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ABA Committee Tightens Bar Pass Standards, Some Raise Diversity Concerns

In a unanimous vote, the ABA Accreditation Standards Committee approved a proposal to tighten standards for bar passage rates at ABA-accredited law schools. The current standard says that within five years, at least 75 percent of first-time bar exam takers must pass, or the school must be within 15 points of its state's bar passage rates. The proposed new standard says that 75 percent of a school's graduating class must pass a bar exam within two years. Some believe the proposed standard is still too low, and others say that many schools that will likely be out of compliance are ones that admit a higher percentage of students who are economically disadvantaged and/or people of color. [ABA Journal](#) takes a closer look at the proposal and the reactions.

Study Shows Solo Lawyers Are a Breed Apart

Apart from the size of the office and the number of coworkers, is a solo or small-firm practitioner just like any other lawyer? Whether it takes a certain kind of person to hang out a shingle, or whether doing so reshapes that person in fundamental ways, a recent survey from the Thomson Reuters Solo and Small Law Firm group found that solos really do stand apart from others in terms of how they practice, what's on their mind — and yes, the size of their bank account. Robert Ambrogi got a sneak peek at the data; at [Above the Law](#), he shares his observations on 11 ways solo and small-firm practitioners are different from everyone else.

The Florida Bar Succeeds on Social Media by [Insert Awesome GIF Here]

If your bar association is on social media, you might want to do something besides push out announcements and wait for all those "likes" and "follows" to roll in. You might want to be, well ... social. Through banter, GIFs (you know, those funny moving images of people yelling, "YES!" or giving out free cars), and news and information from around the bar and legal community, The Florida Bar is winning on social media — and has gotten there in a fairly short time. [The Florida Bar News](#) rounds up the numbers, the accolades, and the techniques you can use if your bar is willing to shake things up a little.

Unconscious Gender Bias Affects How Women Are Heard

Does this scenario sound familiar?: A woman — perhaps you — says something in a meeting and receives only a minimal response. Then a man says the exact same thing ... and everyone verbally high-fives him for his great idea. Why does this happen? Research suggests that unconscious bias — the collection of stereotypical beliefs that we all carry around, whether we like them or not — affects how we hear another person and process what they say. Women in particular often face this type of bias when they speak, notes Vivian Giang at [Fast Company](#). She shares one researcher's advice for how to eliminate it — and surprise! — the tips are for the listener, not the speaker.

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American Bar Association | 321 N Clark, Chicago, IL 60654-7598 | 800-285-2221 | 312-988-5356



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