

The Importance of Argument

Dear NWCU Student/Graduate,

The ultimate secret for passing the essay portion of the General Bar Examination involves ISSUE RECOGNITION and **ARGUMENT, ARGUMENT, ARGUMENT, ARGUMENT**. Those who understand that truth should do very well.

You must list all of the issues in your scratch outline and then identify them one by one for the grader in your answer. After identifying an issue and providing the applicable rule of law in your answer, you must skillfully **ARGUE** using the facts of the question. **IT IS MOST CRITICAL THAT YOU BE CERTAIN THAT YOU ARE REALLY ARGUING RATHER THAN JUST SIMPLY REPEATING GIVEN SEGMENTS OF FACTS FROM THE QUESTION.**

The biggest problem of most unsuccessful bar takers is that they simply repeat facts rather than making good arguments with facts in their answers to essay questions. Often when they try to use facts to argue they simply repeat facts and condense their analyses such that, in the end, their answers are too conclusionary and way too simple to receive passing grades.

To be successful you must provide expanded discussion in your essay answers by **PLAYING WITH THE FACTS** rather than just repeating them. It makes a huge difference when it comes to grading.

So the purpose of this message is to implore you to remember the wording that follows.

DON'T JUST REPEAT FACTS, INSTEAD USE THEM TO ARGUE through use of wording such as:

“ _____ will argue that ...”

“On the other hand, _____ will contend ...”

“ _____ will assert to the court that the fact that ...”

“The court may find it significant here that ...”

That type of wording will force you to **PLAY WITH THE FACTS** rather than just repeating them, and will cause you to provide the type of discussion that bar graders must see before they can assign passing grades. It will make your answers longer and will make a world of difference in final outcome on the exam.

In sum, when you write essay answers on the General Bar Examination be sure that you skillfully ‘pour it on’ in your discussion when it comes to using (not merely repeating) the facts of the questions. It is, absolutely, the key to getting passing grades.

Argue with those facts!!!

Best wishes,

Michael Clancey, Dean

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