Why bar essays are different

- Purpose
- There is a right answer (but you can get points even with the wrong conclusion).
- More specific, concrete and concise than the typical law school exam.
- On UBE, multiple subjects in one essay.
What do bar graders want to see you do?

1. Analyze the facts of the question.
2. Spot the issue – find the legal problem.
4. Apply relevant legal principles to the facts provided.
5. Organize your answer and make it easy to read.
Answering a bar essay question

1. Read the call of the question
2. Read the question – circling important items
3. Re-read the call
4. Outline your answer
5. Write your answer
6. Re-read the call. Did you answer it?
Use the same legal analysis methods you learned in law school

Determinative facts should take center stage
  - The graders know the facts. They don’t need a recitation.

Grammar, complete sentences and paragraphs matter
  - Be precise and concise

Use headings
  - If given multiple prompts, label your answers and answer in the order asked.

Acknowledge counterarguments where appropriate.

Follow the same process for each answer. Develop a template.
Content of a bar essay

- CRAC
  - Conclusion – Be explicit. Begin with, “Yes, …” or No, …”
  - Rule – State the applicable rule. Give the appropriate statute if you know it. “As a general rule…” or “Under the Texas ______ code, …”
  - Analysis – Apply rules to relevant fact. “Here, …” or “In this case, …” or “Because.”.
  - Conclusion – Repeat your explicit conclusion. “In sum, …” or “Therefore…”. 

- CIRAC
  - You’ll often be encouraged to include an issue statement. Some students find that it helps them focus their answer. Make sure you use facts from the question.
    - Bad: The issue is whether a life estate was created.
    - Good: The issue is whether the phrase “until she dies” created a life estate for Donna.
Avoid lengthy discussions of law
  - No brain dumps
  - Tell the graders what they want to hear
    - They spend an average of two minutes (TX) to three-five minutes (CA) reading your answer.

Do not assume any facts (unless the call directs you to do so).

Citations