

The Silver Bullet - Active Study FOR THE TEST versus Passive Study for the Courses Tested

Dear NWCU Student,

There is no 'Silver Bullet' for passing the California First-Year Law Students' Examination (the 'Baby Bar'). However, there is something that comes very close. It involves the reality that there is a direct relationship between the type, quality and quantity of study done by you and the chance of your success on the exam.

As I stated to you in a prior message, ***“those who study hour after hour and day after day in the weeks before the exam have a great chance of passing it. Those who do not study that way and instead try to ‘wing’ the exam without diligent and very intensive study have little, if any, chance of passing it.”***

The harder, longer and smarter you work, the better will be your chance of passing. In that regard, I submit that the ACTIVE learning approach is the best. It involves reading actual exam questions and answers and the taking of practice exams, giving you the opportunity to discern what you know from what you don't know. It is an especially useful method when you are provided with information that you need to make needed additions and corrections to your knowledge.

Many students engage only in “passive study” for the courses tested on the examination. They do so by simply reading and highlighting written law study materials or by watching course videos and listening to law review recordings, thinking that this approach alone will help them pass. While the passive study method of preparation is relatively easy, since you just sit and read, or watch, or listen, it takes a lot of time and, unfortunately, does not help you quickly reach the level of mastery that you need for the Baby Bar Exam. Passive study is useful and better than not studying at all, but does not work well when it comes to quick learning and the swift making of modifications to knowledge already obtained.

Therefore, my advice is that you do much more ACTIVE studying than passive studying, as you prepare for the Baby Bar Examination. It is fine to divide your work somewhat between active study tasks and passive study tasks, but you should spend much more time in ACTIVE study than passive study.

Reading books filled with practice multiple choice questions and answers is a very good idea. It is a wonderful way to learn important nuances in the law that will help you on both the multi-choice and essay portions of the Baby Bar Examination. Going over hundreds of them can really do wonders if you are actively involved selecting answers and then compare your answers to the ones that are identified as correct.

Active Preparation for the Multi-Choice portion of the Baby Bar Examination:

In addition to the use of books with practice multiple choice questions and answers, I highly recommend the 'AdaptiBar MBE Online Simulator & Prep.' It is available specifically for those studying for the California Baby Bar at a price of \$295. A web page with information about it is located at the following URL:

<https://www.adaptibar.com/baby-bar.aspx>

You should be using books with practice multiple choice questions and answers AND/OR 'AdaptiBar MBE Online Simulator & Prep' each and every day in ACTIVE preparation for the Multi-Choice portion of the examination.

The 'AdaptiBar MBE Online Simulator & Prep' is **well worth the modest price of \$295**. Using it every day to prepare for the Baby Bar Examination is an absolutely great idea!!!

Active Preparation for the Essay portion of the Baby Bar Examination:

For the essay portion of the examination I highly recommend that you read scores of past baby bar essay questions and selected answers to those questions. Eventually, select certain questions and, in self-timed sessions, actively write answers to them and later compare your answers to actual answers written by students taking the Baby Bar Examination.

Learn to answer all essay questions with analysis and argument because that will get you much higher scores than answers that provide nothing more than good definitions of key law terms and only simple, non-analytical references to, or quotations from, the facts of the questions. Good analysis and argument will get you many more points than good definitions. While knowing the definitions is crucial to being able to identify issues on the bar examination, it is analysis and argument that will drive up the points earned on the essay portion of the exam.

Here are links to past baby bar essay questions and selected answers. **You should be using the links each and every day** to locate essay questions and selected answers in ACTIVE preparation for the essay portion of the examination. It is amazing how much you can learn by reading the questions and selected answers. The more of them that you read the better your chances will be of writing passing answers. This is especially true when you take time to ACTIVELY write your own answers to the questions for practice.

As stated in a prior message, a number of the links that I am providing to you go to questions and selected answers that are older than those available on the Web site of the California Bar. **The State Bar may reuse fact patterns of older exams over time, so I really can't overstate the value of reading both the newer and the older exam questions and selected answers that you can access using the links provided in this message.** My hope is that you will print all of them, place them in a binder and read them a number of times between now and the upcoming examination. However, reading them on your computer screen is fine too.

(Click on each link below)

June 2022	October 2022
June 2021	October 2021
June 2020	November 2020
June 2019	October 2019
June 2018	October 2018
June 2017	October 2017
June 2016	October 2016
June 2015	October 2015
June 2014	October 2014

June 2013	October 2013
June 2012	October 2012
June 2011	October 2011
June 2010	October 2010
June 2009	October 2009
June 2008	October 2008
June 2007	October 2007
June 2006	October 2006
June 2005	October 2005
June 2004	October 2004
June 2003	October 2003
June 2002	October 2002

Between now and the date of the examination, study compulsively with constant focus on the prize. Avoid distractions and stay determined over the entire period of time by studying many long hours, day in and day out. Remember that success on the Baby Bar Examination comes only with intense preparation. The time you spend preparing for the exam should be one of the most unforgettable periods of your life; a time when you worked harder than ever to achieve a worthwhile goal. Your aim must be to prepare to the point that when you answer questions on the day of the real exam you realize that it is just like another day of practice.

Please ACTIVELY study long and hard every day between now and the date of the examination. If you do, it will improve your chance of passing immensely.

Best wishes to you,

Michael P. Clancey, Dean

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