ASSOCIATION FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH
Data and Decisions for Higher Education

Dear Louis,

Thank you for submitting your proposal. A printable summary is below. Your confirmation number is 27230. A confirmation email will be sent to you within 24 hours.

Applicants will be notified of the status of the proposed project on February 1, 2019.

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

SUMMARY

Personal Information

Name	Dr. Louis M Rocconi
Informal Name	Louis
Affiliation	University of Tennessee
Unit/Department	Educational Psychology and Counseling
Title	Assistant Professor
Year began this position	2016
Email	lrocconi@utk.edu
Cell Phone	
Preferred Mailing Address	535 Bailey Education Complex 1126 Volunteer Blvd. Knoxville, Tennessee 37996 United States Phone: 6627194181
Secondary Address	

Demographics

Highest degree	Doctorate
Discipline of highest degree	Education - Evaluation and Research
Position description	Faculty - Teach Other Than IR
Staff members in IR office	
Campus type	Single Campus Institution
Years of experience in IR	6 to 10
IR Roles	Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes IR for internal decisions and institutional use IR for external reporting Accreditation Statistical analysis
Year of birth	
Race/Ethnicity	
Gender	

Grant Type

I am applying for a:

Research Grant

Financial Representative

Name

Jean Mercer

Affiliation

University of Tennessee

Department

Sponsored Projects

Title

Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research

Address

1534 White Avenue

City

Knoxville

State or Province

TN

Zip or Postal Code

37996-1524

Country

United States of America

Additional Contacts

Project Description

Project title:

Measuring Quality in Legal Education: Examining the Relationship between Law School Rank and Student Engagement

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?

Since their creation nearly thirty years ago, law school rankings such as U.S. News and World Report's (US News) "Best Law Schools" have come to dominate the conversation on quality in legal education (e.g., Heaton, 2018; Ryan, 2015; Sauder & Lancaster, 2006; Seto, 2007). Since identifying quality in higher education is difficult (Morphew & Swanson, 2011), rankings provide a seemingly objective measure of what constitutes quality in higher education. Because rankings provide a seemingly objective measure, prospective students often rely on them to assess the quality of a law school (Morphew & Swanson, 2011; Sauder & Lancaster, 2006). However, the criteria used to rank law schools often have little to do with the quality of education students receive (Espeland & Sauder, 2007; Ryan, 2015; Sauder & Lancaster, 2006). Given the popularity of rankings with alumni, employers, and potential students as well as the use of rankings in the law school search process, it is important to investigate whether rankings are related to other important aspects of law students' educational experience. If rankings are intended to demonstrate some level of collegiate quality, then these measures should be linked to other important aspects of the law school experience, such as student engagement. The purpose of this study is to examine how rankings relate with other indicators of law school quality. Specifically, this study will explore the relationship US News rankings have with various measures of student engagement as measured by the Law School Survey of Student Engagement.

Despite their popularity, scholars have questioned the validity and utility college rankings (see, Espeland & Sauder, 2007; Pike, 2004; Sauder & Lancaster, 2006; Zilvinskis & Rocconi, 2016) noting that they often have little to do with the quality of education received by students. One criticism of rankings is that they measure the inputs of students enrolled and the outcomes associated with those inputs instead of the actual outcomes of attending law school. Student engagement, on the other hand, represents an aspect of educational quality that should be considered important to prospective students because it describes what students will be doing if enrolled at the law school. Moreover, student engagement has been linked with other desirable outcomes both at the undergraduate and law school level like academic performance (Silver, Rocconi, Haeger, & Watkins, 2013), diverse interactions (Rocconi et al., forthcoming), and satisfaction (Webber, Krylow, & Zhang, 2013).

This project will draw on the previous works of Pike (2004) and Zilvinski and Rocconi (2018) who examined the relationship between institutional rankings for four-year colleges and levels of engagement in undergraduate education. Both studies demonstrated little to no relationship between institutional rankings and levels of engagement. These results raise concerns about whether rankings provide appropriate information for prospective students about the quality of the educational experience. Furthermore, these results suggest important implications for institutional leaders. By focusing just on increasing one's rank, institutional leaders may overlook other areas important to student success that are not captured by rankings. This project furthers this area of research by extending it to legal education. Examining the relationship between engagement and law school rankings will help law schools, potential students, and the public become more aware of other indicators of collegiate quality and provide guidance to law schools to better allocate resources towards things that enhance the student experience in law school.

This research will have direct implications for access to legal education. Because of the difficulty in assessing quality and the lack of other reliable, easy-to-use information on law schools, ranking schemes, like US News, provide a vital tool for prospective students to judge the supposed quality of different law schools. In fact, over half of law students reported that US News rankings were a primary consideration in their decision to attend their current law school (Ryan, 2015). Not only are rankings influential in the search process but research has demonstrated that a law school's rank can influence the number and quality of applications a law school receives (Locke, 2011) and job placement after graduation (Ryan, 2015; Taylor, 2014). Given the role rankings play in legal education from the search process through employment, rankings have a direct link with access to legal education by providing guidance to potential students regarding the quality of the law school and potential career opportunities. As such, there should be some concern whether rankings are related with other indicators of educational quality. This proposal aims to examine the relationship law school rankings have with other measures of high-quality educational experiences, such as student engagement.

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?

Law School Rank

While the vast majority of research on college rankings tends to focus on rankings for the institution as a whole (Locke, 2011), scholars have also examined the use and influence of rankings in legal education. Research on rankings in legal education has focused on analyzing and critiquing rankings (e.g, Morriss & Henderson, 2008), understanding the methodology (e.g., Ryan, 2015; Seto, 2007), and understanding how law schools respond to rankings (e.g., Askin & Bothner, 2016; Sauder & Espeland, 2009). Research has demonstrated that ranking can influence the number and quality of applications a law school receives and its yield (Locke, 2011). Furthermore, rankings have been shown to play a central role in the law school search process (Morphew & Swanson, 2011; Ryan, 2015), and this is often credited to the lack of other reliable, easy-to-use information on law schools (Crittenden & Dybis, 2010). Law school rankings even have an influence on students' job placement after graduation with certain law firms preferring students from top-ranked law schools (Taylor, 2014).

Not only are prospective law students using rankings to gauge a law school's worth, but law schools are also keenly aware of their ranking and actively seek to enhance their position relative to their peers (Ryan, 2015; Sauder & Espeland, 2009). Rankings have become so important in legal education that they have influenced the behavior and culture of law schools (Sauder & Espeland, 2009). In response to potential students, employers, and the public's embrace of rankings, law schools, as well as other higher education institutions, will "game" the system in an effort to obtain a favorable ranking. Espeland and Sauder (2007) and Sauder and Espeland (2009) describe policies and practices law schools implement in order to enhance their rankings. For example, in an effort to climb the ranking ladder, law schools will offer merit scholarships to students with high test scores to increase their selectivity results while students with low scores are classified as part-time or probationary in order to exclude them from the ranking calculation. Career services personnel will expend tremendous effort to track down alumni's employment status even at the expense of counseling current students or engaging with employers. Moreover, alumni employed in non-legal related jobs will often be classified as employed in order to boost the schools' job placement numbers. Law schools have even sent marketing brochures to peer institutions, lawyers, and judges in the profession in an effort to improve their reputational score. These examples illustrate the ubiquity of rankings in legal education and the influence rankings can have on resource allocation and educational mission.

Student Engagement

Student engagement is a term used to represent a series of understandings of the student experience in college. It is based on the premise that learning and development in college are related to the ways students spend their time and energy in both formal learning settings such as classrooms and informal learning settings that reinforce their formal counterparts (McCormick, Kinzie, & Gonyea, 2013; O'Day & Kuh, 2006). Specific examples of student engagement include student-faculty contact, active learning, and co-curricular activities like participating in moot court or serving on the law journal. Numerous studies at both the undergraduate (see, McCormick et al., 2013 for an overview) and law school levels (e.g., Florio & Hoffman, 2012; Silver et al., 2011, 2013; Rocconi et al., forthcoming) have examined the idea of student engagement and how it is related to students' growth and development.

Much attention has been directed towards student engagement because research has shown that students benefit more from college when their efforts are directed at learning-centered activities both inside and outside the classroom. Furthermore, student engagement has been linked with important indicators of collegiate quality such as academic performance (Silver et al., 2013; Webber et al., 2013), diverse interactions (Rocconi et al., forthcoming), critical thinking (Carni, Kuh, & Klein, 2006), and satisfaction (Webber et al., 2013). These studies have linked student engagement with key factors that potential students should consider important when choosing a law school, yet little is known about how the student experience in law school relates with a law school's ranking.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical/conceptual grounding for this study draws from Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) three-phase model of college choice. Hossler and Gallagher provide a simple yet comprehensive model that has been widely used to study students' college choice behaviors. The three phases are predisposition (deciding to enroll in law school), search (evaluating law schools), and choice (selecting a law school). While Hossler and Gallagher's model was based undergraduate college choice, it has also been applied to study graduate school choice (Perna, 2006; Poock & Love, 2001). Of particular interest in Hossler and Gallagher's model is the second phase of the model, the search process. In this phase, a student has begun to gather

information about possible law schools, and this information often includes law school rankings. For instance, Ryan (2015) found that 94% of students at an elite private law school, 77% of students at a public flagship law school, 58% of students at a public regional law school, and 61% of students at a new private law school reported that US News rankings were a primary factor when deciding to attend their current law school. These findings illustrate the central role rankings play in the search process for students across different types of law schools. Given the emphasis prospective students place on rankings along with the pressure to maintain or increase one's ranking, it is important to investigate whether rankings are related to important aspects of students' law school experience – specifically, student engagement.

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?

The primary research question guiding this study is: What is the relationship between law school rankings and student engagement? More specifically, when controlling for law school and student characteristics, to what extent, if any, is there a relationship between law school ranking and student engagement?

Proposed Research Methods

In order to answer our research question, data from the Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE) and law school rankings from U.S. News will be analyzed with a series of multilevel models (i.e., hierarchical linear models). Given that the rankings are based on data derived at the law school level and the data on student engagement are derived from individual students within each law school, a multilevel modeling process will be used to explore the relationship law school rankings have with the different facets of engagement measured by LSSSE. The multilevel model more accurately models the relationship between rank (a law school-level variable) and engagement (a student-level variable) by incorporating a unique random effect for each law school into the statistical model (Hox, 2010; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). In addition, multilevel models protect against inflated standard errors that can arise due to the nested nature of the data (i.e., students nested within law schools).

Variables

The dependent variables will be the four LSSSE Engagement Indicators – Learning to Think Like a Lawyer, Student-Faculty Interaction, Student Advising, Law School Environment – as well as measures of diverse interaction, perceived learning gains, and satisfaction with law school.

The LSSSE Engagement Indicators were developed to represent four specific aspects of student engagement. The Learning to Think Like a Lawyer indicator is based on Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of educational objectives and includes four items that focus on the extent students believed their coursework emphasized critical and analytical thinking skills. The Student-Faculty Interaction indicator is comprised of six items that asked students how often they interacted with or sought counsel from their professors. The Student Advising indicator is composed of five items that ask students how satisfied they are with advising services at their law school. The Law School Environment indicator includes six items that ask students about their law school's commitment to their academic and social success. More information on the LSSSE Engagement Indicators can be found on the LSSSE website: lssse.indiana.edu.

In addition to the LSSSE Engagement Indicators, this study will explore the relationship law school rankings have with other measures of student development that have been used in prior student engagement research (e.g., Rocconi et al., forthcoming; Silver et al., 2011; 2013). We will use the diverse interactions scale presented in Rocconi et al., (forthcoming) that is derived from three items on LSSSE that asked students about their interactions and discussions with peers in law school. We will create a measure of perceived learning gains, similar to Silver et al. (2013), by combining questions that ask students how much their law school contributed to their knowledge, skill, and personal development in a variety of areas identified by Shultz and Zedeck (2009) as effective lawyer attributes, such as writing clearly and effectively, thinking critically and analytically, and legal research skills. Finally, a scale measuring satisfaction with the law school experience will be created from two items that ask students to rate their overall educational experience and if they could start over again whether they would attend the same law school.

In order to account for differences in engagement by student and law school characteristics, we will include factors that have been shown to be related to engagement in both the undergraduate and law school literature. Potential student characteristics include gender, race-ethnicity, enrollment status, age, class-level, and first-generation status. Potential law school characteristics include sector (public/private) and enrollment size. In order to examine the relationship US News ranking scheme has with LSSSE's engagement measures, we will include a law school's numeric score on the ranking scheme. Thus, a higher score equates to a more prestigious ranking for the law school. The numeric score will be used since it has an interval scale of measurement while rank has an ordinal scale.

Statistical Model

The following statistical model will be estimated for each engagement outcome. Since we are interested in a law school characteristic (i.e., ranking) controlling for student characteristics and other law school characteristics, we will grand-mean center the student and law school characteristics as recommended by Enders and Tofighi (2007). Furthermore, we will follow procedures outlined in Raudenbush and Bryk (2002) and Hox (2010) for estimating and assessing the adequacy of multilevel models.

$$\hat{Y}_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{qj} * X_{qij} + \gamma_{(q+1)j} * Rank_{(q+1)j} + r_{ij} + u_{0j}$$

where, $\hat{Y}_{ij}$ is the predicted engagement outcome of student i in law school j;

γ_{00} is the intercept, or constant, and represents the mean engagement outcome score for law school j;

X_{qj} is a vector of student and law school control variables and γ_{qj} represents the effect of each these characteristics on the engagement outcome;

$\gamma_{(q+1)j} * Rank_{(q+1)j}$ is the effect of law school rank on the engagement outcome;

r_ij is the random student-level residual;

u_0j is the random law school-level residual.

Application of this statistical model will provide empirical evidence depicting the extent to which there is a relationship between law school rankings and levels of student engagement.

References cited (no word limit):

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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)

1. The Law School Survey of Student Engagement, 2016 and 2017 administrations
2. U.S. News and World Report Best Law Schools, 2017 edition

The main datasets used for this project will be the Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE) and data on law school ranking from U.S. News and World Report (US News). We will purchase full access to the US News ranking methodology that includes each law school's ranking and the law school's numeric ranking score. The principal investigator has discussed this research project with the LSSSE project manager and received support for the project.

LSSSE is an annual survey administered to law students used to assess the extent to which law students are exposed to and participate in a variety of effective educational practices. The survey asks students about various aspects of their law school experience, including interactions with peers and faculty members. Typically, around a third of all ABA-approved law schools elect to administer the LSSSE survey in a given year. We propose to use the 2016 and 2017 administrations of LSSSE to capture a large cohort of law schools. If a law school participated in both years, we will use their most recent year of participation.

Each year, US News publishes a ranking of the "best law schools." These rankings are based on both empirical data (e.g., median LSAT, employment rates, bar pass rates) and subjective quality evaluations based on assessments by law school deans and faculty within academia and assessments by lawyers and judges in the profession.

In order to be selected for this study, a law school would have to have participated in LSSSE in 2016 or 2017 and be ranked in the 2017 edition of US News rankings.

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*.

LSSSE data are proprietary and confidential; as such, the principal investigator will work with LSSSE and the Center for Postsecondary Research at Indiana University to obtain all data sharing and licensing requirements needed and meet the IRB requirements of both Indiana University and the University of Tennessee. The principal investigator has discussed this research project with LSSSE staff and no issues are foreseen with gaining access to the data.

Timeline and Deliverables

Timeline:

Provide a timeline of key project activities.

Pre-award:
• Finalize data sharing agreement with LSSSE, finalize IRB application, and submit IRB application for approval

Spring 2019 (February – April):
• Hire a graduate assistant to assist with the project
• Compile, clean, and code data from the Law School Survey of Student Engagement and U.S. News rankings
• Run preliminary data analyses
• Gather literature and draft introduction and literature review sections

Summer 2019 (May – July):
• Analyze data, prepare preliminary findings, finalize literature review
• Share preliminary findings with other scholars in the field to get feedback on findings and methodology
• Write a draft of the manuscript
• Prepare a proposal for Association for the Study of Higher Education conference
• Submit the first progress report on June 30

Fall 2019 (August – December):
• Conduct additional data analyses based on feedback from other scholars
• Finalize draft of the manuscript
• Submit second progress report on October 29
• Present findings at AccessLex Institution Legal Education Research Symposium November 11-12
• Present findings at the Association for the Study of Higher Education Conference November 14-16

Spring 2020 (January – April):
• Release draft of paper via SSRN
• Submit final report on April 30
• Submit final report to LSSSE and work with LSSSE staff to create a blog post of the findings for the LSSSE website
• Submit manuscript to an academic journal

Deliverables:

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

1. AccessLex Legal Education Research Symposium presentation
2. Association for the Study of Higher Education conference presentation and draft of scholarly paper
3. Final report for AccessLex
4. A copy of the final report will also be sent to LSSSE and an abbreviated version may be made available on the LSSSE website/blog
5. Release final version of paper via the SSRN
6. Peer-reviewed research journal publication (possibly the Review of Higher Education, the Journal of Higher Education, or SAGE Open)

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.)

The research findings will be presented at the 2019 AccessLex Institute Legal Education Research Symposium so other law schools can learn about this research. This presentation will expose this research to law school administrators, researchers, and faculty who are interested in law school rankings and how that relates with student engagement and access to legal education. We will also submit a proposal to present these findings at the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) conference in order to reach other higher education, legal scholars, and policymakers who do not attend the Symposium. The ASHE conference is an annual gathering of higher education researchers and presentations at the conference often receive press coverage from the Chronicle of Higher Education and Inside Higher Education. We will also provide the final report to LSSSE and, if requested, draft a short write-up of the findings for the LSSSE website or blog. Finally, we plan to submit a research article for publication in a peer-reviewed journal and upload finding to the SSRN to further disseminate the findings of this research. Using these different avenues of dissemination, we believe many different audiences in legal and higher education will be able to access and benefit from the findings of this research.

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.

The proposal for IRB approval will be submitted in January, and we will work with our IRB to have the project approved prior to the finds being distributed. Since we will be working with secondary data, we anticipate that the research will be granted "exempt status" from the IRB.

Biographical Sketch(es)

Biographical sketch (limit 750 words):

Louis Rocconi is an assistant professor in the Evaluation, Statistics, and Measurement program in the Department of Educational Psychology and Counseling at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He earned a Ph.D. in educational psychology and research from the University of Memphis. His areas of research include program evaluation and assessment in higher education, student engagement and development in college, and methodological issues in educational research. He has presented and published research on university rankings in higher education as well as work in student engagement in both undergraduate and legal education. He is also currently working on a contribution for an upcoming textbook on university rankings: Research Handbook on University Rankings: History, Methodology, Influence, and Impact.

Prior to his arrival at the University of Tennessee, Dr. Rocconi was an assistant research scientist at the Center for Postsecondary Research (CPR) at Indiana University, Bloomington where he provided data analytic support to several large, national survey research projects including the National Survey of Student Engagement and the Law Schools Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE). During his five years at CPR, he also helped manage the data operations and reporting process for LSSSE.

Budget

- [Rocconi Budget Form](#)

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.

The principal investigator, Louis Rocconi, does not currently have any external research funding nor does he have any pending. He has not received any prior funding from AIR.

Dissertation Advisor Letter of Support

There are no files attached.

How Did You Hear About This Grant Opportunity?

Check all that apply:

- American Educational Research Association (AERA)
- Association for Institutional Research (AIR) website or direct communication
- Association for Institutional Research (AIR) eAIR Monthly electronic newsletter

AIR email

Research Grant Proposal Budget Form

Personnel - Salary

Principal Investigator $ [ ]

Second Principal Investigator $ [ ]

Third Principal Investigator $ [ ]

Graduate Research Assistant $ [ ]

Travel

2019 AccessLex Institute Legal Education Research Symposium: Principal Investigator $ [ ]

2019 AccessLex Institute Legal Education Research Symposium: Second Principal Investigator $ [ ]

2019 AccessLex Institute Legal Education Research Symposium: Third Principal Investigator $ [ ]

2019 AccessLex Institute Legal Education Research Symposium: Graduate Research Assistant* $ [ ]

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.

[ ]

TOTAL REQUESTED – Maximum Allowable is $50,000 $ [ ]

*Note: The AccessLex Institute believes graduate student professional development and mentoring opportunities are important aspects of the Research Grant Program. Therefore, Research Grant recipients are strongly encouraged to designate funds for graduate student travel for the AccessLex Institute Legal Education Research Symposium Presentation.

Louis Rocconi
AccessLex Institute AIR Grant Proposal
Response to Comments
1 February 2019

Dear Ms. Tinsley Smith,

I am writing this statement in response to the review panel's required revisions to my AccessLex Institute AIR grant proposal. Below I list the required changes and my response to the change. I address the first two bulleted revisions detailing limitations of the proposal together.

- The proposal does not acknowledge or consider the potential for selection bias among students admitted to and enrolling in law schools. A more detailed discussion of how the research will treat individual effects vs. institutional effects is warranted.
- The proposal should at least acknowledge that LSSSE, NSSE, etc. have received some critique for validity issues (Porter, 2009; Campbell & Cabrera, 2012), and also acknowledge the limitation that the act of responding to a survey is indicative of engagement itself, and so generalization from respondents to non-respondents may be dubious.

As with any piece of research, this project is not without its limitations. Care will be taken not to overgeneralize the results of this study. While around a third of all ABA approved law schools participate in LSSSE each year, the proposed sample is a convenience sample in which law schools self-select to participate in LSSSE. Law schools elect to participate in LSSSE for a variety of reasons, mainly for self-examination and improvement, which may affect the context of the student experience. The results will also be limited by the fact that students self-select to attend law school as well as self-select to participate in the survey and participating in the survey is a form of engagement in itself. It is also important to acknowledge that there is the debate within the higher education community regarding the validity of survey data, which includes concerns regarding social desirability bias (Bowman, 2011), psychometric properties (Campbell & Cabrera, 2011), and subjectivity of self-reporting (Porter, 2011). However, other research has demonstrated that social desirability bias does not play a major role in students' self-reports of basic academic behaviors (Miller, 2012). In addition, the psychometric properties of the LSSSE measures that will be used in this study have been documented in other published research (e.g., Rocconi et al., in press; Silver et al., 2013). While survey data may reflect respondent perception, these data still offer valuable information regarding the student experience that should be incorporated in institutional decision-making and policy creation (Gonyea & Miller, 2011; Pike, 2013). Despite these limitations, this project will still provide useful information in contributing to the conversation regarding quality in legal education. Limitations will be fully addressed in the final report.

- The first part of the title should be removed so that it reads Examining the Relationship between Law School Rank and Student Engagement. The title change reflects what AccessLex wants this research project to cover. AccessLex wants this study to measure the relationship between law school rank and student engagement, as opposed to bar passage because AccessLex is already funding a research project that is focused on bar passage.

I approve changing the title of the proposal to "Examining the Relationship between Law School Rank and Student Engagement."

- The statistical model should likely include institutional response rates in models to observe any relationship with model output.

I will request LSSSE include law school response rates with the data and include them in the statistical model.

If you have any further questions or revisions, please let me know. I look forward to working with you on this project.

Sincerely,

Louis M. Rocconi, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Educational Psychology and Counseling
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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