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## Feb bar exam

California's bar exam results have been released, showing that nearly 56% of test-takers passed the winter administration of the exam, which is a historically high pass rate. This success was partly due to changes in scoring and a more favorable exam format for some test-takers last November. In comparison, fewer than 34% of applicants passed the February 2024 bar exam. Meanwhile, several law firms have been involved in various lawsuits, including trademark infringement, securities, and product liability cases, with notable attorneys from firms like Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer, A&O Shearman, and Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani stepping in as defense counsel for clients such as Hanaco Venture Capital, Toronto-Dominion Bank, and Electrolux Home Products Inc. Stern claims that Electrolux Home Products' refrigerators' drawers and shelving frequently break and deteriorate within a few months after purchase. The case is currently pending before US District Judge Joan M. Azrack. In related news, Prof. Darryl Stracke notes that the Uniform Bar Exam tends to test Constitutional Law more in February and Corporations more in July, but this doesn't necessarily mean the exams are easier or harder in those months. He also highlights the differing pass rates between the February and July bar exams, which may contribute to the notion that the February exam is more challenging. Regarding the ease of passing a state bar exam, South Dakota has the highest pass rate at 68%, followed closely by Wisconsin (59%), Nebraska (80%), Iowa (79%), and Montana (77%). In contrast, some states like California are considered particularly challenging due to their complex testing procedures. For instance, Arkansas requires test-takers to have in-depth knowledge of state and local laws in addition to federal ones. California's State Bar reported a 52% pass rate on the July 2022 attorney licensing exam, a slight drop from last year's 53%. For first-time test-takers, the pass rate plummeted to 62%, down from 71% in 2021. The main reason behind this decline is that many law graduates typically take the bar exam for the first time in July, whereas repeaters tend to take it in February. This, along with a lack of seriousness among some test-takers, contributes to the lower pass rates. According to data from the National Conference of Bar Examiners, 85% of law school graduates take the bar exam once, while around 9% take it twice. Less than 1% attempt it more than five times. A small percentage refuse to give up despite repeated failures. In a similar trend, over 78% of U.S. law school graduates who took the bar exam for the first time in 2022 passed, as per the American Bar Association. However, simply repeating previous study methods can lead to failure among repeat test-takers due to a lack of meaningful reflection and necessary adjustments. Oklahoma boasts the highest pass rate, while Alabama, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, and North Dakota are tied for the easiest UBE (Uniform Bar Examination) scale. Failing to create a plan after previously taking the bar exam can lead to demotivation and a decline in performance. With an MBE score following a bell curve pattern, it's crucial to create a plan and stay motivated throughout the process. That's a staggering amount, but there's still much to do! For full-time students, it's crucial to study 40-60 hours per week for nine or ten weeks due to the California bar exam's broad scope. The exam covers various legal subjects like contracts, torts, criminal law, civil procedure, and professional responsibility, making it challenging. Interestingly, around one in ten J.D.s have taken but failed to pass a bar exam; this disparity affects black, Hispanic, and Asian law school graduates the most. Memorization is key when preparing for the bar exam. This often-overlooked aspect can be the missing link in many bar prep plans. Even if you struggle with memorizing information, don't panic! Everyone can effectively memorize material. The State Bar of California faced a botched rollout of its new exam, aiming to save money, which might ultimately cost them an additional \$5.6 million. According to Leah T. Wilson, executive director of the State Bar, the agency expects to pay around \$3 million for free exams, \$2 million for in-person testing sites, and \$620,000 to return to its traditional system. The California State Bar has launched an independent review of its traditional in-person exams after February test takers reported disruptions and technical issues. The Senate committee approved the audit, which will be conducted by the California State Auditor. Test taker Andrea Lynch described her experience as being affected by constant proctoring, technical glitches, and computer crashes, culminating in a message stating that her exam had been submitted before she had seen the questions. Lynch emphasized that the issue was not just a technical failure, but a systemic problem with the integrity of the exam. The State Bar has filed a civil complaint against the exam vendor, Meazure Learning, accusing it of fraud and breach of contract. However, some critics argue that the agency's leadership is responsible for the problems, particularly for failing to develop the new test in sufficient time. The hearing revealed issues with the exam's multiple-choice questions, including those drafted using artificial intelligence. The State Bar's executive director admitted that no lawyer assisted in the initial drafting of these questions and that they were only discovered after the exam was administered. Additionally, the agency did not copy edit test questions ahead of time, leading to concerns about fairness in grading. The pass rate for the February exam was reported as 55.9%, significantly higher than the previous year's rate. However, lawmakers raised concerns about how this disparity could be explained, suggesting that there may be issues with the grading process. The February bar exam saw an increase in passage rates compared to previous years, with historians attributing the higher score to the California Supreme Court's approval of a petition to lower the minimum raw passing score for general bar exam takers. According to Alex Chan, chair of the State Bar's Committee of Bar Examiners, the grading process remained rigorous and consistent despite the problems with the bar exam. He credits the high passing score to the scoring adjustments made by his committee. Wilson noted that February 2025 test-takers had a higher average raw score on the written section than their 2024 or 2023 cohorts, indicating they performed better without any psychometric adjustments. Umberg suggested that this improvement was due to the increased intelligence of test-takers. If the minimum score wasn't lowered, the overall pass rate would have been significantly lower at around 46.9%. However, Umberg expressed uncertainty about the impact of future testing formats on results. The National Conference of Bar Examiners is a not-for-profit corporation that develops licensing tests for bar admission and provides character and fitness investigation services. Stay current on bar exam news and updates for the NextGen bar exam. Review examples of new question types and explore the topics and skills to be tested. The Bar Examiner, NCBE's quarterly publication, keeps you informed about bar admissions and legal education issues. The Spring 2025 issue focuses on 2024 bar examination and admission statistics, including a deep dive into factors that influence performance. You can access the latest issue's table of contents or featured articles by following the link. NCBE aims to promote fairness, integrity, and best practices in law admissions for public benefit. The organization works towards equity in testing and eliminates aspects contributing to performance disparities among different groups.