

**AALS Sections on Academic Support (ASP) and the  
Empirical Study of Legal Education and the Legal Profession  
January 2019 Annual Meeting in New Orleans, LA: Thursday January 3, 2019, 1:30-4:30 p.m.**

*Circling the Square: Fresh Partnerships to Understand Student Learning and Bar Performance through  
Empirical Studies*

***Breakout Group: Professionalism Education and the Road to Bar Passage***

We are proposing a research effort comparing law students' degree of professionalism to bar passage rates. The goal is to clarify the institutional mandate of our ASP program, to determine what extent ASP resources should be dedicated to developing professional identity characteristics, and to determine how those characteristics relate to bar passage.

We are at the stage where we are launching our program and beginning data collection.

**Key Questions in Our Project:**

1. Why study the relationship between professionalism and bar passage?
2. How do you define professional formation sufficiently to create a meaningful learning outcome?
3. Once you have a learning outcome, how do you design a curriculum and teaching methods?
4. How do you assess professionalism, formatively and summatively?
5. Once you have defined a professionalism learning outcome, taught it, and measured student development through valid assessments, what can you learn from the data?

**Key Challenges Include:**

1. Defining professional identity formation and creating learning outcomes.
2. Designing a sound curriculum and teaching methods.
3. Assessing professional identify formation, formatively and summatively.
4. Understanding and acting on the data.

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