

BAR ESSAY REVIEW

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.
3. Material v. immaterial facts.
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?

Content of a bar essay

- 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.

What to NOT put in your answer

- 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