



Metromark Legal Research Center

## **Preparation for the Profession of Law**

South Carolina Bar

January 18, 2008

### **Objective**

The primary objective of this research and this report is to identify areas for improvement in the preparation of law students to become lawyers. This information may be useful not only to the University of South Carolina School of Law but to other law schools in creating curricula and services for students.

### **Background**

Law schools and lawyers in practice are looking for new ways that they can improve the preparation of those graduating from law school and entering the practice of law. It is in the interest of the law school, the students, and practicing lawyers in the state to have recent graduates prepared to practice law either in small or large practices, in government agencies, or in businesses as in-house counsel.

Larger law firms are depending on new law school graduates to begin work in their firms in a variety of practice areas.

### **Overview**

#### ***Improvement in Legal Education***

This study focuses on three areas of legal education: skills, knowledge and values.

#### **Professional Skills**

The professional skills that are in most need of improvement, given the importance that members place on the skill and the performance of recent graduates, are 1) basic writing skills and 2) listening.

The most important skills for law students to learn are, according to members, 1) basic writing, 2) legal analysis and reasoning, and 3) listening.

Members are most satisfied with recent graduates on 1) computer skills and 2) legal research using electronic access.

### Professional Knowledge

Professional knowledge items most in need of improvement, considering the combination of the importance and performance (satisfaction) ratings, are 1) professional responsibility, 2) evidence, and 3) civil procedure.

The most important knowledge areas are 1) professional responsibility and 2) civil procedure.

Members are most satisfied with recent graduates on 1) professional responsibility and 2) torts. While these are the highest in satisfaction on professional knowledge, there is room for them to be even higher.

### Professional Values

Professional values that are most in need of improvement, given importance and satisfaction ratings, are 1) reliability and willingness to accept responsibility and 2) showing diligence and a hard work ethic.

The most important value areas, members report, are 1) acting honestly with integrity and 2) reliability and willingness to accept responsibility.

Members are most satisfied with recent graduates on 1) acting honestly and with integrity and 2) providing high quality legal work for each client.

### ***Public Perception of the Legal Profession & Legal Education***

Members have a high level of concern about how the public perceives lawyers, the legal profession, and the judicial system. According to members, there needs to be improvement in the public's understanding of the challenges that lawyers face in their day-to-day work.

The public, according to members, is not aware of successes that law schools have had in preparing future lawyers.

### ***Working with Recent Graduates of the USC School of Law***

Over half of members say they work with recent graduates of the USC School of Law.

Nearly all members say that recent graduates have the characteristics of 1) being effective and responsible, 2) having intellectual and analytical skills, and 3) having a knowledge and understanding of the law. Members are not sure about the characteristic described as “self-reflection, with lifelong learning skills”.

### ***Elements of Learning in Legal Education***

Members do not highly rate their own law school experience on any of the elements of learning. Law school experience rated on the elements of learning, in order from highest to lowest rated, are analysis, synthesis, application of theories, memorization, and making judgments.

Nearly three-quarters of members participating in this study are graduates of the USC School of Law.

Members who graduated from other law schools are significantly more likely to give the highest ratings to their law school experience on each element of learning, when compared to those who graduated from the USC School of Law.

### ***Services Provided by Member’s Law School***

Members are most satisfied with the assistance they received from their law school in one service, the use of the law library. There is some satisfaction with using new technologies. Members are not highly satisfied with academic advising and planning, financial aid advising, job search help, career counseling, and personal counseling.

There is a highly significant difference between members who graduated from other law schools and those who graduated from the USC School of Law on their satisfaction with the services of their law school. Graduates of other law schools have higher ratings on each service, with the exception of law library assistance.

### ***Student Assistance in the Academic & Social Experience in Law School***

Members rate the student assistance provided by their law school highly on two areas: 1) emphasis on spending time studying and on academic work and 2) encouraging the ethical practice of law. All other areas, such as use of technology and social support, are rated as having a low emphasis in their law school.

Members who graduated from law schools other than the USC School of Law are significantly more likely to say that their law schools have higher emphasis on all items than do members who graduated from the USC School of Law.

## **Approach**

The South Carolina Bar has approximately 8,800 lawyers identified as being active and practicing in South Carolina. This was the source of our email addresses for this research. There are 10,300 active members in the SC Bar, including those who are out-of-state and in-state.

On January 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of 2008, a questionnaire was emailed to all known active members of the bar. For most of these lawyers, over 7,000, only one email invitation was received, on January 10, 2008. Lawyers in the pre-test on January 9, 2008 received more than one email invitation.

With an email questionnaire, we know that there are attorneys who do not have a working email address. We know that there are attorneys who do not regularly use their working email addresses.

By January 15, 2008, we had 1,223 members (13.9% of all active members) at least begin the questionnaire. A total of 1,014 members (11.5% of all active members) fully completed the questionnaire. Eighty-nine percent of those who began the questionnaire completed it. This is a very high full completion rate, especially for a questionnaire that took, for some, over 15 minutes to complete.

An 11 percent response rate based on a total population of 8,800 gives us confidence that the findings in this report are representative of the active lawyers in the SC Bar.

This report contains a summary of the quantitative findings. In separate files are the verbatim comments, as typed-in by the members when completing the questionnaire. The member's name is not associated with his or her comments.

## Findings

### *Public Understanding of Lawyer Challenges*

When we asked members “How would you rate the public’s understanding of the challenges facing lawyers today?”, over 90 percent (92.0%) said that the public’s understanding is fair (32.0%) or poor (60.0%).

The mean score on this item is 1.45 out of a possible high score of 5.00. In this report, we use several scales that are summarized best by a mean score instead of presenting percentage by each response choice. For this item, we used a scale of excellent (5.00), very good (4.00), good (3.00), fair (2.00) and poor (1.00). A score of 1.45 is midway between fair and poor.

Blacks (score 1.62) are significantly more optimistic about the public’s perception of challenges facing lawyers than are whites (1.41). Females (1.47) are slightly more optimistic than are males (1.41)

In this report, we use the term “significant” to refer to statistical significance. That is, when the difference between scores, for example, cannot be explained by chance alone. Significance is noted when the probability of finding a difference is equal to or less than 5 times out of a hundred. The term “highly significant” may be used when the probability is equal to or less than one out of a hundred that there would be a difference.

The greater the number of comparisons in a study, the more likely it is that there will be some differences, based on demographic characteristics for example, that although statistically significant, for which there is no ready explanation. We sometimes refer to these as differences that make no difference.

Members who are in law firms with 50 or more attorneys (mean score 1.55) are more likely to believe that the public’s understanding of the challenges lawyers face is more positive than are members in smaller law firms.

### *Public Perception of Law School Success in Preparing Lawyers to Practice*

The question is, “How would you rate the public’s perception of the degree of success that law schools have had in preparing their students to become lawyers?”

Those members who do not work with lawyers who graduated from USC School of Law within the past 5 years are significantly more positive of the public perception (2.18 with 5.00 being “excellent”, the most positive score) when compared to those who do work with recent graduates of the USC School of Law (2.15).

Females (2.32) are significantly more positive than are males (2.06) of the public perception of the success that law school have had in preparing their students to become lawyers.

Those members who graduated from the USC School of Law in 2006 and 2007 are significantly more positive (2.43) than those members who graduated earlier (scores range from 1.89 to 2.24) to say that public perception is positive.

### ***Work with Recent USC Law Grads?***

We asked all members, “Do you work with one or more lawyers who graduated from USC School of Law within the last 5 years?”

There is a highly significant difference between members who are USC School of Law graduates and those who graduated from some other law school.

Over half (55.1%) of graduates of the USC school say they work with recent USC law school graduates. Only just over 40 percent (42.8%) of those members who are not USC law graduates say they work with recent graduates of USC School of Law.

Those members who work primarily in the Midlands of South Carolina (58.6%) are significantly more likely to say that they work with recent USC law school graduates, when compared with those from the Pee Dee (37.5%), the Upstate (47.3%) and the Lowcountry (48.7%).

In general, the larger the size of the law firm, the more likely a member of that firm works with a recent USC law school graduate. While nearly 90 percent (86.8%) of members from law firms with 50 or more attorneys say they work with a recent USC law school graduate, only about a half (50.8%) of law firms with 3 to 10 attorneys say they work with a recent USC graduate.

Graduates of the USC School of Law from the years of 2006-2007 (60.9%) and from the years 2003-2005 (69.3%) are most likely to say that they work with a recent graduate of the USC law school.

The members who graduated from law school prior to 1983 are significantly less likely than other classes to say they work with a recent USC law school graduate. For example, only 40 percent of those members who graduated from law school in the period of 1978 to 1982 say they work with a recent USC law school graduate.

***Characteristics of Recent USC Law School Graduates***

Members were asked a series of questions about whether or not they agreed that recent graduates had specific characteristics.

Eight out of ten or more are in agreement that recent graduates have three of the specific characteristics. Less than ten percent say they don't know whether recent graduates have the characteristic. These characteristics were "effective, responsible," "intellectual, analytical skills," and "knowledge, understanding of the law".

Table 1.  
Characteristic of Recent Graduate  
by Percent of Members Saying "Yes"

Characteristic	% "Yes"
Effective, responsible	86.4
Intellectual, analytical skills	85.7
Knowledge, understanding of the law	80.9
Self-reflection, lifelong learning skills	48.8

While nearly all members were able to say "yes" or "no" to each of the first three items, the third item, self-reflection, led a third of members (32.3%) to say "I don't know". If we remove those who said they didn't know, over 70 percent (72.1%) say "Yes," that recent graduates are self-reflective with lifelong learning skills.

Members from the classes of 2006-2007 (71.9%) and 2003-2005 (67.0%) are most likely to say, being themselves recent graduates, that recent graduates of the USC Scholl of Law have adequate self-reflection and lifelong learning skills.

***Areas of Legal Education: Satisfaction with Professional Skills***

Members report their highest satisfaction with the professional skill of satisfaction with recent graduate's computer skills (score is 3.51 out of a highest possible score of 4.00 "very satisfied"). The least satisfaction is with the skill of getting new clients.

Table 2.  
Satisfaction with Professional Skills by Score

Skill	Score
Computer skills	3.51
Legal research (electronic sources)	3.45
Working cooperatively in a team	3.29
Legal analysis and reasoning	3.28
Oral communication	3.16
Basic writing skills (grammar, usage)	3.10
Listening	3.09
Written communication	3.08
Interviewing and questioning	3.06
Factual investigation	3.05
Problem solving	3.05
Recognizing & resolving ethical dilemmas	3.04
Appellate advocacy	3.03
Networking within the profession	3.01
Legal research (print sources)	3.01
Keeping clients	3.01
Organization & management of legal work	2.93
Pretrial discovery and advocacy	2.92
Drafting legal documents	2.91
Mediation	2.91
Counseling	2.88
Trial advocacy	2.86
Billing & time-keeping	2.84
Negotiation	2.82
Arbitration	2.82
Strategic planning	2.79
Getting new clients	2.71

Note: Scores range from 1.00 (not satisfied at all) to 4.00 (very satisfied).

When asked, “In your opinion, do recent graduates of the USC School of Law have adequate professional skills?”, nearly three quarters (71.1%) say these recent graduates have adequate professional skills.

Nearly 80 percent (79.5%) of members say that recent USC School of Law graduates demonstrate, in terms of their behavior, adequate professionalism. The question was “Do recent USC School of Law graduates demonstrate, in terms of their behavior, adequate professionalism?”

***Areas of Legal Education: Importance of Professional Skills***

Members say that the most important professional skills are basic writing (3.92 out of a possible high score of 4.00), legal analysis and reasoning (3.90), and listening (3.89). Least important are appellate advocacy (2.70) and arbitration (2.62).

Table 3.  
Importance of Profession Skill by Score

Skill	Score
Basic writing skills (grammar, usage)	3.92
Legal analysis and reasoning	3.90
Listening	3.89
Written communication	3.87
Oral communication	3.83
Legal research (electronic sources)	3.78
Problem solving	3.76
Recognizing & resolving ethical dilemmas	3.75
Organization & management of legal work	3.73
Drafting legal documents	3.67
Factual investigation	3.67
Working cooperatively in a team	3.66
Computer skills	3.63
Interviewing & questioning	3.48
Keeping clients	3.45
Pretrial discovery & advocacy	3.39
Negotiation	3.36
Trial advocacy	3.29
Counseling	3.25
Strategic planning	3.23
Billing & time-keeping	3.23
Legal research (print sources)	3.15
Networking within the profession	3.11
Mediation	2.96
Getting new clients	2.87
Appellate advocacy	2.70
Arbitration	2.62

Note: Scores range from 1.00 (not important at all) to 4.00 (very important).

Since both the “importance” and “satisfaction” scales have four points, we are able to compare the level of importance that the member gives with the level of performance (based on satisfaction) of the recent graduate of the USC law school. By subtracting the “performance” (satisfaction) score (usually lower than the importance score) from the importance score, we can identify gaps between what members say are important and the satisfaction they have with the performance of recent USC law school graduates.

In two instances, when looking at professional skills, we find that members give a lower score to importance of the skill and a higher score to the recent graduates’ performance. Both arbitration and appellate advocacy are perceived as low on importance by members. However, members rate recent graduates on the satisfaction scale as higher than the importance scale for these items.

For all of the other items tested, the responses suggest that members believe there is room for improvement on the part of recent graduates, especially in terms of basic writing skills, listening, the organization and management of legal work, and written communications.

Table 4.  
Difference between Ratings of Importance  
and Satisfaction on Professional Skills

Skill	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Appellate advocacy	2.70	3.03	.33
Arbitration	2.62	2.82	.20
Mediation	2.96	2.91	-.05
Networking within the profession	3.11	3.01	-.10
Computer skills	3.63	3.51	-.12
Legal research (print sources)	3.15	3.01	-.14
Getting new clients	2.87	2.71	-.16
Legal research (electronic sources)	3.78	3.45	-.33
Counseling	3.25	2.88	-.37
Working cooperatively in a team	3.66	3.29	-.37
Billing & time-keeping	3.23	2.84	-.39
Interviewing & questioning	3.48	3.06	-.42
Trial advocacy	3.29	2.86	-.43
Strategic planning	3.23	2.79	-.44
Keeping clients	3.45	3.01	-.44
Pretrial discovery & advocacy	3.39	2.92	-.47
Negotiation	3.36	2.82	-.54
Factual investigation	3.67	3.05	-.62
Legal analysis and reasoning	3.90	3.28	-.62
Oral communication	3.83	3.16	-.67
Problem solving	3.76	3.05	-.71
Recognizing & resolving ethical dilemmas	3.75	3.04	-.71
Drafting legal documents	3.67	2.91	-.76
Written communication	3.87	3.08	-.79
Organization & management of legal work	3.73	2.93	-.80
Listening	3.89	3.09	-.80
Basic writing skills (grammar, usage)	3.92	3.10	-.82

***Areas of Legal Education: Importance of Professional Knowledge***

The most important knowledge areas, members say, are professional responsibility, civil procedure, and evidence. One of the least important are international and immigration law and admiralty law, two specialized areas.

Table 5.  
Importance of Legal Knowledge Item by Score

Knowledge	Score
Professional responsibility	3.82
Civil procedure	3.73
Evidence	3.57
Contracts	3.36
Torts	3.34
Remedies	3.25
Business associations	3.18
Property (real, personal, landlord tenant)	3.15
Constitutional law	3.12
Insurance, workers comp. & social security	2.98
Commercial law	2.97
Administrative law	2.93
Estates, trusts, and wills	2.90
Criminal procedure	2.89
Civil rights	2.89
Criminal law	2.88
Family, juvenile & elder law	2.87
Employment and labor law	2.86
Consumer law	2.85
Land use law	2.70
Intellectual property and Internet law	2.68
Bankruptcy, liens, and poverty law	2.63
Securities, banking, and investment law	2.63
Taxation	2.62
Environmental, natural resources & water law	2.62
International and immigration law	2.46
Legal history	2.29
Admiralty law	1.82

***Areas of Legal Education: Satisfaction with Professional Knowledge***

Members are most satisfied with recent graduates on knowledge areas of professional responsibility and torts. Members are least satisfied with graduates' knowledge of a bankruptcy, liens, and property law as well as legal history.

Table 6.  
Satisfaction with Legal Knowledge by Score

Knowledge	Score
Professional responsibility	3.20
Torts	3.18
Contracts	3.11
Constitutional law	3.08
Property (real, personal, landlord-tenant)	3.07
Civil procedure	3.03
Business associations	3.03
Estates, trusts, and wills	3.03
Criminal law	3.01
Commercial law	2.99
Criminal procedure	2.98
Family, juvenile, and elder law	2.97
Land use law	2.96
Remedies	2.96
Civil rights	2.95
Environmental, natural resources & water law	2.94
Insurance, workers comp. & social security	2.93
Taxation	2.92
Employment and labor law	2.91
Evidence	2.89
Securities, banking, and investment law	2.89
Consumer law	2.86
Admiralty law	2.86
Intellectual property and Internet law	2.85
Administrative law	2.85
International and immigration law	2.82
Bankruptcy, liens, and poverty law	2.81
Legal history	2.77

As noted earlier, we are comparing importance scores with performance scores (satisfaction). When looking at professional knowledge, satisfaction is often higher than the importance that the member gives a knowledge area. In fact, for most areas of professional knowledge the member's satisfaction with the graduates' knowledge is higher than is the member's rating of the importance of the knowledge area.

The knowledge areas most in need of improvement are professional responsibility, evidence and civil procedure.

Table 7.  
Difference between Ratings of Importance  
and Satisfaction on Professional Knowledge

Knowledge	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Admiralty law	1.82	2.86	1.04
Legal history	2.29	2.77	.48
International and immigration law	2.46	2.82	.36
Environmental, natural resources & water law	2.62	2.94	.32
Taxation	2.62	2.92	.30
Securities, banking, and investment law	2.63	2.89	.26
Land use law	2.70	2.96	.26
Bankruptcy, liens, and poverty law	2.63	2.81	.22
Intellectual property and Internet law	2.68	2.85	.17
Estates, trusts, and wills	2.90	3.03	.13
Criminal law	2.88	3.01	.13
Family, juvenile & elder law	2.87	2.97	.10
Criminal procedure	2.89	2.98	.09
Consumer law	2.85	2.86	.06
Civil rights	2.89	2.95	.06
Employment and labor law	2.86	2.91	.05
Commercial law	2.97	2.99	.02
Constitutional law	3.12	3.08	-.04
Insurance, workers comp. & social security	2.98	2.93	-.05
Administrative law	2.93	2.85	-.08
Property (real, personal, landlord tenant)	3.15	3.07	-.08
Business associations	3.18	3.03	-.15
Torts	3.34	3.18	-.16
Contracts	3.36	3.11	-.25
Remedies	3.25	2.96	-.29
Professional responsibility	3.82	3.20	-.62
Evidence	3.57	2.89	-.68
Civil procedure	3.73	3.03	-.70

***Areas of Legal Education: Importance of Professional Values***

The most important areas of professional values are acting honestly and with integrity, reliability and willingness to accept responsibility and treating clients, lawyers, judges and staff with respect.

The least important is the commitment to pro bono work and the commitment to critical self reflection.

Table 8.  
Importance of Professional Values by Score

Value	Score
Act honestly and with integrity	3.98
Reliability & willingness to accept responsibility	3.97
Treat clients, lawyers, judges and staff with respect	3.95
Provide high quality legal work for each client	3.93
Show diligence and hard work ethic	3.92
Show maturity, autonomy & judgment	3.87
Show self-motivation and passion	3.78
Commitment to professional growth & development	3.77
Show tolerance, patience, and empathy	3.76
Show self-confidence and earn others' confidence	3.74
Promote justice, fairness and morality	3.65
Engage in healthy stress management	3.52
Commitment to a balanced life	3.46
Show creativity and innovation	3.43
Strive to rid the profession of bias	3.39
Involvement in community activities & service	3.30
Participate in activities to improve the profession	3.29
Commitment to pro bono work	3.18
Commitment to critical self-reflection	2.50

Members are most satisfied with recent graduates on the items of acting honestly and with integrity, providing high quality legal work for each client, and showing self-confidence and earning others' confidence.

The lowest satisfaction is with commitment to pro bono work and commitment to critical self-reflection.

Table 9  
Satisfaction with Professional Values by Score

Value	Score
Act honestly and with integrity	2.74
Provide high quality legal work for each client	2.72
Show self-confidence and earn others' confidence	2.72
Promote justice, fairness & morality	2.71
Treat clients, lawyers, judges, and staff with respect	2.70
Involvement in community activities & service	2.68
Participate in activities to promote the profession	2.67
Commitment to a balanced lifestyle	2.66
Show self-motivation and passion	2.65
Commitment to professional growth & development	2.65
Engage in healthy stress management	2.65
Show creativity and innovation	2.64
Reliability & willingness to accept responsibility	2.64
Show tolerance, patience, and empathy	2.64
Show diligence and hard work ethic	2.64
Show maturity, autonomy & judgment	2.63
Strive to rid the profession of bias	2.63
Commitment to critical self-reflection	2.61
Commitment to pro bono work	2.60

In looking at the difference (the gap) between what is important and the performance of recent USC School of Law graduates, critical areas of improvement are reliability and willingness to accept responsibility, and showing diligence and a hard work ethic.

Table 10.  
Difference between Ratings of Importance  
and Satisfaction on Professional Values

Value	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Commitment to critical self-reflection	2.50	2.61	.10
Commitment to pro bono work	3.18	2.60	-.58
Involvement in community activities & service	3.30	2.68	-.62
Participate in activities to improve the profession	3.29	2.67	-.62
Strive to rid the profession of bias	3.39	2.63	-.76
Show creativity and innovation	3.43	2.64	-.79
Commitment to a balanced life	3.46	2.66	-.80
Engage in healthy stress management	3.52	2.65	-.88
Promote justice, fairness and morality	3.65	2.71	-.94
Show self-confidence and earn others' confidence	3.74	2.72	-1.02
Commitment to professional growth & development	3.77	2.65	-1.12
Show tolerance, patience, and empathy	3.76	2.64	-1.12
Show self-motivation and passion	3.78	2.65	-1.13
Provide high quality legal work for each client	3.93	2.72	-1.21
Show maturity, autonomy & judgment	3.87	2.63	-1.24
Act honestly and with integrity	3.98	2.74	-1.24
Show diligence and hard work ethic	3.92	2.64	-1.28
Reliability & willingness to accept responsibility	3.97	2.64	-1.33

***Rating Law Schools on  
Systems and Elements of Learning***

Law school education is rated by members, when they were in law school, as best in learning to analyze (3.71), followed by learning to synthesize issues, facts and knowledge, and being able to apply theories to practical problems lawyers face on a regular basis. “Making judgments” is the lowest rated (2.29, somewhere between fair and good).

Table 11.  
Rating Law School Education  
by Element of Learning  
by Score

Element	Score
Analysis	3.71
Synthesis	3.41
Application of theories	3.20
Memorization	3.10
Making judgments	2.29

Note: Scores range from 1.00 (poor) to 5.00 (excellent).

***Satisfaction with Service Provided by Law School***

Members say they were most satisfied with the law library assistance their law school gave them when they were students, followed by using new technology, such as computers. Score for the other items are low when compared to the top rated services.

Table 12.  
Satisfaction with Service Provided  
By Law School by Score

Services	Score
Law library assistance	4.24
Using new technology, computers	3.80
Academic advising and planning	2.96
Financial aid advising	2.82
Job search help	2.81
Career counseling	2.69
Personal counseling	2.59

Note: Scores range from 1.00 (very dissatisfied) to 5.00 (very satisfied).

The greatest emphasis that members’ law schools had was on spending time studying and doing academic work and encouraging the ethical practice of law. The least emphasis was on social activities to balance the law school experience.

Table 13.  
Law School Emphasis on Assistance  
Provided to Members as Students

Assistance	Score
Spend time studying and on academic work	3.59
Encouraging ethical practice of law	3.32
Using technology, such as computers in school work	2.89
Providing support for academic success	2.65
Attending campus activities	2.45
Providing financial aid as needed	2.38
Support for your job search	2.36
Encouraging contact with others with diverse social backgrounds	2.24
Support to thrive socially	2.19
Coping with non-academic responsibilities	1.64

Note: Scores range from 1.00 (not at all) to 4.00 (very much).

### ***Graduate of SC School of Law?***

Of all members responding just over 70 percent (71.3%) are graduates of the USC School of Law, with just over a quarter (28.7%) being graduates of other law schools, which could be inside or outside of South Carolina.

Those who are graduates of the SC School of Law are significantly more likely than graduates of other law schools to be working with lawyers who graduated from the USC law school within the last 5 years.

Members in the Midlands (83.4%) are most likely to be graduates of the USC School of Law, followed by those in the Pee Dee (72.9%), the Upstate (66.7%) and the Lowcountry (56.4%).

### ***Year Graduated from Law School***

Over half (51.9%) of members participating in this study graduated from law school since 1993.

Table 14.  
Members by Year of  
Graduation from Law School

Year	%
2006-2007	13.1
2003-2005	12.5
1998-2002	14.8
1993-1997	11.5
1988-1992	13.5
1983-1987	10.5
1978-1982	7.9
1973-1977	11.0
1968-1972	2.8
1963-1967	1.0
1962 or Earlier	1.4

***Gender of Members in Study***

Over a third (37.9%) of members participating in this study are female, with under two-thirds (62.1%) males.

Females are most likely (47.8%) to work as a lawyer in a government office and are least likely to work in a two-person law practice (25.6%).

***Racial or Ethnic Identification***

Of all members responding, less than a percent (0.8%) say they consider themselves to be either Hispanic or Latino.

Table 15.  
Percent Identifying  
By Race or Ethnic Group

Identity	%
African American/Black	4.8
Caucasian/White	89.2
Other	1.3
Would rather not say	4.6

***Type of Law Practice***

Over half (53%) of members are in law firms with less than 50 lawyers. Over 40 percent (43.2%) of members are from firms with ten or fewer lawyers.

Table 16.  
Percent of Members Responding  
by Type of Law Practice

Practice	%
Law firm, solo	16.2
Law firm, 2 lawyers	8.5
Law firm, 3-10	18.6
Law firm, 11-25	5.2
Law firm, 26-49	4.5
Law firm, 50+	14.2
Non-profit, legal	3.3
Judge	.8
Government	18.1
In-house counsel	3.8
Non-legal for profit	.6
Non-legal non profit	.5
Other	4.2
Retired	1.2

***Geographic Area of South Carolina***

This distribution by area of South Carolina is consistent with the distribution of lawyers in South Carolina by judicial district.

Table 17.  
Area of South Carolina

Area	%
Upstate	25.4
Pee Dee	4.7
Midlands	42.9
Lowcountry	26.9

## **Credits**

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Any questions, additional analysis, issues, or suggestions for improvement should be directed to Emerson at [emsmith@metromark.net](mailto:emsmith@metromark.net) or at 803-256-8694.