

Educational Policy Committee Meeting

University of California College of the Law, San Francisco
333 Golden Gate, San Francisco, CA 94102, 501 Deb Colloquium Rm.
2026-05-21 12:30 - 14:00 PDT

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Educational Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

University of California College of the Law, San Francisco
February 19, 2026

University of California College of the Law, San Francisco, Cotchett Law Center, 333 Golden Gate, San Francisco, CA 94102, 501 Deb Colloquium Room. Participants and members of the public were also able to join the open session via the web link or dial-in numbers listed in the public notice of this meeting linked here: <https://www.uclawsf.edu/our-story/board-of-directors/board-meeting-notice-agendas-and-materials/>.

1. Roll Call

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:31 p.m., and the Acting Secretary called the roll.

Committee Members Present

Director Shashi Deb, Chair
Director Simona Agnolucci (joined at 12:54 p.m.)
Director C. Don Clay
Director Albert Zecher
Director Courtney Greene Power, Ex Officio

Committee Members Absent

Director Andrew Giacomini

Other Directors Present

Director Andrew Houston (joined at 12:38 p.m.)

Staff Participating

Chancellor & Dean David Faigman
Chief Operating Officer Rhiannon Bailard
Legal & Executive Assistant Yleana Escalante
Dean of Students Tiffany Gabrielson
Director of Bar Passage Support Margaret Greer
Chief Advancement Officer Julia Jordan
Assistant Dean for the Career Development Office Amy Kimmel
Assistant Chancellor & Dean/Chief of Staff to the Chancellor & Dean Jenny Kwon
Director of Applied Innovation and Professor of Practice Tal Niv
Provost & Academic Dean Morris Ratner
Dean of Enrollment Management June Sakamoto
Acting Secretary & Chief Operating Officer David Seward

2. Public Comment Period

Chair Deb invited public comment. No member of the public offered comment.

3. Action Item: Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Motion:

The Chair moved to approve the November 14, 2025 meeting minutes.

Motion made and seconded. Motion carried.

4. Report of Provost and Academic Dean Morris Ratner

4.1. Legal Education Landscape: Opportunities and Challenges

Dean Ratner explained that Chair Deb requested an overview of key opportunities and threats facing legal education and that the presentation was intended to help the Educational Policy Committee and Board identify any additional strategic priorities, reporting areas, or planning concerns that warranted attention. He framed the discussion as a partial strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis limited to educational policy and the academic division, informed by the College's 2018 strategic planning SWOT analysis, current legal education commentary, and the observations of Dean Ratner and Chancellor & Dean Faigman.

Dean Ratner noted that the 2018 environment predated the pandemic and the emergence of artificial intelligence as a central issue, and that the College's bar passage rates were then significantly lower. He summarized the 2018 opportunities revealed by 2018 faculty surveys as technology partnerships, alumni engagement, the Academic Village concept, JD advantage careers, and potential legislative funding; and the 2018 threats as U.S. News ranking changes, applicant market pressures, San Francisco's cost of living, tuition discounting, and neighborhood concerns.

Dean Ratner said current legal education discussions focus on rankings, bar exam changes, changing ABA standards, admissions pipelines, and artificial intelligence. He identified current opportunities as increased applications, AI integration, hybrid and online degree programs, and admissions pipeline innovation. He identified current threats as changing federal policies, AI-related disruption in legal hiring, a possible demographic enrollment cliff, changes to federal student loan programs and loan caps, and political interference in higher education.

Dean Ratner then summarized the College's current priorities under teaching, research, and public service. For teaching and student success, he identified employment outcomes, student AI skills, the effect of accelerated large law firm recruiting on first-year students, U.S. News volatility, student self-directedness, bar passage, the transition to California's next-generation bar exam, student debt, and student well-being. He described "self-directedness"

as time management, project management, initiative, self-reflection, and ownership over educational and professional development, and said the College is addressing those skills because students nationally appear to arrive with less preparation in those areas. For research, he identified faculty compensation and retention, faculty productivity, impactful scholarship, competing demands on faculty time, rankings, and academic reputation. For public service, he identified continued support for faculty and student public service work and the grants and philanthropy needed to sustain it.

Dean Ratner said the College's current day-to-day planning priorities are student self-directedness, preparation for the new bar exam, employment outcomes, AI integration, faculty compensation and retention, and changing federal policies affecting admissions, diversity initiatives, and higher education. He also noted that the College is beginning to consider longer-term questions about the future of legal education, including mission, academic program structure, class size, and related fiscal and structural implications.

Chair Deb asked for a reminder of the College's current strategic planning process and timeline. Dean Ratner responded that the College has concluded the original 2020 Strategic Plan, while the 2024 Supplemental Strategic Plan on Generative AI remains active. He said the College is also implementing bar success initiatives developed the prior year and has moved directly from planning to adoption of related regulations and requirements. Dean Ratner also referenced the Supplemental Strategic Planning Working Group led by Chancellor & Dean Faigman on federal student loan issues. He explained that, unless the Board directs otherwise, the College will continue supplemental strategic planning on an issue-by-issue basis rather than launch another comprehensive strategic planning process at this time. He said the key question for the Educational Policy Committee and the Board is whether there are additional issues the College should address on a spot basis over the next semester or 18 months.

4.2. Faculty Hiring

Dean Ratner rested on the written report.

4.3. Bar Exam

Dean Ratner said the written report addressed future California Bar Exam changes and recent bar passage outcomes, and that he and Ms. Greer were present to answer questions. He explained that the Classes of 2026 and 2027 will take an exam similar to the exam administered to the Class of 2025, but the College still does not know because the State has not determined the contours of the bar exam current first-year students will take in 2028. Although the California Supreme Court issued a 2024 order requiring changes, the College has not yet received because the State Bar has not provided definitive guidance

on whether California will adopt the national NextGen Exam or continue with a California-specific format. Dean Ratner said the delay leaves the College without basic information on tested subjects, covered issues, and testing modalities, and that the College will face a compressed timeline for academic program redesign once the State Bar provides guidance.

Dean Ratner also summarized the College's retrospective analysis of Class of 2025 bar outcomes, conducted with a statistical expert and compared against peer institutions. He said California first-time bar passage data from 2010 through 2025 showed 2016 as a major outlier that led to significant academic program changes. Since those reforms, and apart from temporary dips in 2022 and 2023, the College has had a generally upward trajectory in bar passage performance. Dean Ratner said academic programming, pedagogy, student support, admissions, and retention strategies all contributed to improved outcomes. He noted a strong correlation between first-time bar passage rates and the median LSAT scores of students sitting for the exam, while cautioning that the analysis was descriptive rather than causal. He said the College's efforts to reduce the highest and lowest LSAT score tails and concentrate class profiles near a median LSAT score of 160 have contributed to more predictable outcomes and reinforced the importance of strong admissions and retention policies. Dean Ratner also identified recent academic interventions that appear to be improving bar outcomes, including expansion of the Sack program (explicit skills instruction with feedback) into the upper-division curriculum, required Critical Studies coursework, and specialized staffing support for students seeking bar exam accommodations.

4.4. Employment

(Taken out of order, after 4.5.)

Dean Ratner rested on the written report.

4.5. AI Update (Presenters: Morris Ratner, Tal Niv, Drew Amerson)

Prof. Niv reported on LexLab's recent initiatives and reiterated its two-part mission: preparing students to practice law in a technology-driven legal market and preparing students for careers in technology law and emerging fields such as artificial intelligence. She said UC Law SF's San Francisco location gives the College a natural advantage in connecting students with technology companies, innovators, and legal practitioners. Prof. Niv said LexLab's work is organized around technology law and legal technology curriculum, community partnerships with lawyers, entrepreneurs, and policymakers, and broad-based technology skills for students across practice areas. Ms. Niv highlighted the AI-Enabled Lawyer Bootcamp, a six-session program that teaches students to use AI and legal technology tools across different types of legal work. She said the program emphasizes judgment, responsible and ethical use, critical review of AI-generated outputs, and repeatable AI-enabled workflows. Students who

complete the program receive a certificate. Prof. Niv said student interest has been strong, the initial cohort was intentionally limited, and LexLab may expand the program to more students, faculty, and members of the legal community if it continues to be successful. She also noted that parts of the bootcamp are being developed publicly through a GitHub repository. Prof. Niv also discussed LexLab's new non-fiduciary advisory board on the future of the legal profession and legal education. She said the advisory board includes law firm leaders, chief information officers, in-house counsel, policy experts, and AI company executives. It is intended to provide insight into how technology is changing legal work, hiring expectations, training, and practice structures. She said that feedback from the board has already influenced the AI-Enabled Lawyer Bootcamp, particularly its focus on judgment and responsible AI use and that LexLab expects to convene the board twice per year.

Prof. Niv described LexLab's affiliate network, which includes lawyers, policymakers, and technology experts who support programming, student engagement, curriculum feedback, community building, and professional opportunities for students and graduates. She also provided updates on LexLab's Law and AI continuing legal education program, focused on AI governance and related legal topics. She said the first offering generated strong interest, the program will run again in March, and LexLab plans additional offerings and partnerships.

Prof. Niv concluded by discussing LexLab's speaker series and symposia, including programs with representatives from Ironclad, DataGrail, Microsoft, Oracle, Meta, and Waymo, and an upcoming symposium titled "Who Controls Data in the Age of AI."

Chair Deb thanked Prof. Niv and Mr. Amerson for their work on the College's AI initiative and encouraged Board members to attend the upcoming LAIC program. She noted that the program would address different topics each day, including the future of the legal profession, the impact of AI, newly released AI tools, coding accessibility, agentic AI tools, and broader technology-driven changes in professional work.

The Committee entered closed session at 1:29 p.m. pursuant to Education Code section 92032(b)(7).

Chair Deb reconvened the open session at 1:35 p.m.

Dean Ratner reported that the Committee approved recommending tenure for Prof. George Horvath and Prof. Christine Koningisor and emeritus status for Prof. Lois Schwartz.

5. Adjournment

Chair Deb adjourned the meeting at 1:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Seward, Acting Secretary



Educational Policy Committee Meeting (CLOSED Session) Minutes

University of California College of the Law, San Francisco
February 19, 2026

University of California College of the Law, San Francisco, Cotchett Law Center, 333 Golden Gate, San Francisco, CA 94102, 501 Deb Colloquium Rm. Participants were also able to join the closed session via the web link or dial-in numbers. The closed session was held pursuant to Education Code Section 92032(b)(7).

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the closed session to order at 1:29 p.m. The following persons were present.

Committee Members Present

Director Shashi Deb, Chair
Director Simona Agnolucci
Director Albert Zecher
Director Courtney Greene Power, Ex Officio

Committee Members Absent

Director C. Don Clay
Director Andrew Giacomini

Other Directors Present

Director Andrew Houston

Staff Participating

Chancellor & Dean David Faigman
Legal & Executive Assistant Yleana Escalante
Assistant Chancellor & Dean/Chief of Staff to the Chancellor & Dean Jenny Kwon
Provost & Academic Dean Morris Ratner
Acting Secretary & Chief Operating Officer David Seward

2. Tenure Vote

Dean Ratner reported that the College had completed tenure votes for two lateral faculty hires and that Chancellor & Dean Faigman and he sought a recommendation that the full Board approve both tenure appointments. Dean Ratner stated that the first recommendation was for Mr. George Horvath, a health law expert, whom he described as an outstanding scholar, excellent teacher, and strong institutional citizen. Prof. Horvath's tenure appointment was effective January 1 of the current year, pending full Board approval. Dean Ratner stated that the second recommendation was

for Prof. Christina Koningisor, a First Amendment scholar, whom he also described as an excellent teacher and institutional citizen. Professor Koningisor's tenure would be effective July 1, 2026. Dean Ratner noted that the written materials and faculty CVs provided additional detail on both candidates.

Motion:

Chair Deb called for a motion that the Committee recommend full Board approval of the two tenure appointments.

Motion made and seconded. Motion carried.

3. Emeritus Status for Retiring Lecturer

Dean Ratner reported that Prof. Lois Schwartz will retire in June after many years of service as a lecturer at the law school. Dean Ratner stated that Prof. Schwartz met the standard under Section 102.5 for the Board to award emeritus status. He explained that emeriti titles are automatic for certain long-serving faculty categories, but that the Board approval process applies to other faculty categories, including Lecturers (Professors of Practice). Prof. Schwartz is a Professor of Practice. Dean Ratner stated that Prof. Schwartz's contributions to the law school and academic program were comparable to those expected of a tenured faculty member, including her impact on educational programming, community-building, the 1L program, the LLM program, and bar success. He noted that Prof. Schwartz was an award-winning faculty member and had most recently received a Kane Excellence Award in honor of Mary Kay Kane. Dean Ratner stated that he and Chancellor & Dean Faigman strongly supported recommending emeritus status for Prof. Schwartz.

Motion:

Chair Deb called for a motion that the Committee recommend full Board approval of Prof. Schwartz's emeritus status upon her retirement.

Motion made and seconded. Motion carried.

4. Adjournment

Chair Deb adjourned the closed session at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Seward, Acting Secretary

Report 4.1 – Implementation of Strategic Priorities in AY25-26

By Provost & Academic Dean Morris Ratner

In August 2025 reporting, I described the strategic priorities in the academic program for the 2025-2026 academic year and detailed specific plans for the year to advance them.¹ This report summarizes implementation efforts this past academic year. It is brief because the strategic priorities identified at the start of this academic year have been the subject of extensive reporting during the year and/or are addressed in accompanying reports presented for the May 21 Educational Policy Committee meeting.

I. Final Reporting on Implementation of the 2020 Operational Strategic Plan

As promised at the start of the academic year, and at the request of the Chancellor & Dean and Board of Directors, Chief Financial Officer David Seward and I submitted final reporting on the implementation of the 2020 Operational Strategic Plan and shared it with the Board.² The 2020 plan has largely been implemented, though the College is still pursuing goals laid out in the plan such as continuous improvement with regard to student outcomes.

II. Continuing Strategic Priorities

A. Bar Pivot

As reported earlier this year,³ and as detailed in accompanying Report 4.5 (“Bar Exam Update”), California has delayed making a final decision regarding whether California will adopt the NCBE’s NextGen exam or adopt a different exam that is unique to California. We expect to have more information this summer, which will inform faculty committee charges in the coming academic year meant to ensure that graduates are prepared for whatever exam the State adopts.

B. Employment and Law Firm Hiring

UC Law SF Class of 2025 graduates experienced one of the most successful employment outcomes in the recent history of the law school.

On a less positive note, and as reported earlier this year,⁴ the Big Law hiring process for Fall 2025 1Ls was chaotic and disruptive and was widely disliked by both law firms and students. The College does not control firm hiring timelines. We are focused on what we

¹ See Morris Ratner, Educational Policy Committee [Report 5.1 – Strategic Plan Implementation and Priorities in AY25-26](#) (August 21, 2025).

² See Morris Ratner & David Seward, [2020 Plan Implementation Report](#) (10.13.25), which is part of the Open Session Book for the October 27, 2025 Board of Directors meeting.

³ See, e.g., Morris Ratner, Margaret Greer & Dan Martin, Educational Policy Committee [Report 4.3 – Bar Exam](#) (February 19, 2026).

⁴ See, e.g., Morris Ratner and Amy Kimmel, Educational Policy Committee [Report 4.4 – Employment](#) (February 19, 2026).

can control, including student advising and counseling, i.e., search preparedness. Accompanying Report 4.6 (“Employment”) describes Class of 2025 outcomes and explains some of the strategies the Career Development Office is rolling out next year to supplemental initiatives adopted this past year to mitigate the negative effects of the Big Law hiring process. They include pre-matriculation (“Zero-L”) advising on career searches.

C. Grants Management

Director of the Office of Sponsored Projects, Yael Nadel-Cadaxa, will submit his annual report regarding third-party funded research and programs (“sponsored projects”) in the fall reporting cycle, once we have completed year-end fiscal reporting for the College as a whole. At this time, it appears sponsored project funding is slightly down from last year, but still robust despite disruption associated with shifts in funding priorities within federal grants agencies and the private grants sector (e.g., foundations, law firms, companies, wealthy individuals). At the federal level, sponsored project funding was impacted by temporary pauses and attempted terminations of multiple federal grants (note, only one small federal grant was terminated, all other attempted terminations were successfully challenged and, at least partial, funding was restored) and a reduction in the number of federal grant offerings for research and programs in core work streams for many faculty and centers (e.g., international education exchanges, pro-DEI programs, immigration and refugee support programs). In the private grants sector, the disruption was more subtle but there are indications that private sponsors are (at least in the near-term) also shifting their funding priorities in response to shifts at the federal level and within American society more broadly (e.g., law firms and companies are discontinuing DEI programs, foundations are scaling back programs that conflict with federal policy priorities, individuals and organizations are wary of being targeted by the federal government for supporting currently disfavored policies and programs). Despite these disruptions at the federal level and perceived shifts in the private sector, overall third-party funding for faculty-led research and programs remains robust and we remain hopeful that funding levels will return to a growth trend in future years.

D. Asynchronous Master’s Degree

The Master of Legal Studies for non-lawyers is UC Law SF’s fastest growing degree program. Accompanying Report 4.3 (“MLS Degree Program Update”) provides some of the details. This growth is partly due to the increase in asynchronous course offerings. The law school anticipates adding a second start window for matriculants in Spring 2027, meaning that the law school will enroll two cohorts each academic year.

E. AI

The major initiatives adopted this year have been the subject of reporting earlier this academic year,⁵ including the launch of an [AI advisory board](#),⁶ the launch of a beta

⁵ See Morris Ratner, Educational Policy Committee [Report 4.5 – AI Update](#) (February 19, 2026).

⁶ See <https://www.uclawsf.edu/2026/01/21/industry-leaders-advise-uc-law-sf-on-the-future-of-ai-in-law-and-legal-education/>.

version of a new co-curricular “[bootcamp](#)” through which upper division students will develop AI project portfolios,⁷ and the expansion of [professional development offerings](#) for practitioners.⁸

There is no separate report for AI in this reporting cycle, so I will share key takeaways from the second meeting (March 20, 2026) of the AI advisory board in this section of this report. This board was constituted by Shashi & DJ Deb Professor of Practice Tal Niv and LexLab Director Drew Amerson in furtherance of the College’s [2024 Supplemental Strategic Plan on Generative AI](#). Our first meeting with this external advisory board in December of 2025 focused on the continuing importance of developing students’ understanding of how lawyers exercise “judgment.” The second meeting drilled more deeply into what that means and how that might translate into our curriculum, co-curricular programming, and pedagogy. We also discussed how our students can gain employment advantage if they demonstrate certain attributes (curiosity about innovation) or skills (knowing how to competently use tech to solve problems).

1. AI Adoption (Experimentation to Identify Use Cases)

The degree to which AI adoption is centrally coordinated in law firms varies by firm and practice setting. One common approach appears to be centralized provision of baseline training and tools combined with encouragement of individual lawyers and practice groups to identify and experiment with specific use cases.

2. What Students Need to Know Upon Graduation (Program Learning Outcomes)

Advisory board members emphasized that law students still need to learn knowledge and skills that are unrelated to tech, including substantive law, legal research and writing, and legal analysis, along with all the other baseline lawyering skills like client and time management.⁹ But, multiple advisory board members told us, new graduates *also* need to demonstrate a “curiosity” about innovation and legal tech. Pressed on the exact skills law school graduates should have upon completing a three-year JD program arc, one advisory board member suggested that students should understand AI tools as part of “systems level problem solving.” This topic is addressed in the subsection that immediately follows.

⁷ The plan is to scale up the bootcamp (with multiple cohorts) and integrate it into the Academic Regulation 708 Professional Development Program, such that 1Ls matriculating in Fall 2026 may be required in their 2L year to complete the Bootcamp. If our assessment of the Spring 2026 beta test supports that approach, then starting AY27-28 all 2Ls would get practical training one product of which will be the opportunity to develop a portfolio demonstrating they can use AI to solve legal practice problems.

⁸ See <https://www.uclawsf.edu/2026/04/13/lexlab-program-prepares-lawyers-for-the-frontlines-of-ai-policy-and-practice/>.

⁹ The core list of 26 lawyering effectiveness factors formulated and popularized by Marjorie Schultz and Sheldon Zedeck can be found on this [page](#).

3. The AI Equivalent of “IRAC” (Six Steps for Using AI to Complete Legal Tasks)

A board member described the following **six steps** a law student or graduate should be able to competently follow to determine whether and how to use AI to solve a problem:

1. Identify use cases: Determine first whether AI should be used at all to assist with or undertake a particular project or task.¹⁰
2. Purpose: Clearly define the purpose AI is meant to serve.
3. Prompt: Determine the prompt or coding needed to implement a task or solve a problem.
4. Verification: Verify the output.
5. Iteration: Iterate and interrogate to refine output utilizing legal judgment and other lawyering skills.
6. Finalize: Finalize the task or project.

The list (IPPVIF) was shared in response to a question about whether there’s an admittedly reductionist but still useful way to think about AI problem solving analogous to IRAC for legal analysis.

4. AI’s Immediate Impact on Law Practice and the Legal Services Market

The board discussed AI’s effects on the legal services market. Reports were inconsistent, with some board members reporting increases in work as easy access to information from AI increases complaints against clients and other board members projecting contraction in work soon. There was some discussion of the types of legal work that are at risk, with the suggestion that some tasks like trial work are unlikely to be replaced by AI, while others, like pre-trial work or transactional work might be the first to experience contractions.

5. AI and Student Job Seeking Strategies

The advisory board discussed how students can make themselves most attractive to employers. Most advisory board members suggested that students who can demonstrate the ability to proactively use AI to help them perform traditional junior associate tasks would have an advantage. For example, when getting an assignment, students or new lawyers should consider (carefully) using AI to help themselves better understand how to tackle the assignment before asking a partner for advice. And board members suggested that students or grads who can competently apply the six steps above – IPPVIF – will have an advantage.

¹⁰ A UC Law SF advisory board member suggested that AI is best suited for tasks that are difficult for humans but “easy to verify” if performed by AI. The California State Bar has provided [guidance](#) for determining when and how to use AI.

6. How UC Law SF Can Help Practicing Lawyers and Legal Service Organizations

We asked the advisory board members what else UC Law SF can do to support lawyers and legal service organizations.¹¹ One board member from a local Big Law firm office suggested that a 1-2 day program to which they could send their new associates would be useful, especially if it emphasized systems thinking, problem solving, and prompt engineering. A lawyer on the advisory board who manages a boutique law firm suggested that programs geared toward smaller firms would be of value, especially if they help lawyers who are not at the cutting edge of Big Law better understand use case scenarios and recent developments at larger firms and how those might be applied in less well-resourced settings.

7. Future Advisory Board Conversations

Advisory board members emphasized that the tools are changing rapidly, especially as AI is used to build better AI models. They emphasized that conditions on the ground in law practice are likely to significantly change every 6 months, requiring legal educators to stay in close touch with practitioners and to remain nimble when thinking about what it means to train future lawyers.

Technology, including its impact on our academic program and law school structure, will necessarily be at the center of future comprehensive strategic planning. We have a solid foundation grounded in a 2024 Supplemental Strategic Plan re Generative AI and in the work Tal Niv, Drew Amerson, Shashi Deb, Robin Feldman, Paul Belonick, Camilla Tubbs/Hilary Hardcastle, LRW (Angie Gius, Mimi Glumac, Nehal Khorraminejad), and others are doing to update our academic program. Ad hoc experimentation with integrating AI knowledge and skills across the curriculum is also taking place. And research faculty are centering AI and technology in their scholarship. All these efforts mean that we are one of the leading law schools for AI and legal tech, even if our self-promotion does not yet match our accomplishments. But many fundamental questions remain to be investigated and answered.

F. Federal Policy Changes

Chancellor & Dean Faigman has been leading a special working group on this topic throughout the academic year. Dean of Enrollment Management June Sakamoto will directly report to the Educational Policy Committee on this topic at the May 21 meeting. See also accompanying report 4.2 (“Enrollment Management”).

¹¹ LexLab already regularly hosts AI training programs for practicing lawyers (which are also open to faculty and staff at UC Law SF). For a description of the most recent program, see this [page](#).

Report 4.2 – Enrollment Management

By Provost & Academic Dean Morris Ratner

At the May 21, 2026 Educational Policy Committee meeting, Dean of Enrollment Management June Sakamoto will share data regarding current and projected enrollment levels for the classes that matriculate at UC Law SF in Fall 2026. This report provides background information about national trends.

For information about enrollment trends in the period 1963-2025, see the LawHub website powered by the Law School Admissions Council (LSAC).¹ JD enrollment nationally is still down from the peak in approximately 2010, but has been steadily increasing in recent years. Last month, Pepperdine Dean Paul Caron wrote in his blog:

We are now 90% of the way through Fall 2026 law school admissions season. The number of law school applicants [reported by LSAC](#) is up 10.3% compared to last year at this time. 170 of the 197 law schools are experiencing an increase in applications. Applications are up +20% or more at 85 law schools. Applicants are up in every region except Other (-2.4%), and are up the most in the Mountain West (+13.7%), Great Lakes (+13.2%), and South Central (+11.2%). Applicants' LSAT scores are up +15.7% in the 170-180 band, +12.2% in the 160-169 band, +5.5% in the 150-159 band, and +5.8% in the 120-149 band.²

For the most current data, see [this LSAC page](#).³

It remains to be seen how new federal loan caps will impact enrollment across degree programs. For the JD program at UC Law SF, the second deposit deadline is in early June of 2026. That will give us a much better picture of likely fall enrollments than we have now based on first deposit data that Dean Sakamoto will share at the May 21 meeting of the Educational Policy Committee.

¹ See <https://www.lawhub.org/trends/enrollment>.

² See <https://taxprofblog.aals.org/2026/04/19/80-percent-through-the-fall-2026-law-school-admissions-season-applicants-are-up-10-percent-from-last-year/>.

³ See <https://report.lzac.org/View.aspx?Report=FiveYearComparison>.

Report 4.3 – MLS Degree Program Update

By Provost & Academic Dean Morris Ratner

At the May 21, 2026 Educational Policy Committee meeting, outgoing Associate Dean for the Master of Legal Studies Program Jessica Vapnek will provide information about our 24-credit degree program for non-lawyers. This report provides background information.¹

First, the MLS degree program is growing - dramatically. Assistant Dean and Registrar Amy VanMullekom prepared the following table showing enrollment levels over the past decade:

MLS Program Year-over-Year Growth

FALL TERM	HEADCOUNT	YOY % (HC)	FTE	YOY % (FTE)	AVG LOAD (FTE/STUDENT)
2017	7	—	3.2	—	0.46
2018	5	-28.6%	2.3	-28.1%	0.46
2019	13	+160.0%	9.8	+326.1%	0.75
2020	26	+100.0%	18.6	+89.8%	0.72
2021	25	-3.8%	14.6	-21.5%	0.58
2022	18	-28.0%	9.5	-34.9%	0.53
2023	25	+38.9%	14.1	+48.4%	0.56
2024	40	+60.0%	23.6	+67.4%	0.59
2025	68	+70.0%	44.5	+88.6%	0.65

Note: FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) measures enrollment based on course load rather than the number of students. Full-time students count as 1.0, while part-time students count as a fraction based on units taken. This differs from headcount, which counts each student equally regardless of enrollment level.²

According to Dean Mullekom:

MLS enrollment has grown significantly in recent years, particularly since 2023–24. Headcount increased from 25 to 68 students over the past two years (a 172% increase), while FTE grew from 14.1 to 44.5 (a 216% increase), reflecting both increased enrollment and stronger course loads. While earlier years showed some volatility, the program has now entered a clear and sustained growth phase. Notably, recent FTE growth has outpaced headcount growth, suggesting that students are, on average, enrolling in more units.

Much of this growth corresponds with our buildout of a mostly asynchronous online pathway to earning the degree.

¹ For a recent story on our website about the MLS program's benefits for local government workers, see <https://www.uclawsf.edu/2026/05/07/master-of-legal-studies-program-helps-government-workers-think-like-lawyers/>.

² To create this table, Dean VanMullekom compiled headcount and FTE data and used AI to generate a structured table and analysis, which she then reviewed and validated

Second, the program is experiencing a key leadership transition. Dean Vapnek turned this program around during her 8-year tenure as Associate Dean. She did that partly by assembling a team of extraordinarily competent educators who breathed life into this popular degree program, including Associate Director and Professor of Practice Morgan Wells. Jessica has decided to hand the leadership baton to Professor Wells, who has more than amply demonstrated her program management chops in recent years. Professor Wells is now one of the leading experts on our faculty on nonlawyer master's degree programs in general and on asynchronous pedagogy in particular. As of July 1, Professor Wells will take over as Associate Dean of the MLS Program.

Report 4.4 – HPL Degree Program Update

By Provost & Academic Dean Morris Ratner

At the May 21, 2026 Educational Policy Committee meeting, Associate Dean Sarah Hooper will provide information about the Master of Science in Health Policy & Law (HPL) that we jointly offer with UCSF. This report provides background information.

The HPL is an online degree program designed for a wide range of learners from pre-professional to those who are mid-career. The aim of the HPL is to provide students with tools and training to conduct evidence-based legal and policy analysis that will allow them to effectively address complex issues at the intersection of law and policy in the areas of health, health care and the health sciences. The program consists of 24 units of all-required coursework and three in-person convenings, summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below. Courses in blue are taught by UC Law faculty, courses in purple are taught by UCSF faculty, and courses in orange are co-taught by UC Law and UCSF faculty.

Table 1: HPL Full Time Academic Track

Fall	Spring
<i>Orientation</i>	Health Economics (3)
HPL Research & Writing (3)	Health Law: Institutions, Providers & Patients (4)
How to Evaluate Policy-Relevant Research (2)	Health Care Leadership & Advocacy (2)
Intro to U.S. Health Policymaking Process (2)	Capstone Execution (3)
U.S. Health Care System & the Law (4)	<i>Final Convening & Graduation</i>
Capstone Proposal (1)	
<i>Midyear Convening</i>	

Table 2: HPL Part Time Academic Track

Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
<i>Orientation</i>	Health Economics (3)	How to Evaluate Policy-Relevant Research (2)	Health Care Leadership & Advocacy (2)
HPL Research & Writing (3)	Health Law: Institutions, Providers & Patients (4)	Intro to U.S. Health Policymaking Process (2)	Capstone Execution (3)
U.S. Health Care System & the Law (4)		Capstone Proposal (1)	<i>Final Convening & Graduation</i>
<i>Midyear Convening</i>		<i>Midyear Convening</i>	

Courses are taught in a primarily asynchronous format, but with synchronous and in-person elements as well. The Capstone Proposal and Execution courses require regular one on one and small group meetings via Zoom with a faculty member. The Intro to U.S. Health Policymaking Process, Health Care Leadership & Advocacy, and Health Law: Institutions, Providers, and Patients courses all require students to meet and engage in assignments together synchronously and remotely. Students are also required to attend three in-person convenings over the course of the program: Orientation, Midyear Convening, and Graduation. Orientation provides level-setting instruction in the structure of the United States' health care and legal systems, an introduction to frameworks for health leadership, and aims to establish the program culture and norms necessary for student success in an online, interdisciplinary program for diverse aspiring health leaders. The midyear convening focuses on developing skill sets relevant to health law and policy, such as effective oral communication with policymakers and translation of legal developments and scientific information to the public. The graduation convening provides students an opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and skills gained over the course of the program and convenings by presenting their final Capstone projects.

For the past three academic years, the HPL degree program has enrolled approximately 32-37 students per year.

The HPL degree program – one of the top health law programs in the country - is part of a broader health law program partnership with UCSF. UCSF is one of the world's leading health sciences universities dedicated to the mission of “advancing health worldwide.” The four professional schools and Graduate Division all rank among the nation's most prestigious advanced study programs in the health sciences, and their academic missions reflect UCSF's innovative spirit by emphasizing health care advocacy, leadership, and systems change, pioneering patient care and interdisciplinary collaboration.

The institutional partnership between UC Law and UCSF aims to foster interdisciplinary collaboration across campuses in education, research, and service, and is led through the UCSF-UC Law Consortium on Law, Science & Health Policy (“Consortium”). Since 2009, the Consortium has developed several major educational initiatives including a JD Concentration in Health Law & Policy, a Master of Studies in Law (originally health-focused and now with broader scope), and a Medical-Legal Partnership for Seniors Clinic.

Report 4.5 – California Bar Exam

By Provost & Academic Dean Morris Ratner, Director of Bar Passage Support Margaret Greer, Associate Director of Bar Passage Support Dan Martin

I. Bar Exam Format Update

By the May 21, 2026 Educational Policy Committee meeting, we may have more insight into the format of the Bar Exam that California will administer in 2028. The State Bar must provide two years' notice before implementing changes of the type discussed above. Because the Bar intends on implementing its changes with the July 2028 exam, it must provide notice of the exam it adopts by no later than July 2026. On April 17, 2026, the CBE adopted a resolution recommending that the Board of Trustees "advance to the Supreme Court a recommendation that the NextGen UBE without a California-specific component be administered in California beginning in July 2028 and until such time as a California-specific component is developed." The Board will consider that recommendation at its [May 14-15 meeting](#).

II. February Bar Outcomes

On May 1, the State Bar posted statistics regarding the February exam administration on this [page](#).¹ The first-time pass rate for ABA-accredited law schools in California was 62.3% and the repeater pass rate was 36.2%. UC Law SF had only 13 graduates sit for the February 2026 administration as first-time test takers. Their pass rate was approximately 54% (7/13), below the ABA-accredited average. UC Law SF graduates' repeater pass rate was 40% (25/62), above the ABA average. Seven of the 11 LEOP repeaters (64%) passed.

We do not use February outcomes to undertake administration-specific program assessment because as noted in prior years: (1) the numbers are too small to undertake rigorous analysis, (2) the students tend to be atypical with lower cumulative law schools GPAs compared to the graduating class as a whole (which skews outcomes), and (3) they tend to be less connected to our support resources, despite our efforts to engage them. However, we do wrap February pass/fail data into full-year analyses.

The bar success team is focused now on supporting Class of 2026 first-time test takers, though we offer the usual array of support described in prior reporting to repeaters who are within two years of graduation on every administration.

¹ See <https://www.calbar.ca.gov/news/state-bar-announces-february-2026-bar-exam-results>.

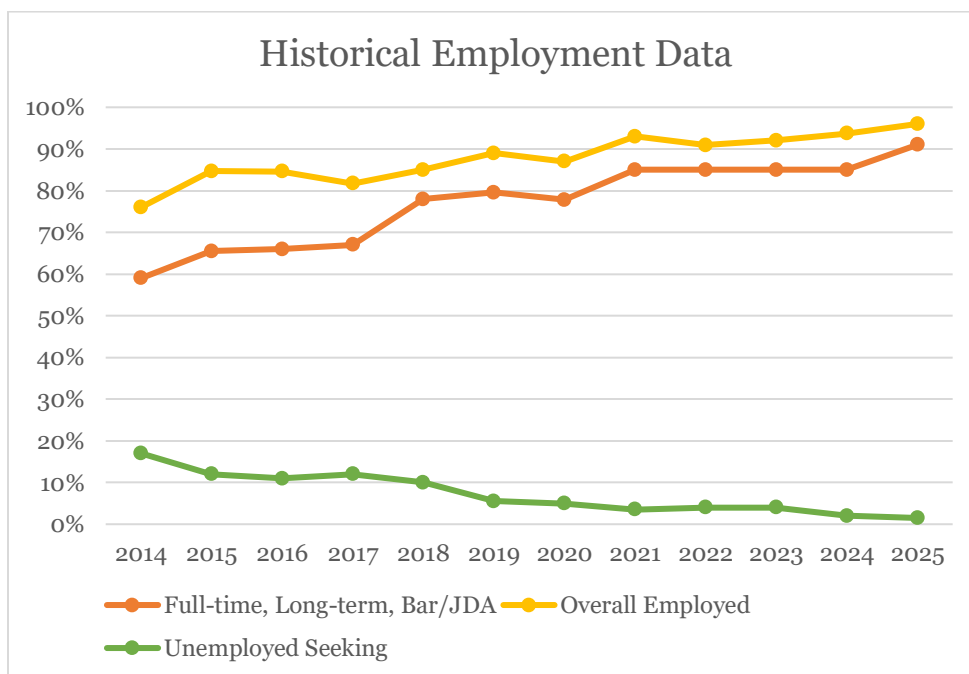
Report 4.6 – Employment

By Assistant Dean for Career Development Office Amy Kimmel

I. Employment Stats for Class of 2025 at 10 Months After Graduation

The UC Law SF Class of 2025 had excellent employment outcomes with the highest overall employment and highest full-time/long-term, bar admission or JD advantage employment in recent years.

- **Total Employed** (Bar Admission, JDA and other): 96% (340/354)
Class of 2024: 93.7%
- **Employed plus graduate studies and start date deferred:** 96.8% (343/354)
Class of 2024: 95%
- **Employed Bar Admission/JDA and Full-time/Long-term:** 91% (323/354)
Class of 2024: 85%
- **Unemployed Not Seeking:** 1.5% (5/354)
Class of 2024: 2% (9 people)
- **Unemployed Seeking:** 1.5% (5/354)¹
Class of 2024: 1.3% (5 people)
- **Unknown:** 1 person
Class of 2024: 3 people



¹ Five graduates were unemployed seeking, five were unemployed not seeking, and there was one unknown (a December 2024 grad who matriculated in 2020). None of the unemployed graduates passed a July bar.

The category “employed bar admission or JD advantage and full-time/long-term” includes jobs that are school funded. The ABA (as well as US News rankings) are moving away from distinguishing school funded and non-school funded employment. Employed Bar Admission/JDA and Full-time/Long-term (not including school funded jobs) was at 86% for the Class of 2025 (up from 82.7% in 2024). The College funded 16 FL/TL Bridge Fellows and one Abascal Fellow.

Graduates going to law firms again rose slightly to 67% (from 64% last year and 61% the year before). Of the graduates in law firms, the highest number were in firms of 501+ lawyers² but at a lower rate (35%) than the previous two year (40% in 2024 and 50% in 2023). The changes from the record high of Class of 2023 is reflective of the unique market conditions that existed for Summer 2021 and Summer 2022 recruiting (a “COVID boom”) and a trend we did not expect to continue.³ The Class of 2025 went through BigLaw recruiting in Summer 2023 (at a time when numerous big law firms delayed start dates and/or laid off entry level associates in response to the unprecedented hiring in the previous years).

The next highest category, at 15% (down 5%), was law firms of 1-10 lawyers. The other categories were split relatively evenly: firms with 11-25 lawyers at 13% (up 5%); 26-50 lawyers at 10%; 51-100 at 7%; 101-250 at 10% and 251-500 at 8%. Business jobs remained stable at 9% for the Class of 2025. Government and public interest employment was at 9% and 11% respectively (down slightly from last year). If public defenders are counted as government (the ABA counts public defenders as public interest), the percentages roughly flip. Clerkship employment numbers remained stable.

II. Current Recruiting Climate and Interventions

A. Big Law Recruiting

Nationally, employment outcomes improved for the Class of 2025, but declines were seen in BigLaw jobs. Even though there are reports that overall fewer positions were available, the Class of 2025 was smaller overall than the Class of 2024.⁴

BigLaw recruiting for Summer 2027 started in Fall 2025 and is mostly finished. Early estimates are that roughly 75% of firms finished recruiting by March 2026 with offers peaking in February 2026. Firms will continue to rely primarily on direct applications for the Summer 2028 recruiting cycle. Again, we expect our incoming class of 1Ls to be navigating BigLaw recruiting throughout the fall semester. It is unknown what OCI programs will look like for the Summer 2028 recruiting cycle, but we do not expect them to increase from, or to be more robust, than the last recruiting cycle.

² Approximately one quarter of our total grads were employed at the top 500 law firms, which ranks us 29th according to Law.com’s “Go-to-Law School” rankings.

³ The Class of 2022 sent 34% of firm graduates to firms with 501+ lawyers.

⁴ Per Derek Muller’s blog: [Class of 2025 legal employment outcomes mixed: placement rates improve, but total jobs, large law firm jobs in decline.](#)

B. Class of 2029 Interventions

The changes in the BigLaw recruiting cycle have started to impact recruiting timelines of other sectors and we expect to see an increase in this “trickle down” effect in the coming cycle. To that end, we are increasing our offerings to the Class of 2029 to assist students with navigating these changes.

We have two planned communications to the Class of 2029 before they arrive on campus for orientation. The CDO May communication will introduce the office, our services, and the fall semester schedule of mandatory and optional 1L Essentials programming. The June communication will introduce recruiting timeline information (for BigLaw as well as other early recruiting opportunities for 1L summer including the San Francisco City Attorney, federal judges, and others). It will also include our resume template and a short handout, tailored for 1Ls, on how to best update their resumes this summer. This increased engagement with “oLs” is in line with efforts at law schools nationally to connect with students and provide career resources at an earlier stage. The 1L Essentials programming will feature a workshop on private practice recruiting (including BigLaw) in September followed by a similar session on public interest/government recruiting.⁵ Drop-in office hours specifically focused on BigLaw recruiting will be available throughout the semester. Additionally, we will be working with student organization leaders this summer to best support and coordinate events with BigLaw firms to be scheduled for the fall semester.

⁵ We are mindful that our communication and resources need to balance informing students of these recruiting changes in one sector (BigLaw) while also not alienating the majority of our students who do not seek (and/or obtain) careers in that sector.

Report 4.7 – Faculty Updates

By Provost & Academic Dean Morris Ratner

This report provides faculty updates, including new hires and the establishment of a new programmatic center and institute focused on habeas petition work. In addition, this report describes leadership changes in the law school's library.

I. New Hires

The College is currently hiring to backfill for open faculty positions, only. Two term-limited contract faculty positions that were still open as of the last reporting cycle have been filled. First, we have a new racial and economic justice Visiting Assistant Professor, a rotating position that is designed to help promising new scholars to enter the law school teaching market. Second, we have a new Director of Startup Legal Garage, a key experiential program run by the Center for Innovation at UC Law SF.

A. New Center for Racial and Economic Justice C. Keith Wingate Visiting Assistant Professor Aimee Carlisle

Aime Carlisle recently accepted an offer to become the College's fourth aspiring tenure-track professor in the Center for Racial and Economic Justice's (CREJ) Visiting Assistant Professor (VAP) program. This is a two-year position that starts July 1, 2026. Current-year CREJ Faculty Co-Directors Thalia Gonzalez and Shauna Marshall oversaw the selection process. The Chancellor & Dean and Faculty Appointments Committee approved the appointment.

Professor Carlisle is a 2016 graduate of New York University School of Law. At New York University School of Law, she was awarded the Root-Tilden-Kern Public Interest Scholarship and received honors including the Law Alumni of Color Association Convocation Prize for Public Service and Derrick Bell Public Service Scholar. She was the Managing Editor of the *NYU Law Review of Law and Social Change*. Since graduation, she has been a practicing criminal defense attorney at the Bronx Defenders (2016-2023) and Office of the Federal Public Defender, Central District of California (2023-present). Her research and teaching interests align directly with this substantive experience in criminal law. She is the principal co-author of two amicus briefs filed in the Supreme Court of the United States and counsel of record and principal co-author on one amicus filed in the Supreme Court of the United States. She is also co-author of a SCOTUSBlog Symposium and author of a *Washington Post* opinion editorial.

The CREJ [website](#) describes the VAP program:

As a hub for racial and economic justice activities, CREJ enriches the intellectual community at UC Law San Francisco by hosting two academic appointments, the Wiley Manuel Visiting Scholar and Professorship and C. Keith Wingate Visiting Assistant Professorship.

The Wiley Manuel Visiting Scholars and Professors are legal scholars whose work has been recognized as seminal in the fields of racial and economic justice and include [Professor Cheryl Harris](#) (2024 – 2025), [Professor Jerry López](#) (2023 – 2024), [Professor Scott Cummings](#) (2023 – 2022) and [Professor Russell Robinson](#) (2022 – 2021). In 2025 – 2025, CREJ will welcome [Professor Rick Banks](#) as the Wiley Manuel Visiting Scholar and Professor.

The two-year C. Keith Wingate Visiting Assistant Professorship supports junior scholars committed to equity and justice, in developing their research and teaching portfolios before entering legal academia. The 2024-2026 C. Keith Wingate Visiting Assistant Professor of Law is [Natalia Ramírez Lee](#). Prior C. Keith Wingate Visiting Assistant Professors of Law are [Professor Prithika Balakrishnan](#) (UC Law San Francisco) and [Professor Evelyn Marcelina Rangel-Medina](#) (Temple University James E. Beasley School of Law).

This year's outgoing VAP, Natalia Ramirez-Lee, starts a tenure track role at McGeorge on July 1.

***B. New Director of Startup Legal Garage and Professor of Practice
Steven Bazley***

The Startup Legal Garage program is described [here](#):

Since 2009, the Startup Legal Garage's innovative program has been empowering startups with free legal support. We match startups with talented UC College of Law San Francisco students who provide expert legal assistance, all while gaining invaluable knowledge and experience. Our network of partnerships ensures a steady stream of innovative companies and talented legal supervisors. Join an award-winning community program recognized by prestigious publications and associations, including the American Lawyer and the Association of American Law Schools.

Former Director of Startup Legal Garage Paul Belonick is moving out of the program to take over teaching duties previously handled by Lois Schwartz, who is retiring at the end of this academic year. After a year-long search, we have identified his replacement, Steven Bazley.

Professor Bazley earned his JD and BA from Duke. After graduating law school, he worked in corporate law advising public and private companies on capital markets, M&A, and governance matters, and he is specifically experienced advising early-stage and growth-stage companies. He will bring this substantial corporate experience at firms such as Latham & Watkins and Raines Feldman to bear as he teaches the Startup Legal Garage Corporate class and runs that program in the coming year. He starts June 1, 2026.

II. New Center

Chancellor & Dean David Faigman approved the creation of the newest center at UC Law SF, the Center for Criminal Justice. It will replace the Criminal Justice Institute.¹ It will be fully non-state funded (via third party funding). Its primary stream of work, initially, will be housed in the Habeas Institute within the Center.

Professors of Law Jon Abel and Richard Boswell proposed the center. Here are some highlights of the proposal David approved:

Criminal Justice Center – mission: The mission of the Criminal Justice Center will be to create a center of gravity for criminal law teaching and scholarship on campus, linking the Criminal Law Concentration, student organizations, faculty, and alumni via communications and programming. It would provide an administrative hub for centralizing and conveying information about our strengths and opportunities in this area. It would also be a vehicle for fundraising in case alumni are interested in subject-specific donations. The center would maintain an external website and Sharknet page, identify affiliated internal faculty, and have the capacity to associate with external affiliated scholars and fellows.

Habeas Institute – mission and focus: The mission of the Habeas Institute is to engage in the litigation, teaching, and study of immigration habeas corpus proceedings. This past year, the Immigrants’ Rights Clinic has litigated fifteen habeas corpus cases in federal court, resulting in the release of fourteen clients from ICE detention. The Clinic has been invited to join the Bay Area Habeas Network (“BAHN”), which consists of legal non-profits that respond to, and challenge, unlawful ICE detentions in the Bay Area. BAHN has secured a multi-year grant to hire staff attorneys for the Network. The goal is that every person unlawfully arrested by ICE will have access to an attorney who can file an emergency habeas petition on their behalf, before they are transferred out of the Northern District of California. The Habeas Institute will be on-call one day a week for any ICE arrest that occurs. If the arrestee meets certain predetermined criteria, the Habeas Institute will in its discretion file a pro bono habeas case and take on the resulting temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction litigation. The Habeas Institute will be staffed by the Center’s dedicated attorney and work in conjunction with Jon and Richard and the Clinic’s students. In this way, the staff attorney’s litigation practice will open up numerous opportunities for law students to engage with all aspects of an immigration habeas case—from arrest to court to release.

¹ See <https://www.uclawsf.edu/academics/centers/criminal-justice-center/>.

III. Library Staffing

Both Associate Dean for the Library and Academic Technology Initiatives Camilla Tubbs² and Library Director Hilary Hardcastle are leaving UC Law SF. The College plans to post for a new head of library operations. Because this is per ABA regulations a faculty role, the hiring cycle is such that there will be a need for interim staffing for a semester or full academic year. Provost & Academic Dean Morris Ratner, who oversees library operations, is working with outgoing Associate Dean Camilla Tubbs and others to effectuate an interim leadership plan while the law school recruits a new director.

² Dean Tubbs had also just started a new role focused on AI capacity building. That portfolio will need to be reallocated.

Report 4.8 – Rankings

By Provost & Academic Dean Morris Ratner

This report provides information regarding U.S. News & World Report rankings for the current year (2026-2027) and shares information about an expected improvement in rankings in the 2027-2028 publication year (next April), absent a significant change to the ranking methodology used by U.S. News. The most recently published projection by one of the leading commentators on rankings has UC Law SF going up in the rankings more than 10 spots next year.

I. Current-Year (2026-2027) Published Rankings

A. Overall Rank

U.S. News & World Report publicly [released](#) law school rankings on April 7. This year, UC Law SF moved up three ranks to 85.

U.S. News did not materially change [methodology](#) for calculating overall rank year-over-year. As was the case in the past few years, nearly two-thirds of the score that produces a law school's rank is based on the combination of employment (33%), first-time bar passage (18%), and "ultimate" bar passage, i.e., passage within 2 years of graduation (7%). For the current publication year (2026-2027), the data for those categories is a blended average of two prior years, i.e., 2023 and 2024 for employment outcomes and first-time bar passage and 2021 and 2022 for ultimate bar passage. (Bar outcomes from 2022 and 2023 were depressed by the pandemic and quickly shot back up starting 2024, so this year's rank is largely determined by one very strong year [2024] and one weaker year [2023].)

For a detailed explanation of the reasons the U.S. News formula that produces our overall law school rank fails to capture law school quality, see this previously posted document on the UC Law SF website, "[Understanding U.S. News Rankings](#)." Professor Derek Muller, a leading commentator on legal education, had this to say about the 2026-2027 U.S. News rankings:

And as for the rankings themselves? They are, as usual, noisy without a lot of substance behind them. Some things are, of course, interesting. Harvard continues to sag under the new methodology, and to a lesser extent Yale, calling into question the 'endgame' of the original 'boycott' that [instigated the new methodology](#). The new *USNWR* employment metric is heavily weighted in the ranking and highly manipulable by schools, as I've highlighted in [trying to assess employment categories](#). Many changes arise solely because of year-to-year vagaries in bar passage or employment.¹

¹ See <https://derekmuller.substack.com/p/the-new-uswnr-law-school-rankings>.

Table 1, below, shows changes in our overall and specialty ranks over the past five years. **Table 2** shows YoY changes from last year to this year for UC Law SF and for certain peer schools in California. UC Law SF and UC Irvine all went up this year. Berkeley, UCLA, and Davis all went down.

Category	2022	2023	2024 ²	2025	2026
Overall	51	60	82	88	85
Bus/Corp	32	36	73	62	41
Clinical	20	22	30	43	24
Const. Law	33	29	68	55	47
Contracts	27	29	91	72	42
Crim Law	32	36	61	51	35
ADR	9	11	14	14	14
Env. Law	21	18	36	21	25
Health	12	11	12	16	16
IP	28	31	53	58	61
Int'l Law	27	25	77	71	41
LRW	160	Unranked	Unranked	110	101
Tax	20	32	18	29	20
Trial Ad	26	71	24	48	40

Table 1: UC Law SF Overall and Specialty Rankings by Year

Table 1 makes clear how significantly and negatively the U.S. News formula change in 2024 impacted UC Law SF's overall rank. Table 1 also shows how the law school was impacted in the specialty rankings in 2024 and 2025, when U.S. News stopped counting the votes of faculty from schools that did not participate in the company's data collection efforts (including UC Law SF) and when there was confusion in the specialty surveys about whether UC Law SF was UC Hastings or some other school (e.g., USF). Swings in specialty categories like business, clinical law, contracts/commercial law, criminal law, and international law, are likely all related to name recognition campaigns over the past two years and to the fact that this year U.S. News agreed to Chancellor & Dean David Faigman's request that the phrase "formerly UC Hastings" appear in our specialty survey listings as it did in the overall peer reputation survey.

[Proceed to next page.]

² This is the first year U.S. News modified the formula to reduce the weight of or eliminate formula elements that benefitted UC Law SF (like peer reputation and student investment) and dramatically increase the weight accorded to student outcomes (bar passage and employment). It was also the first year we were not listed as UC Hastings in the overall rank peer reputation survey or the specialty rank surveys.

School	2025	2026
Stanford	1	1
UCLA	12	13
UC Berkeley	13	16
USC	26	26
UC Irvine	38	34
Pepperdine	55	46
UC Davis	50	52
USD	57	54
Loyola - LA	71	70
UC Law SF	88	85
Santa Clara	156	150
McGeorge	163	152
USF	166	156

Table 2: UC Law SF Compared to Select CA Peers – YoY Overall Rank

As noted, the U.S. News formula didn't change materially year-over-year, so much of the variability evident in Table 2 is likely driven by changes in bar passage and employment outcomes, given that those comprise 58% of the score that produces the rank.

B. Specialty Ranks

1. Big Law Placements

In addition to applying a formula to generate an "overall rank," U.S. News shares a ranking of "Law Schools with the Most Graduates at Big Law Firms." Here, for the 2026-2027 publication year we are ranked 32.

2. Specialty Fields

In addition, U.S. News conducts qualitative surveys of voters to generate rankings in specialty areas. In this kind of ranking, we have historically done well. Here is a summary of the rankings for this year:

- We have three top 20 specialty programs: Dispute Resolution (14), Health Care (16), and Tax (20).
- We are ranked top 50 in 11 of the 13 specialty categories: Business (41), Clinical Training (24), Con Law (47), Contracts/Commercial Law (42), Crim Law (35), Dispute Resolution (14), Environmental Law (25), Health Care (16), International Law (41), Tax (20), and Trial Ad (40).

C. Alternative Rankings Systems

There are alternatives to the U.S. News ranking system. As Professor Muller noted: "Prospective law students understandably and increasingly rely on a variety of [alternative metrics](#), and the granular employment data is also helpful for efforts to

distinguish between schools in meaningful ways.” This Internet Legal Research Group [ranking](#) based on ABA data, ranks UC Law SF #54. (To find us, you need to search for “Hastings”).

II. Projections for 2027-2028 Rankings

In a recent Substack post,³ Professor Muller projected rankings for the 2027-2028 publication year, which U.S. News will release in April 2027. He wrote in relevant part:

My *USNWR* law school rankings projections have been [pretty good](#)—but hardly perfect.... The [Class of 2025 employment data](#) has been released, along with more recent bar data. And given that the other 42% of the rankings are [much less volatile](#), we can simply assume this year’s data for next year’s and have, within a couple of ranking slots or so, a very good idea of where law schools will be.... High volatility and compression mean the potential for bigger swings in any given year, but I’ll note that things feel more stable than previous years as schools adjust to managing the rankings.

Muller predicts UC Law SF will be ranked 71 next year, a 14-rank improvement. However, as he notes, this is just a prediction, albeit an informed one given that U.S. News now relies so heavily on public and historical data to determine overall ran.

³ See <https://substack.com/home/post/p-195606551>.