

Why Assess?

Professor Andi Curcio

Georgia State University

College of Law

Why Assess



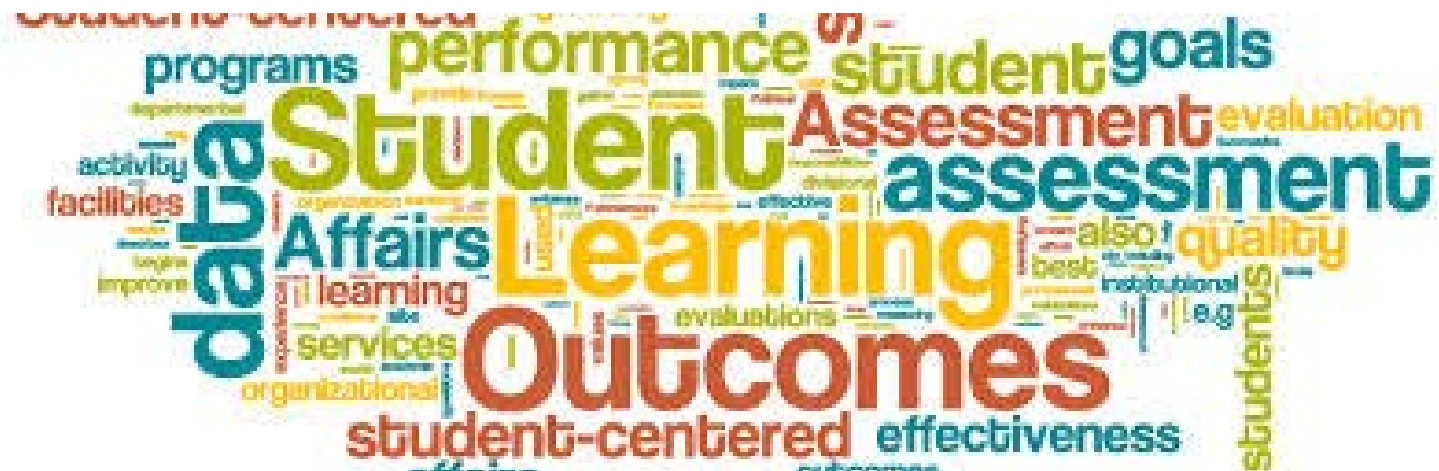
Don't let your brain
get too comfortable



Section of Legal Education
and Admissions to the Bar

What I have learned from studying assessment results

- Cultural sensibility learning outcomes
- Legal analysis learning outcomes
 - Formal studies
 - Observations



Cultural Sensibility



- **Clients are more likely than lawyers to perceive legal problems through their own cultural lens**
- **Lawyers do not bring culturally biased assumptions into the lawyer/client relationship**
- **While most people can't accurately identify when they are acting based upon stereotypes and biases, I generally know when I am doing so**

What I learned

- **Bias blindspot**

Perceiving
Self



Perceiving
Other



What I learned

- **Legal objectivity**



Want to Think Like A Lawyer?

What I learned

- **Student resistance**

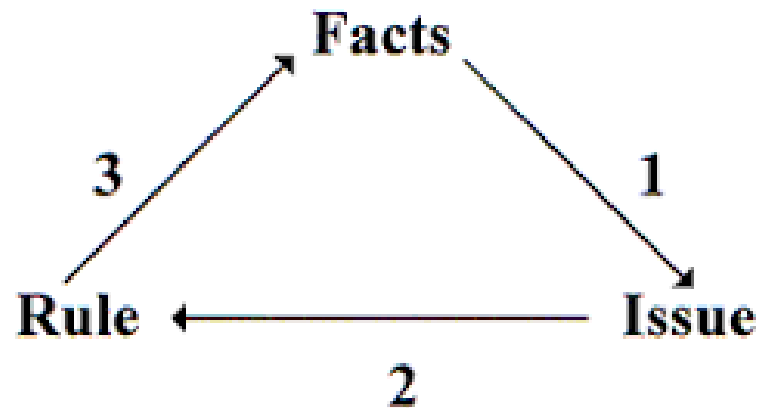


Outcome: Graduates will demonstrate the ability to work effectively in culturally diverse environments

- ***[Some] Criteria:***
- ****Demonstrate self-awareness about the role cultural experiences play in one's own perceptions and analyses***
- ****Recognize the difficulty inherent in identifying one's own biases and when one is acting based upon those biases***
- ****Demonstrate an understanding that cultural experiences influence lawyers, judges and clients in context of legal decision-making and legal representation***

Studying students' learning: legal analysis/reasoning

IRAC TRIAD



Query

- **Did the practice have a positive impact on my students' legal analytical abilities?**
- **Did all students benefit fairly equally?**
- **Who benefitted more – students with high grade predictors [high LSAT/UGPA] or students with low grade predictors [low LSAT/UGPA]?**

What I learned



Observations from assessments: What I learned

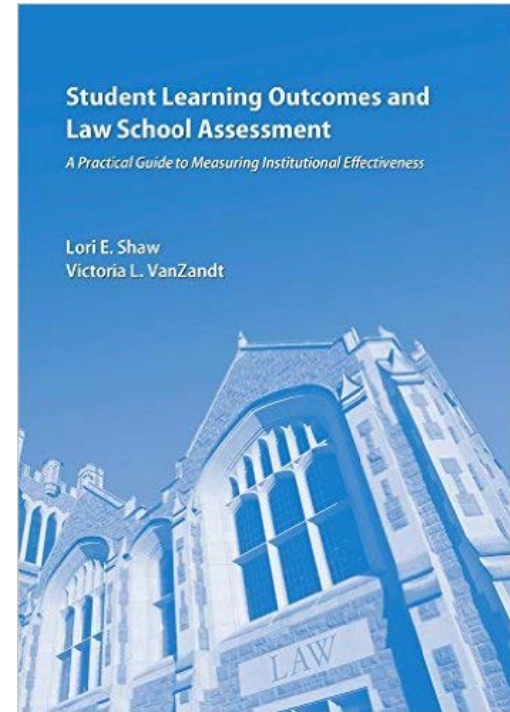


Outcome: Graduates will demonstrate effective legal analysis and reasoning skills

- **Criteria:**
- ****Demonstrate the ability to: issue spot, identify applicable legal rules, apply facts to those rules, consider both sides of an argument and reach a conclusion about a legal problem***
- ****Demonstrate the ability to: read and understand procedural rules, administrative regulations and statutes and apply those rules, regulations and statutes to a concrete problem in order to provide advice about potential resolutions to that problem***

GSU Process: what we have learned

Lori Shaw & Victoria VanZandt



Consultant: Dr. Cheryl Nahmias

To learn more about the studies discussed

Cultural sensibility

**A Survey Instrument to Develop and Tailor Law Student Cultural Diversity Education Learning Outcomes, 38 Nova Law Review 171 (2014) (with Dogra and Ward) [contains survey]*

**Addressing Barriers to Cultural Sensibility Learning: Lessons from Social Cognition Theory, 15 Nev. L. J. 537 (2015)*

Formative assessments

**Does Practice Make Perfect? An Empirical Examination of the Impact of Practice Essays on Essay Exam Performance, 35 Fl. St. U. L. Rev. 217 (2008) (with Jones and Washington)*

**Empirical Evidence that Formative Assessments Improve Law Students' Final Exam Performance, (with Sargent), 61 J. of Legal Educ. 379 (2012)*