



Dear Amy,

Thank you for submitting your proposal. A printable summary is below. Your confirmation number is 15240. A confirmation email will be sent to you within 24 hours.

Applicants will be notified of the status of the proposed project on February 2, 2017.

If you have questions or need assistance regarding your application please contact the AIR Grant staff at 850-391-7109 or [grants@airweb.org](mailto:grants@airweb.org).

## SUMMARY

Personal Information	
Name	Dr. Amy Nichole Farley
Informal Name	Amy
Affiliation	University of Cincinnati
Unit/Department	School of Education
Title	Assistant Professor, Education Policy & Leadership
Year began this position	2015
Email	farleyay@ucmail.uc.edu
Alternate Email	farleyan@gmail.com
Cell Phone	5415438644
Preferred Mailing Address	PO Box 210002 Cincinnati, Ohio 45221 United States Phone: 513-556-5111
Secondary Address	53 Lockwood Pl Fort Thomas, Kentucky 41075 United States Phone: 5415438644

  

Demographics	
Highest degree	
Discipline of highest degree	
Position description	
Staff members in IR office	
Campus type	
Years of experience in IR	
IR Roles	
Year of birth	
Race/Ethnicity	
Gender	

  

Grant Type
I am applying for a:
Research Grant

**Financial Representative**

Name

John Ungruhe

Affiliation

University of Cincinnati

Department

Sponsored Program Accounting

Title

Director

Address

University Hall, Suite 530

51 Goodman Drive, P.O. Box 210222

City

Cincinnati

State or Province

Ohio

Zip or Postal Code

45221-0222

Country

United States

**Additional Contacts**

Name

Joel Chanvisanuruk

Affiliation

University of Cincinnati

Department

College of Law

Title

Assistant Dean for Academic Success and Bar Programs

Address

2540 W Clifton Ave

PO Box 210040

City

Cincinnati

State or Province

OH

Zip or Postal Code

45221-0040

Country	United States
Name	Chris Swoboda
Affiliation	University of Cincinnati
Department	School of Education
Title	Assistant Professor, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Research Methodology
Address	PO Box 210002
City	Cincinnati
State or Province	Ohio
Zip or Postal Code	45221
Country	United States

### Project Description

**Project title:**

Law Student Success and Supports: Examining Bar Passage and Factors that Contribute to Student Performance

**Statement of the research problem and national importance (limit 750 words):**

- What is the research problem this proposal intends to address?
- How does this topic relate to the research priorities areas of access, affordability, and value of legal or graduate/professional education?
- Why is this topic of national importance?
- Why is it timely to conduct this research at this time?

Law schools across the country are struggling with decreasing enrollment and an associated pressure to compete for a shrinking pool of prospective students (Arewa, Morriss, & Henderson, 2014; Sloan, 2015; Taylor, 2014); while the newest data suggest that the worst may be over – with nearly no change in enrollment in 2016 (Ward, 2016) – the changes to law school policies and practice as a result of this trend have been enormous. National trends suggest that this decline in enrollment has also led to changes in student composition, including a slight reduction in mean grade point averages (GPAs) and LSAT scores (Taylor, 2015). At the same time, U.S. News and World Report's rankings heavily weight both student credentials and student outcomes following graduation, including passage rates on the bar examination (Arewa et al.). Together, these trends have sparked fierce competition for students, resulting in what some scholars have labeled a law school "arms race" for higher rankings and greater numbers of prospective students who will not only be able to successfully complete their legal education but also ultimately pass the bar exam (Arewa et al.; Wellen, 2005).

One potential positive outgrowth of this changing law school population may be an increase in student diversity (McEvers, 2016; Taylor, 2015): In 2014, students of color accounted for 26 percent of law students compared to just 21 percent in 2004 and 10 percent forty years prior (Taylor, 2014). While this change is mostly attributable to a decline in the enrollment of white students, and students of color remain "profoundly underrepresented" (Taylor, 2015), it represents an important shift. It is also consistent with a drive to increase law student diversity, particularly as it relates to racial and ethnic student composition and enrollment of first-generation college students.

To address this changing climate in legal education, this research attempts to understand more fully law student success and the various factors, student characteristics, and programmatic interventions that contribute to positive student outcomes. Specifically, we will explore two overarching

research questions: First, what are the key predictors of law student bar exam passage, and what, if any, student success initiatives are associated with bar passage? Second, what student characteristics can be used to identify students that pass the bar exam when they are not predicted to do so? And, among students not predicted to pass the bar, what, if any, student success initiatives are associated with passage? In addressing these research questions, we will also explore whether any student success initiatives are particularly useful in improving bar passage for traditionally underrepresented students (e.g., first generation college students, low-income students, or students of color).

These questions will be explored through a unique collaboration between faculty from the University of Cincinnati College of Law and School of Education. Relying on student admissions and administrative data from five cohorts of UC law students, we will explore factors related to law student success, operationalized as bar exam passage. We will then explore how we can use findings from that empirical investigation to identify students that pass the bar when they are not predicted to do so and the characteristics that set them apart from peers who did not ultimately pass the bar. Finally, we will explore the effectiveness of various interventions utilized in the College of Law, including bar preparation experiences, programs targeted at traditionally underrepresented students, and academic support programs.

The UC College of Law is well-positioned as the context for this research for several reasons. First, UC's law program is competitive, largely considered the nation's premier small, urban, public law school. It is the fourth oldest continuously operating law school in the country and is classified as a "regional elite" program (Arewa et al., 2014). Second, the composition of the school is rapidly changing, with a significant reduction in overall enrollment and a slight increase in the enrollment of students of color and first-generation college students. Third, consistent with national trends, the credentials of incoming students have declined slightly, largely attributable to a general reduction in the pool of law school applicants. This reduction in qualifications – particularly those that ultimately predict bar exam passage – necessitates a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the factors that have the potential to contribute to law student success. Finally, the college's leadership is committed to collaborating on this research agenda and using results to directly and immediately inform practice, something that is unique in educational research.

#### Review the literature and establish a theoretical grounding for the research (limit 1000 words):

- What has prior research found about this problem?
- What is the theoretical/conceptual grounding for this research?

To inform study design and contextualize our findings, we situate our proposed research within the following three scholarly traditions: research regarding (a) the factors that predict student success and bar passage rates within J.D. programs; (b) academic support services, interventions, and programs for law students, and how those programs impact future student outcomes (e.g., bar passage); and (c) post-secondary student success and retention in general, for all students pursuing post-secondary degrees. For the purposes of this proposal, we summarize the key findings from (a) and (b) below because they are the most directly applicable to the current study. Future scholarship resulting from the proposed research will also summarize (c) in an attempt to link the findings for law students to the broader literature base regarding post-secondary student success.

#### Factors Related to Student Success and Bar Passage

Traditional post-secondary scholarship regarding student outcomes focus on graduation and employment attainment. Within legal education, however, the importance of the bar exam cannot be overstated. The requirement to pass the bar exam is a relatively modern phenomena: Almost all jurisdictions now require a written examination of some sort, although there remain large variation across the composition and requirement for said exams (Goforth, 2015). Passage rates also vary significantly by jurisdiction, with some places recording passage rates below 60% and others over 85% (Goforth). Regardless of these differences, however, bar passage remains a critical hurdle on the way to practicing law: In fact, Yakowitz (2010) estimated that over time there have probably been approximately 150,000 law school graduates who sat for the bar exam at least once and were never able to pass the test.

Research has documented several factors and student characteristics that are able to predict bar passage. In particular, there is a longstanding and well-documented relationship between law school grades and bar exam performance (Austin, Christopher, & Dickerson, 2016; Christopher, 2014; Goforth, 2015; Wightman, 1998). This is true for both overall law school GPA and first year (or 1L) GPA in particular (Austin et al.). Law school grades are frequently shown to be the strongest overall predictor available (Christopher, 2014). Austin et al. (2016) also demonstrated a relationship between bar passage and law review/journal and clinic participation, although their analyses did not account for differences in student achievement prior to that participation and should therefore be interpreted cautiously.

Research has also shown a consistent relationship between student performance prior to law school admission and bar exam results. First, several scholars have documented the predictive power of the LSAT (Austin et al., 2016; Goforth, 2015; Rosin, 2008; Wightman, 1998), although this finding is more contested than law school GPA because the LSAC consistently asserts that the LSAT is not a measure of predicted bar passage (Austin et al., 2016). There is more uncertainty about the strength of the relationship between undergraduate GPA and bar exam passage, with some research suggesting it is predictive (Wightman, 1998), while others suggest it is not (Alphran, Washington, & Eagan, 2011; Austin et al., 2016; Georgakopoulos, 2013).

Finally, consistent with educational research regarding high-stakes tests in a variety of contexts, the literature has shown a relationship between bar passage and student demographics. Subotnik (2013) argues that the bar exam has taken "an especially high toll on minorities," and research has confirmed the finding that African Americans pass the bar at significantly lower rates than their white counterparts (Curcio, 2002; Subotnik, 2013), although some research suggests those disparities disappear when controlling for prior achievement.

The relationship between demographics and bar passage is important: In fact, Christopher (2014) argued that stereotype threat – the idea that "when individuals perceive themselves to be at risk of confirming a negative stereotype about themselves, their increased anxiety disrupts their performance" (p. 167) – may have unintended negative consequences for students who take the bar exam who possess characteristics known to reduce the likelihood of passage (e.g., students with low LSAT scores or first year GPAs, or students of color). In short, these students may be aware of their decreased probability of success and that knowledge may actually perpetuate their failure. To combat this, he suggests stressing the fact that the bar exam is predictable and does not measure a fixed construct like intelligence, but rather learnable skills.

#### Research on Student Support Programs

Curcio (2002), in a formal position from the Society of American Law Teachers, asserts that poor student performance on the bar exam reflects poorly on a school, in part due to the influence of U.S. News and World Report rankings; this in turn disincentivizes law schools from admitting students who are

unlikely to pass the bar. Despite this claim, research has suggested that while some of the factors outlined above are related to student success, academic support programs and bar preparation also have the potential to positively impact bar exam success (Johns, as cited in Austin et al, 2016). This is particularly important given the changing climate of legal education described above.

Extending stereotype threat theory, Christopher (2014) hypothesized that academic support programs based on underperformance can unintentionally reinforce stereotypes about the inevitability of bar exam failure; he argues for academic support interventions that are thoughtfully designed to minimize the stigma on students with low GPAs and instead reinforce a more positive stereotype that those who participate are more likely to pass the bar. These kind of support programs have the potential to “not only allow law schools to see their bar passage rate rise but will also enable students, who once seemed at risk of failure, to become successful attorneys” (Christopher, p. 179).

To further strengthen the conceptual basis for our research, particularly with regard to understanding the role of student support programs, we will also draw upon Tinto’s (1975) model of retention, Veenstra’s nine pillars for student success (Veenstra, Dey, & Herrin, 2009), and the framework for student success in college (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2006).

#### **Describe the research method that will be used (limit 1000 words):**

- What are the research questions to be addressed?
- What is the proposed research methodology?
- What is the statistical model to be used?

As described above, the prior literature suggests that a variety of student factors and characteristics are predictive of bar exam passage, including undergraduate grade point average (GPA) (Alphran, Washington, & Eagan, 2011; Austin et al., 2016; Georgakopoulos, 2013), LSAT score (Austin et al., 2016; Goforth, 2015; Rosin, 2008; Wightman, 1998), law school cumulative and first year GPA (Austin et al., 2016; Christopher, 2014; Goforth, 2015; Wightman, 1998), and academic support programs (Johns, 2016). To deepen this body of literature, we will explore the following research questions:

1. What are the key predictors of law student success post-graduation, operationalized as bar exam passage? What, if any, student success initiatives utilized in the UC College of Law are associated with bar passage?
2. What student characteristics can be used to identify students that pass the bar when they are not predicted to do so? Among students not predicted to pass the bar, what, if any, student success initiatives utilized in the UC College of Law are associated with bar passage?
  - a. Are any student success initiatives utilized in the UC College of Law effective at improving bar passage for traditionally underrepresented students in particular (e.g., first generation college students, low-income students, or students of color)?

To explore these questions, we will rely on data from five cohorts of law school students – those who matriculated in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 – and subsequently graduated in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2016, respectively. Robust data from a variety of already obtained sources will be included in analyses files, including admissions and demographic data, course-taking and performance data, intervention and support program participation data, and bar exam data (including both a binary indicator of bar exam passage and total and sub-component scaled scores). Most of the data for 2013 graduates have already been entered and cleaned to facilitate preliminary analyses described below; the remaining data is in progress.

Statistical data analyses will employ regression and logistic regression to address the first research question regarding predictors of bar passage. We will also conduct secondary analyses to determine whether these results hold when focused near the margins of bar passage and if these relationships are consistent within subgroups.

For the second research question, we will investigate cases with significant prediction error (e.g., students whose bar exam performance far exceeds model estimates) for patterns or trends in characteristics, student success initiative enrollment, and other factors to gain insight into those who exceed their predicted performance. We will then conduct formal analyses employing latent variable methods to identify possible risk categories for non-passage. We will use these combined analyses both as an informative outcome for practice, and to provide insight into updating the model and future data collection efforts.

#### **Preliminary Findings**

One of the strengths of the proposed research is the team’s access to longitudinal student performance and administrative data. Utilizing five years of longitudinal data allows us the opportunity for deeper causal understanding. Preliminary analyses of a limited subsample of data, comprised of one cohort of students (2013 graduates), demonstrate the potential for the larger study to shed light on the research questions of interest. The full dataset will undoubtedly lend statistical power to the analyses and will enable us to paint a fuller picture of the success factors related to bar passage, particularly for traditionally underrepresented students.

**Descriptive Statistics.** For the 2013 class, 147 students had bar scores reported, with 130 passing the bar (88.4%). The mean and median bar scores were 448.6 and 455.55, respectively (SD = 35.3). These individuals had an average LSAT of 159.6 (SD = 4.5), Undergraduate GPA of 3.52 (SD = 0.30) and first year law school GPA of 3.11 (SD = 0.44).

To investigate individuals near the margins of bar passage, we limited our sample to include only those students whose bar scores were within 50 points of the cutoff for passage (XXX points). This yielded a subsample of 70 students, culled from the original 147 students in the population of 2013 graduates; in total, 55 of those 70 students (79%) ultimately passed the bar.

**Preliminary Statistical Modeling Results.** First, we found that first-year law school GPA was highly predictive of both the final bar examination scaled score and the sub-component scaled scores, while controlling for demographic information. This is consistent with the prior research regarding the relationship between first-year law school GPA and bar exam performance outlined above.

When we looked at those students on the margins of bar passage, we found that this relationship between first-year GPA and bar passage held up. In the limited sample, 100% of individuals with a first-year GPA greater than 3.25 passed the bar exam, with increasing risk of non-passage as first-year GPA got below 3.0 and beyond.

Increasingly distal predictors, including undergraduate GPA and LSAT performance explained less on their own and added little predictive power beyond first-year GPA. Nevertheless, it is likely that a number of factors are “baked-in” to these three measures and further depth of analysis will help us understand these relationships better.

#### Future Analyses

While the preliminary findings described above are compelling and present a strong justification for continued study, the use of multiple years of longitudinal data will significantly expand opportunities to understand sub-populations by increasing sample size and adding additional qualitative data (e.g., student participation in student support services or non-academic/non-classroom professional experiences). Further, finer grain information related to advanced and individual course work will be examined for potential ‘signaling’ courses where student performance serves as a significant indicator of risk of non-passage. Together, this information will not only provide insight into student success at UC and associated programs designed to support students at risk of failing the bar, but also has the potential to contribute to the national literature regarding law student success, bar exam outcomes, and support services for law students.

#### References cited (no word limit):

- Alphran, D., Washington, T., & Eagan, V. (2011). Yes we can, pass the bar: University of the District of Columbia, David A. Clarke School of Law bar passage initiatives and bar pass rates—from the Titanic to the Queen Mary! *University of the District of Columbia Law Review*, 14, 9-41.
- Arewa, O. B., Morris, A. P., & Henderson, W. D. (2015). Enduring hierarchies in American legal education. *Indiana Law Journal*, 89, 941-1068.
- Austin, K. A., Christopher, C. M., & Dickerson, D. (In press). Will I pass the bar exam?: Predicting student success using LSAT scores and law school performance. *Hofstra Law Review*, 45, forthcoming.
- Christopher, C. M. (2014). Eye of the beholder: How Perception management can counter stereotype threat among struggling law students. *Duquesne Law Review*, 53, 163-179.
- Curcio, A. A. (2002). Society of American Law Teachers statement on the bar exam. *Journal of Legal Education*, 52, 446.
- Georgakopoulous, N. L. (2013). Bar passage: GPA and LSAT, not bar reviews. Robert H. McKinney School of Law Legal Studies Research Paper No. 2013-30.
- Goforth, C. (2015). Why the bar examination fails to raise the bar. *Ohio Northern University Law Review*, 42, 47-88.
- Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Buckley, J. A., Bridges, B. A., & Hayek, J. C. (2006). What matters to student success: A review of the literature. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.
- McEvers, K. (Narrator). (2016, April 26). As law school applicant pool shrinks, student bodies diversify [Radio broadcast episode]. All Things Considered. Washington, DC: National Public Radio.
- Morriss, A. P. (2008). Measuring outcomes: Post-graduation measures of success in the U.S. News & World Report law school rankings. *Indiana Law Journal*, 83, 791-834.
- Nance, J. P. & Madsen, P. E. (2014). An empirical analysis of diversity in the legal profession. *Connecticut Law Review*, 47(2), 271-320.
- Rosin, G. S. (2008). Unpacking the bar: Of cut scores and competence. *The Journal of the Legal Profession*, 32, 67-97.
- Sloan, K. (2015, July 20). Has law school enrollment hit rock bottom? *The National Law Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.nationallawjournal.com/>
- Subotnik, D. (2014). Does testing = race discrimination?: Ricci, the bar exam, the LSAT, and the challenge of learning. *UMass Law Review*, 8, 332-399.
- Taylor, A. N. (2014, February 10). As law schools struggle, diversity offers opportunities. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://www.chronicle.com/>
- Taylor, A. N. (2015). Diversity as a law school survival strategy. *Saint Louis University Law Journal*, 59, 321-384.
- Tinto, V. (1975). Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research. *Review of Educational Research*, 45, 89-125.
- Veenstra, C. P., Dey, E. L., & Herrin, G. D. (2009). A model for freshman engineering retention. *Advanced in Engineering Education*, 1(3), 1-33.
- Ward, S. F. (2016, December 15). Slight increase in 1Ls for 2016, new ABA data shows. *ABA Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.abajournal.com/>
- Wellen A. (2015, July 31). The \$8.78 million maneuver. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/>
- Wightman, L. F. (1998). LSAC national longitudinal bar passage study. Newtown, PA: Law School Admission Council.
- Yakowitz, J. (2010). Marooned: An empirical investigation of law school graduates who fail the bar exam. *Journal of Legal Education*, 60(1), 3-40.

#### Project Description - Appendix

There are no files attached.

## Datasets

### List the datasets that will be used and explain why they best serve this research (limit 500 words)

Analyses will utilize longitudinal administrative data from the University of Cincinnati College of Law for students who graduated between 2012 and 2016. Data have been collected for five cohorts of students (N = 604) who matriculated in 2009 (N = 138), 2010 (N = 144), 2011 (N = 119), 2012 (N = 103), and 2013 (N = 100), including:

- a) student law school admissions data collected at the time of application to the UC College of Law, including LSAT score, undergraduate institution, major, and GPA;
- b) course-taking data from College of Law administrative records, including course name, term and year of study, and student grade;
- c) bar exam data collected from the Supreme Court of Ohio's Office of Bar Admissions, including a binary indicator of student passage, total bar exam scaled score, and bar exam sub-component scaled scores;
- d) support program participation data created from College of Law administrative records, including student participation in (i) an optional bar exam course offered by the College of Law for third-year students, (ii) the Law School Foundations Bridge Program, (iii) a structured study group program, and (iv) summer bar exam essay tutorials;
- e) non-classroom experience participation data from College of Law administrative records, including indicators of student participation in clinic, externship, and other non-classroom experiences; and
- f) student demographic data collected at the time of application to the UC College of Law, including race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, age, and Appalachian ancestry.

### Statement of use of restricted datasets (limit 250 words):

Applicants should provide a statement indicating whether the proposed research will require use of restricted datasets. If restricted datasets will be used, the plan for acquiring the appropriate license should be described.

If restricted datasets will not be used, leave this text box blank and click *Save and Continue*.

Although most of this data is confidential and restricted, the research team will rely exclusively on de-identified data to protect confidential student information. Furthermore, the research team has already secured permission from the College of Law to conduct the proposed research in support of the college's mission and commitment to delivering a legal education that positions graduates to succeed on their chosen bar exam and capably begin the practice of law. The proposed research represents the manifestation of that commitment: The research team has worked collaboratively with the College of Law to develop the scope of research activities and a critical element of the proposed research partnership is a collaborative review of findings and their direct application to policy and programmatic decision-making processes.

## Timeline and Deliverables

### Timeline:

Provide a timeline of key project activities.

Pre-award activities

Finalize IRB application and submit for approval

Collect additional data from the College of Law unavailable prior to grant proposal preparation (e.g., 2016 bar passage data)

Spring 2017 (March – April)

Finalize data cleaning and analysis file preparation; begin preliminary data analysis

Gather additional literature regarding the conceptual frameworks and three areas of relevant prior research described above (i.e., research on the factors impacting student success within J.D. programs, post-secondary student success and retention for students from all majors of study, and support services, interventions, and programs for traditionally underrepresented students, and how those programs impact future student outcomes).

Select graduate research assistant to support project during summer and fall of 2017

Submit conference proposal to Association for the Study of Higher Education (May 2017)

Summer 2017 (May – August)

Conduct data analyses and prepare preliminary findings

Finalize literature review

Share preliminary findings with the leadership and relevant faculty and staff within the College of Law

Submit conference proposal to the American Educational Research Association, Division J (July 2017)

Fall 2017 (August – December)

Conduct additional analyses based on discussions with College of Law faculty and staff, as needed

Finalize data analyses and findings; prepare research report for the College of Law

Prepare poster for presentation at the 2017 Access Group Legal Education Research Symposium; attend the symposium and share research results

Spring 2018 (January – April)

Prepare and submit manuscript focused on legal education interventions and bar passage for publication in law review

Prepare final grant report for AIR and the Access Group

Prepare and submit research-focused manuscript to a peer-reviewed education journal (e.g., Research in Higher Education or The Journal of Higher Education)

#### Deliverables:

List deliverables such as research reports, books, and presentations that will be developed from this research initiative.

We anticipate the results from this research will impact local policy and practice at the University of Cincinnati and also contribute to broader national conversations regarding legal education and post-secondary success in general. As such, we plan to produce the following deliverables from the investment from AIR and the Access Group:

1. Internal research report for the University of Cincinnati College of Law
2. Research poster for the 2017 Access Group Legal Education Research Symposium
3. Law review manuscript focused on legal education interventions and predictors of bar passage
4. Peer-reviewed research-focused manuscript, submitted to a peer-reviewed education journal (e.g., Research in Higher Education or The Journal of Higher Education)
5. Policy-oriented research brief
6. Final grant report for AIR and the Access Group

We also plan to submit proposals to present overarching themes and findings at professional associations, including the Association for Academic Support Educators (AASE) and the Association of American Law Schools' (AALS) Section on Academic Support, and national research conferences, including Division J (Postsecondary Education) of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE).

Finally, we anticipate hosting one to two meetings with the UC College of Law to present findings, discuss possible research extensions, and develop actionable steps that the college can take on the basis of the results.

#### Disseminate results:

Describe how you will disseminate the results of this research.

(Note: Costs of travel to meetings should be calculated on the budget page.)

As described above, we believe results from this research will be of interest to a variety of research communities and policy actors. As such, we plan to proactively disseminate results via attendance and presentations at local and national research convenings [i.e., the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE)] and professional association conferences [i.e., the Association for Academic Support Educators (AASE) and the Association of American Law Schools' (AALS) Section on Academic Support]. We also plan to pursue publication in both law review and peer-reviewed education journals, and also anticipate preparing a more policy-oriented research brief (e.g., Scholars Strategy Network policy brief - <http://www.scholarsstrategynetwork.org/briefs-and-spotlights>) for distribution to broader audiences including policymakers and practitioners.

We also plan to disseminate results internally through the collaborative partnership with the UC College of Law. UC's law school has an accomplished history of assessment and action in its curriculum and academic support programming. The College of Law plans to strengthen, innovate and institute programming directly based on the outcomes of this study. Our practice is to engage in the legal education community to present and publish in this area—we will continue this practice with the research and programmatic outcomes of this project.

#### IRB Statement

##### Statement of Institutional Review Board approval or exemption (limit 250 words):

As part of the proposal, a statement outlining a plan for Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is required. The statement should outline the applicant's timeline and plan for submitting the proposal to an IRB or explain why IRB approval is not necessary. Final IRB action is not necessary prior to submitting the application.

We are currently developing the Institutional Review Board (IRB) proposal for the proposed research. We anticipate submitting our completed IRB proposal in January 2017 so that the project will be approved prior to the grant award. We do not anticipate any significant barriers in gaining IRB approval, particularly because the project will also be used for program improvement purposes.

#### Biographical Sketch(es)

##### Biographical sketch (limit 750 words):

Dr. Amy N. Farley --

Dr. Farley's research addresses education policy and reform, using quantitative methods, program evaluation, and policy analysis to explore the impact of policy on students, educators, and educational equity and opportunity. In particular, her recent work has focused on policy-making mechanisms in education, including the growing use of ballot initiatives, and the impacts of education policies on traditionally underrepresented students.

She completed her Ph.D. at the University of Colorado, with a dual emphasis in education policy and research and evaluation methodology. Before

joining the University of Cincinnati, Dr. Farley was a Strategic Data Fellow through Harvard University's Center for Education Policy Research, where she worked closely with state and local agencies to conduct research and provide technical support in the implementation of state policies related to standards, evaluation, and student assessment. In that role, she led the development and execution of the research plan for a \$20M grant and served as Principal Investigator on two additional grants through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Dr. Farley has published in several highly competitive educational research journals, including Harvard Educational Review and Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis (EEPA). She holds a B.S. in Educational Studies and an M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from the University of Oregon; prior to graduate school, she taught 4th through 8th grade in Oregon.

---

**Biographical sketch (limit 750 words):**

Dr. Christopher M. Swoboda --

Dr. Swoboda is an Assistant Professor and Associate Director for the Research Methods subunit of the School of Education at the University of Cincinnati. As an applied quantitative research methodologist, he has focused his scholarship on implementing, evaluating and developing tools for educational, social science, and health researchers and practitioners to appropriately analyze the types of data that are inherent to their field. Amongst other things, these include data analytics, missing data, causal inference and single-case research designs.

Dr. Swoboda holds a B.S. in political science and a M.S. and Ph.D. in educational psychology from the University of Wisconsin. He has over 20 peer-reviewed publications in a wide variety of edited volumes and scholarly journals, including The Handbook of Advanced Multilevel Analysis and the International Journal of Research & Method in Education. He has also been a co-investigator on two competitive Institute of Educational Sciences (IES) innovation and development grants totaling nearly \$3M.

---

**Biographical sketch (limit 750 words):**

Joel Chanvisanuruk, M.P.A., J.D. --

Joel Chanvisanuruk is the Assistant Dean of Academic Success and Bar Programs at the University of Cincinnati College of Law. Assistant Dean Chanvisanuruk oversees the College of Law's Structured Study Group program and teaches a course designed to assist third-year law students in preparing for the written components of the Bar Examination. Assistant Dean Chanvisanuruk recently oversaw the update of the College of Law's orientation programming, integrating legal study skills and other components of a previous bridge program. Before entering the field of law student services, Assistant Dean Chanvisanuruk served as a U.S. Presidential Management Fellow (PMF) with the United States Forest Service and the United States Department of Agriculture in Washington, DC. In addition to his J.D. from the College of Law, Assistant Dean Chanvisanuruk obtained a Master of Public Affairs in Public Affairs from Indiana University, Bloomington. Prior to law school, he served as a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer in Sosnowiec, Poland.

---

**Budget**

- [Research Budget UnivCinn Farley](#)

---

**Funding History****Funding history (limit 250 words):**

A statement of prior, current, and pending funding for the proposed research from all sources is required. The statement should also include a history of all prior funding from AIR to any of the PIs for any activity. Funding from other sources will not disqualify the application but may be considered in the funding decision.

This research project is currently not supported by any grants or foundations. This grant application to Access Group/AIR is currently the only submitted proposal for project funding because we believe that the proposed project is well-matched to the goals of this grant opportunity. Additionally, neither the PI nor any of the co-PIs have been funded from AIR in the past 10 years.

---

**Dissertation Advisor Letter of Support**

There are no files attached.



# Research Grant Proposal Budget Form



Name Amy Farley

### Personnel - Salary

Principal Investigator \$ 18,834.00

Second Principal Investigator \$ 10,121.00

Third Principal Investigator \$

Graduate Research Assistant \$ 18,445.00

### Travel

2017 Access Group Legal Education Research symposium: \$ 1,300.00

Other research related travel: \$

(Note: Other planned travel should be listed in the "Timelines and Deliverables" section)

### Other research expenses

Please provide a breakdown of expenses below and add the total value in the box to the right. Allowable expenses include: materials, such as software, books, supplies, etc.; consultant services, such as transcription, analysis, external researchers, etc.; and costs for publishing articles in journals. The purchase of computer hardware, overhead or indirect costs, and living expenses are not allowable. If you have questions about specific expenditures, please contact AIR. \$ 1,300.00

Travel-related expenses for two Graduate Assistants to attend the 2017 Access Group Legal Education Research symposium: \$650 per GA; Total \$1,300.

TOTAL REQUESTED – Maximum Allowable is \$50,000 \$ 50,000.00