABA gender categories (**Man, Woman,** or **Other**). **Male** and **Female** are also acceptable inputs. Both full text and abbreviations will be accepted.

**Column D:** **Birth Year** (YYYY) of student. Enter the year of birth only.
    *IMPORTANT: Do NOT enter the full date of birth. The full date of birth will NOT be accepted due to data security/privacy reasons.*

**Column E:** **First-Generation College Student Status.** This should be either *Yes* or *No*.

| Student ID | Race/Ethnicity | Gender | Birth Year | First-Generation College Student Status (Yes/No) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5521254 | White | Female | 1995 | No |
| 5513522 | Black or African American | Other | 1991 | No |
| 2519113 | Hispanic or Latino | Female | 1993 | No |
| 1137298 | Asian or Asian American | Male | 1988 | Yes |

## Section 2: Student Admission Information

**Column F: Number of LSAT Scores Reported** in support of the student's application to the law school.

**Column G: Highest LSAT Score** reported to the law school.

**Column H: Average LSAT Score.** Mean value of all LSAT scores supplied in the student's application to the law school.

**Column I: Undergraduate GPA: First year**. GPA should be cumulative of the first academic year and entered as a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column J: Undergraduate GPA: Final**. GPA should be cumulative of all semesters and across undergraduate institutions. This information is found on the "Cum. Across GPA" line of a student's CAS report. It should be entered as a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column K: Undergraduate Institution** name of the undergraduate degree-conferring institution from which the student graduated.

**Column L: Did the Student Attend More than One Institution?** Answer yes if the CAS report lists credits earned at more than one undergraduate institution; otherwise answer no.

**Column M: Number of Years to Complete Undergraduate Degree.** Should be rounded to the nearest whole number and is the difference between the student's *final* year of study and their *first* year of study, as it is reported on the CAS report. This is an approximation for length of time it took the student to complete their degree, so some imprecision is expected here. The goal of this data collection is to determine the extent to which the student completed their studies in the "traditional" 4 years.

<div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 20px; padding: 20px;">

**UNDERGRADUATE GPA EXAMPLE**

Below is a screenshot of the transcript analysis section of a hypothetical student's CAS report. Note that the student attended three different undergraduate institutions.

| | Year | 15-15 | 16-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 | 18-18 | 18-19 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T R A N S C R I P T | Education Level | U | U | U | U | U | U |
| | College | | | | | | |
| | College Code | | | | | | |
| | LSAT College Mean | Sch. 1 | Sch. 2 | Sch. 2 | Sch. 2 | Sch. 3 | Sch. 2 |
| | Num. Candidates | | | | | | |
| | Semester Hours | 6.0 | 18.0 | 31.0 | 25.0 | 6.0 | 34.0 |
| | GPA | 3.17 | 3.44 | 3.94 | 3.64 | 4.00 | 3.85 |
| | Cum. GPA/College | 3.17 | 3.44 | 3.76 | 3.72 | 4.00 | 3.76 |
| | Cum. GPA Percentile Rank | 20% | | | | INSF | 85% |
| | GPA College Mean | 3.46 | | | | 3.18 | 3.24 |
| | Cum. Across GPA | 3.17 | 3.37 | 3.69 | 3.68 | 3.70 | 3.74 |

For the student above, the Excel spreadsheet would be completed as:

| F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of LSAT Scores Reported | Highest LSAT Score | Average LSAT Score | First-year Undergraduate GPA | Final Undergraduate GPA | Undergraduate Institution | Did the student attend more than one undergraduate institution? | Number of years to complete undergrad degree |
| 2 | 155 | 151 | 3.37 | 3.74 | Sch. 2 | Yes | 4 |

To calculate number of years to complete undergraduate degree, please subtract the *first year* of study from the *final year*: 2019 – 2015 = 4 years

</div>

# Section 3: Student Enrollment Information

**Column N: Matriculation Year** at your law school.

**Column O: Matriculation Term** at your law school. This should be either *Fall* or *Spring*. Leave blank if all students enter in the fall.

**Column P: Did the Student Transfer to Another Law School?** This should be either *Yes* or *No*.

**Column Q: Was the Student Dismissed for Academic Performance Reasons?** This should be either *Yes* or *No*.

**Column R: Was the Student Unenrolled for any Reason Other than Transfer to Another Law School or Academic Dismissal?** This should be either *Yes* or *No*.

**Column S: Graduation Year.** This should be the year in which the student's J.D. was conferred.

**Column T: Graduation Term.** This should be either *Fall* or *Spring* for the year reported in Column G. Leave blank if all students graduate in the spring.

| N | O | P | Q | R | S | T |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Matriculation Year | Matriculation Term (If not the fall for everyone) | Did the student transfer to another law school? | Was the student dismissed for academic performance reasons? | Was the student unenrolled for any reason other than transfer or academic dismissal? | Graduation Year | Graduation Term |
| 2016 | Fall | No | No | No | | 2015 Spring |

## Section 4: Student Law School Academic Performance

**Column U: First-Semester GPA** of student. For nontraditional or part-time students, please enter the GPA earned when they have completed approximately half of the required coursework for the 1L year. For example, if your school requires 90 credits to graduate and 30 credits for each year, you would enter that student's GPA at roughly the 15 credit mark. Enter a number formatted to the hundredths place between 0.00 and 4.00. For transfer students please report their first-semester GPA at their original institution, if available—if not, please enter *NA*.

**Column V: First-Semester Class Rank** of student (if available). Enter a whole number without ordinal indicators (e.g., 23, not 23rd).

**Column W: Total Number of Students in First-Semester Ranking Calculation**. Enter a whole number.

**Column X: First-Year Cumulative GPA** of student. For nontraditional students, first-year cumulative should be defined at the point when a student completes the requisite credit hours required for first-year students at your institution. Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place. For transfer students that were enrolled full-time at their original institution, please report their first-year GPA at their original institution, if available—if not, please enter *NA*.

**Column Y: First-Year Class Rank** of student. Enter a whole number without ordinal indicators (e.g., 23, not 23rd).

**Column Z: Total Number of Students in First-Year Ranking Calculation**. Enter a whole number.

**Column AA: Final Cumulative GPA** of student (at graduation). Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column AB: Final Class Rank** of student. Enter a whole number without ordinal indicators (e.g., 23, not 23rd).

**Column AC: Total Number of Students in Final Class Ranking Calculation**. Enter a whole number.

| U | V | W | X | Y | Z | AA | AB | AC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Semester GPA | First Semester Class Rank | Total Number of Students in First Semester Ranking Calculation | First Year Cumulative GPA (Spring Semester) | First Year Class Rank | Total Number of Students in First Year Ranking Calculation | Final Cumulative GPA | Final Class Rank | Total Number of Students in Final Class Ranking Calculation |
| 3.44 | 40 | 98 | 3.50 | 35 | 97 | 3.60 | 27 | 95 |

## Section 5: Credit Hours in Coursework

**For Columns AD through AR, enter the total number of credit hours (at graduation) earned in the following:**

**Column AD: All Doctrinal Bar Courses**
> *Doctrinal bar courses are broadly defined as those that focus on those possible tested topics on the bar exam in the jurisdiction in which the student/graduate took the bar exam. Enter a whole number. Credit hours in this column should equal the total of columns AF through AM.*

**Column AE: Required 1L Doctrinal Courses.** These are credits earned in doctrinal bar courses that are required in the 1L year. Enter a whole number.
> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AF-AR.

**Column AF: Criminal Procedure.** These are credits earned in doctrinal bar courses specifically covering the topic of criminal procedure. Enter a whole number.
> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AE-AR.

**Column AG: Evidence.** These are credits earned in doctrinal bar courses specifically covering the topic of evidence. Enter a whole number.
> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AE-AR.

**Column AH: Conflict of Laws.** These are credits earned in doctrinal bar courses specifically covering the topic of conflict of laws. Enter a whole number.

> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AE-AR.

**Column AI: Business Associations.** These are credits earned in doctrinal bar courses specifically covering the topic of business associations (ex. Agency and Partnership, Corporations). Enter a whole number.

> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AE-AR.

**Column AJ: Family Law.** These are credits earned in doctrinal bar courses specifically covering the topic of family law (ex. Domestic Relations). Enter a whole number.

> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AE-AR.

**Column AK: UCC Art. 9.** These are credits earned in doctrinal bar courses specifically covering the topic of UCC Article 9 (ex. Secured Transactions). Enter a whole number.

> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AE-AR.

**Column AL: Trusts and Estates.** These are credits earned in doctrinal bar courses specifically covering the topics of trusts and estates (ex. Wills and Trusts, Wills and Estates). Enter a whole number.

> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AE-AR.

**Column AM: Other Doctrinal Courses.** These are credits earned in doctrinal bar courses other than those mentioned above. Enter a whole number.

> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AE-AR.

**Column AN: Skill-Based Bar Courses.** A skills-based bar prep course is one in which the acquisition of skills that are relevant on the bar exam is the primary aim of the course. Such a course may seek to improve the ability of students to do things like write bar exam essays, answer MBE questions, or take MPTs. The acquisition of content knowledge may occur in these courses, but skills training is the primary focus. Enter a whole number.

> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AF-AR.

**Column AO: Legal Writing.** These are credits earned in courses that specifically focus on building legal writing skills. Courses counted should focus on legal writing in a practice setting (e.g., memorandum drafting, litigation drafting) rather than academic writing (e.g., seminars or law reviews). Enter a whole number.

> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AF-AR.

**Column AP: Clinic Credit Hours** earned by student. These are credits earned in courses classified as legal clinics by the law school. Enter a whole number.

> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AF-AR.

**Column AQ: Externship Credit Hours** earned by student.
These are credits earned in courses classified as externships or field placements by the law school. Enter a whole number.

> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AF-AR.

**Column AR: Other Courses** earned by student.
These are credits earned in courses that are not counted elsewhere on this form. Enter a whole number.

> *IMPORTANT:* Credits counted here should not be counted elsewhere in Columns AF-AR.

| AD | AE | AF | AG | AH | AI | AJ | AK | AL | AM | AN | AO | AP | AQ | AR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Credit Hours in Doctrinal Bar Courses | Credit Hours in Required 1L Doctrinal Courses | Credit Hours in Criminal Procedure | Credit Hours in Evidence | Credit Hours in Conflict of Laws | Credit Hours in Business Associations | Credit Hours in Family Law | Credit Hours in UCC Art. 9 | Credit Hours in Trusts and Estates | Credit Hours in Other Doctrinal Courses | Credit Hours Earned in Skill-Based Bar Courses | Credit Hours Earned in Legal Writing Courses | Clinic Credit Hours | Externship Credit Hours | Credit Hours in Other Courses |
| 53 | 20 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 12 | 9 | 4 | 0 | 12 |

## Section 6: Student GPA in Coursework

**In columns AS through BD, enter the single grade or grade point average (at graduation) earned in the following:**

> *Please apply the same courses counted as credits in Section 5 for each corresponding category in Section 6. If the student has zero credit hours in any of the following categories and therefore does not have a grade or GPA to enter, please enter NA.*

### Column AS: **All Doctrinal Bar Courses**

> *Doctrinal bar courses are broadly defined as those that focus on those possible tested topics on the bar exam in the jurisdiction in which the student/graduate took the bar exam. Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.*

**Column AT: Required 1L Doctrinal Courses.** This is the cumulative GPA earned in doctrinal bar courses that are required in the 1L year. Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column AU: Criminal Procedure.** This is the cumulative GPA earned in doctrinal bar courses specifically covering the topic of criminal procedure. Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column AV: Evidence.** This is the grade earned in the doctrinal bar course covering the topic of evidence. Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column AW: Conflict of Laws**. This is the grade earned in the doctrinal bar course covering the topic of conflict of laws. Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column AX: Business Associations.** This is the cumulative GPA earned in doctrinal bar courses specifically covering the topic of business associations (ex. Agency and Partnership, Corporations). Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column AY: Family Law.** This is the grade earned in the doctrinal bar course covering the topic of family law (ex. Domestic Relations). Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column AZ: UCC Art. 9.** This is the grade earned in the doctrinal bar course covering the topic of UCC Article 9 (ex. Secured Transactions). Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column BA: Trusts and Estates.** This is the cumulative GPA earned in doctrinal bar courses specifically covering the topics of trusts and estates (ex. Wills and Trusts, Wills and Estates). Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column BB: Other Doctrinal Courses.** This is the cumulative GPA earned in doctrinal bar courses other than those mentioned above.  Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column BC: Skill-Based Bar Courses.** A skills-based bar prep course is one in which the acquisition of skills that are relevant on the bar exam is the primary aim of the course. Such a course may seek to improve the ability of students to do things like write bar exam essays, answer MBE questions, or take MPTs. The acquisition of content knowledge may occur in these courses, but skills training is the main focus. Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

**Column BD: Legal Writing.** This is the cumulative GPA earned in courses that specifically focus on building legal writing skills. Enter a number between 0.00 and 4.00 formatted to the second decimal place.

| AS | AT | AU | AV | AW | AX | AY | AZ | BA | BB | BC | BD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GPA in Doctrinal Bar Courses | GPA in Required 1L Doctrinal Courses | GPA in Criminal Procedure | GPA in Evidence | GPA in Conflict of Laws | GPA in Business Associations | GPA in Family Law | GPA in UCC Art. 9 | GPA in Trusts and Estates | GPA in Other Doctrinal Courses | GPA in Skill-Based Bar Courses | GPA in Legal Writing Courses |
| 3.3 | 3.56 | 3.25 | 3.5 | 3.75 | 3 | 3.8 | 3.4 | 3.33 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.5 |

## Section 7: Student Bar Exam Performance

**Column BE: First-Time Bar Exam Year,** the year in which the graduate first took the bar exam.

**Column BF: First-Time Bar Exam Administration,** whether the exam was taken during the February or July administration period. Please enter either *February* or *July*.

**Column BG: First-Time Bar Exam Jurisdiction** where the graduate took the bar exam for the first time. Either the full state name or state abbreviation is acceptable.

**Column BH: First-Time Bar Exam Score.** Please enter a whole number.

**Column BI: Maximum Possible Bar Exam Score for Jurisdiction** where the graduate took the bar exam for the first time.

**Column BJ: First-Time Bar Exam Result,** either *Pass* or *Fail*.

| BE | BF | BG | BH | BI | BJ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| First Attempt Bar Exam Year | First Attempt Bar Exam Administration (Feb/July) | First Attempt Bar Exam Jurisdiction | First Attempt Bar Exam Score | Maximum Possible Score for First Attempt Jurisdiction | First Attempt Bar Exam Result |
| 2019 | July | Illinois | 262 | 360 | Fail |

# STEP 2: SAVING DATA FILES

- All files submitted should be saved as an Excel Workbook (*.xlsx or *.xls) or a CSV (Comma-delimited) (*.csv), using the workbook accompanying these instructions.

# STEP 3: TRANSFERRING DATA FILES

When files are complete and ready for submission, please contact research@accesslex.org with the following information:
- Contact name
- Contact email address (any instructions or Box.com invitations will be sent here)
- Method of data submission (see below)
- Public IP Address (if using Method 2)

**You may choose either secure method below to transfer data files:**

Method 1 – Box.com
- To transfer files using Box.com, you will be temporarily invited to our Box account.
- **Schools WITH a Box account:** If your school has a Box account, you will receive a notification from Box that a folder has been shared with you. Login to Box and upload the file(s) to this folder.
- **Schools WITHOUT a Box account:** If you do not have a Box account, you will receive an invitation from Box to set up an account. Upon creating your Box account, you will receive access to a folder. Login to Box and upload the file(s) to this folder.

Method 2 – AccessLex's internal secure FTP service
- To transfer files using AccessLex's internal secure FTP service, you will need to provide AccessLex the IP address from which files will be uploaded.
- Using the provided IP address, AccessLex will set up an account giving you access to the secure FTP service and provide login instructions.
- You will then be able to transfer the files using your own web browser.