



Lee Burgess: Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today we are excited to welcome guests from [Themis Bar Review](#) and [UWorld](#) to chat about their tools and how they can support your bar prep. Your Law School Toolbox hosts are Alison Monahan and Lee Burgess, that's me. We're here to demystify the law school and early legal career experience, so you'll be the best law student and lawyer you can be. We're the co-creators of the [Law School Toolbox](#), the [Bar Exam Toolbox](#), and the career-related website [CareerDicta](#). Alison also runs [The Girl's Guide to Law School](#). If you enjoy the show, please leave a review or rating on your favorite listening app. And if you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to us. You can reach us via the [contact form](#) on [LawSchoolToolBox.com](#), and we'd love to hear from you. And with that, let's get started.

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Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today we're excited to have two guests, Jeff Allcorn from UWorld and Rebecca Petrilli from Themis Bar Prep, discussing their tools and how they can help graduates find bar exam success. Hi Jeff and Rebecca, thank you so much for joining me today.

Rebecca Petrilli: Thank you. Very glad to be here.

Jeff Allcorn: Hi Lee. Thanks for having us.

Lee Burgess: Hi. Great. So, to get things kicked off, why don't you both introduce yourselves? Rebecca, why don't you go first, share a little bit about who you are and what you do at Themis?

Rebecca Petrilli: Sure. So, I actually started out at Themis as a student representative when I was in law school. And that basically just meant I was an ambassador for the product at the school. And then shortly after I took the bar exam, I started with Themis as a sales director. That meant I worked in law schools with students, working to get them access to our course, and then helping them through the process of studying for and then ultimately in passing the bar exam. And over time my role has morphed into much more of a 50/50 split between that sales side, and now I do a lot of marketing as well. So I manage all of our social media partnerships and a bunch of other marketing components on the Themis side of things.

Lee Burgess: And so, you probably used Themis when you were studying for the bar exam yourself?



- Rebecca Petrilli: I did. I used it for the MPRE and for the bar exam.
- Lee Burgess: Awesome. Alright, Jeff, what about you?
- Jeff Allcorn: I am an attorney here in the great state of Texas. I went to law school at Southern Methodist University, and after law school I practiced in an insurance coverage litigation firm for a couple of years before switching over to working at UWorld as one of the content authors in the early months of 2021. So, I haven't been around as long as Rebecca, but happy to be here.
- Lee Burgess: And how did you both get interested in working in bar exam preparation? I know Rebecca, you were already involved with Themis while you were in school, but what kind of called you to continue this work?
- Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, I think as a first-generation law student I experienced a lot of the difficulties of navigating the legal space firsthand. I didn't have people guiding me through, at least not in the way that many of my peers did. And becoming a Themis rep and getting access to our free resources and having the guidance of the person who was, essentially, what I do now. But my director at school really helped me get a better handle on what to expect for not only a lot of my classes, but then when it came time to sit for the bar exam, how to study for it appropriately. And I really wanted to continue to help students through that process, because trying to figure it out on your own is challenging.
- Lee Burgess: Yes. Understatement, right?
- Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah.
- Lee Burgess: Jeff, what about you? How did you move from insurance to bar exam preparation?
- Jeff Allcorn: Well, I don't want to scare off your listeners too much, but after I experienced the... I'll just politely call it difficulties of remote practice during the pandemic, especially in insurance litigation with everyone trying to get access to all those business interruption insurance proceeds from the pandemic – I was just looking to do something different. And I came across UWorld's posting, checked out their product and thought, "This is a type of product I could really get behind and I think that I'd be at least pretty okay at making it myself." So, I applied and I'm still here today.
- Lee Burgess: Awesome. Well, it's always good to be able to pivot, as someone who definitely pivoted from my private practice, and I wasn't even in the pandemic times, so I



totally hear that. Great, let's take a minute and just talk about the tool and what it means to prepare for the bar exam. Most of our listeners are still in law school, anywhere from a 1L to 3Ls who are starting to think more candidly about studying for the bar. So, can you just share with us a bit more about these two tools and really what they offer to help students prepare, when students should be getting engaged in decisions about their bar exam prep? Really, how do they start coming up with a plan?

Rebecca Petrilli: I'm happy to take this one. Themis is a full service bar review course, so it's going to teach you every single thing that you need to know to study for and pass the bar exam the first time you sit for it. But that said, we also offer a bunch of free resources for you while you're in law school too. So, while you don't necessarily have to start thinking about taking the bar in a super intense capacity until your 3L year, it's always a good idea to start exploring what options are available to you and utilizing free resources from bar prep companies, so that you're able to get a feel for what the product looks like. Because as I'm sure everyone else on this recording right now can attest to, you're going to be really up close and personal with your bar prep service while you are studying for the bar exam. So, it's a great idea to know that you're going to enjoy the way the lecturers are presenting material, the way the questions are written, etcetera. I'm happy to give a more comprehensive overview of Themis and UWorld if you would like me to, but that's my general thought process on that.

Lee Burgess: Okay. And so, you sign up and it's all online, so you are doing this remotely from wherever you are preparing for prep?

Rebecca Petrilli: Correct, yes.

Lee Burgess: And it involves lectures, activities, outlines. What do students do to prepare?

Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, that's a great question. So, you're going to have access to video lectures, outlines, practice questions, practice essays, a full simulated bar exam, some other simulated mock exams, and a whole host of other components of the course that are going to help you through what does it mean to study for and take the MPT, how to structure your essays, how to understand and approach [MBE](#) questions, etcetera. So, when I say "comprehensive", I really do mean everything. So your day-to-day is going to be basically following a schedule, if you want to follow the schedule the way that we have it written in order that we think makes sense for you. But you can also go off and kind of utilize the materials in the course at your own pace in whatever order you wish, whenever you want to.



Lee Burgess: Alright, let's stick with the study schedule a little bit, because we have a lot of students who either want to start preparing a bit early, or maybe working and studying and so they may not be able to study eight-plus hours a day. Is the study schedule flexible, or can it adapt, or do students follow a schedule and then have to create their own schedule if they're not able to follow the schedule as it is?

Rebecca Petrilli: That's a sort of both-and question. So we have the set study schedule that we call our "recommended study schedule" that is designed to work for students who are studying the full 10 weeks, eight hours a day. But we also have a feature that we call an "adaptive calendar". So, you log into the course, you pick your start date and when our course opens for access, it's full access, so everything in the course is available from the date that the course opens. So you pick your start date and the course is going to allocate all of the material that's in the course for you evenly across whatever your chosen start date is until you sit for the bar exam. And that adjusts as you move through the course. Say you're somebody, for example, who's working a full-time job while you're studying and you've only got a couple of hours in the evening to study, and then you're trying to study full-time on the weekends, but life gets in the way and you're not always able to do that. So you're not going to have a study schedule that's going to consistently pile up and have you come back after not logging in for a day or two and have 40 assignments on your calendar. It's going to reallocate things for you every night at midnight – whatever time zone you're in, your midnight – it'll reallocate everything for you so that you are getting a more balanced experience of moving through the course.

Lee Burgess: Okay. What about for students who get [accommodations](#)? Accommodations are very common in bar prep for all varieties of situations. It could be learning differences, it could be anxiety, it could be breastfeeding, it could be a medical condition, it could be lots of different things. So let's say you get time and a half to take your exam. Is there any way that the tool can be nimble to help simulate exams in that scenario?

Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, absolutely. We work with students who have ADA accommodation requests all the time, and wherever reasonable, wherever the functionality is possible, we will make those adjustments in our course. Time and a half is a really common one and we absolutely can make that adjustment for whoever needs it. And another thing to note is that our course, the assignments are timed but they're not timed so that they will kick you out of the assignment if you don't finish it because we want you to, of course, finish the assignments, especially earlier on in the process, where you're still learning how to structure your answers, etcetera. So, the timers in the course are more of a guide, rather



than a hard and fast "You must finish this MPT in an hour and a half or you're locked out of answering it."

- Lee Burgess: Okay, that's great to know. When you mentioned your start date, that you select your start date, how flexible is that start date?
- Rebecca Petrilli: So, our course for the July bar exam opens up to 20 weeks before, so we're looking at sometime in March open date for the July bar exam, and then a November open date for the February bar exam. So you have a really long period of time, like a nice runway for you to choose your start date anytime from the day that that course opens up until the recommended start date or even after, which is obviously not an ideal situation, but that functionality is there for students who need it.
- Lee Burgess: Okay, great. And it is an on-demand course, it is online, so there is a passive element to it. What parts of the program are more active or interactive, where you might get feedback or can contact a human? What are the interactive elements to it?
- Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, that's another great question, and I apologize that I'm the one doing all of the talking right now, but I...
- Lee Burgess: Oh Jeff, I'm coming for you. It's fine, don't worry about it.
- Jeff Allcorn: I'm very happy, this is great.
- Rebecca Petrilli: I work with the Themis course day in and day out, so I really do...
- Lee Burgess: He is not getting off that easy, so he can just rest his voice. I'm coming for him, don't worry.
- Rebecca Petrilli: Perfect. So, we have what we call our "success team" for you while you are going through your bar study. That consists of an attorney director, so somebody like me who is going to be available to you as a resource, but also checking in on your progress. You're going to get contacted at least twice throughout the process by somebody who's going to say, "Hey, here's where you are. Do you have questions? What can we do for you?" Making sure that you're really getting the best experience possible in the course and that little bit of accountability that sometimes can be hard to come by when you're studying on your own time at your own pace. And then also... I could go into so much detail, so I'm trying to keep this as concise as possible, but we have a progress tracker in the course that shows you, "Here's how much of the course you've completed. Here's the recommended percentage for you to complete today to



stay on track to get to 100% course completion. Here's how much you've completed for the day." There're deep and detailed data analytics for your MBE questions in the course as well. You can get all the way to the granular level of a breakdown of every single question that you've answered, whether you got it right or wrong, how much time you spent on that question, etcetera. And then additionally, on the human interaction side of things, we have what we call a "message center". So that allows you to send messages to graded essay, study strategies, substantive law, customer service, tech support. And wherever you direct your message, it's going to go straight to the right team to handle that. And for graded essays and study strategies specifically, and I believe for substantive law questions as well, we have a two-business-day turnaround time of someone actually getting back to you with a personalized answer to whatever your question is. So there's a lot of interaction and a lot of opportunity for students to reach out to humans and get their specific personalized questions and needs addressed during the course.

- Lee Burgess: Okay. I think that's great, because I think on-demand learning can be lonely sometimes.
- Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, definitely.
- Lee Burgess: It's good to have a human in there. One of the concerns a lot of students have is with the amount of material that they're being asked to memorize, and different bar companies have different recommendations on how to approach memorization. What sort of strategies does Themis include in its materials to support memorization? And is that something that they build into the schedule throughout bar prep, or is the rule of thumb to focus on memorization at the end of your bar prep?
- Rebecca Petrilli: That is such a good question. That's a question that I get asked all the time by students who are studying for the exam, so I am really glad that you asked that. We have a lot of features in the course that help support memorization. And they will preface all of this with the only way to actually memorize the material is for you, as the student, to do the work. And I think a lot of times there's kind of this misperception, if you will, that just simply going through the bar review course and kind of checking the boxes is going to get you to where you need to be. And the reality of that is that even though your course is giving you everything that you need, you still have to be the one actively utilizing the tactics and the tools that are available to you to make sure that you are getting the most comprehensive learning experience possible. So, with that in mind, we do offer a handful of things that I'll mention, and I'm sure I'm not even going to hit everything, but these are the ones that I found really helpful and that come up over and over in my conversations with students. So, we have fill-in-the-



blank lecture handouts – you use these to follow along while you are watching your lecture videos. So, not only are you doing the listening component of things; you're also actively having to read and sort of take notes. You're really just filling in a phrase or a word into these blanks, but it creates that passive listening and also that active retention at the same time. We also offer our video lectures in shortened format. So they're going to be about 15 to 20 minutes per segment and they're going to be broken down into subtopics with a handful of black letter law questions at the end of each video lecture to test your retention of the material. And then once you finish that specific subject's videos, the following day, you're going to see again all of those black letter law questions – we call them "assessment questions" that you answered incorrectly the first time. So those are two of the things that really show up for you as a tool to help you memorize. And throughout the course, you're going to encounter videos that show you, "Here's how to attack the MBE. Here's how to read the MPT case file", etcetera. Obviously, the MPT isn't quite as much memorization, but it all works in conjunction to make sure that you're getting exposure to all of the components of studying for the course, if that makes sense. I can definitely go into more detail, but like I said, I'm trying to keep my answers as concise as possible.

Lee Burgess: No, I think that's a good summary of the idea that the tool is supporting moving law into your longer term memory throughout the course. The idea is not, "Don't memorize till the end."

Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, definitely not. We want you to memorize throughout, because there is such an immense volume of material and it can be a little overwhelming, especially the idea that you would need to memorize all of that at the very end. That seems like too much.

Lee Burgess: So, at the Law School Toolbox and the Bar Exam Toolbox, we talk about the importance of practice, and practice consistently through your bar prep. How does Themis build in practice and feedback into the tool to support students in not letting this go by the wayside?

Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, that's another really great question. So, you're going to get instant feedback on your MBE questions as you're going through them. And we offer the ability to test your MBE questions in two different modes – test mode, where you're not going to get feedback on your answers until the very end of the set, and interactive mode, where you're going to see whether you got the question right or wrong, and an answer explanation for the entirety of the answers to that question immediately. You can move between those two modes to work on, "What's it actually going to feel like to take these questions on test day, and how am I actually doing in terms of my memorization?" On top of that,



we have a graded essay program where we assign you eight graded essays within the course – one of those is an MPT – and you're going to work with the same essay grader throughout. So that person is going to see your writing develop from start to finish, give you really comprehensive and individualized feedback on structure, analysis, etcetera, and help you figure out strengths and weaknesses. We also offer unlimited essay grading, and there's no extra fee for that, it's just part of the course, so at any time you can request additional essays for grading. And then, like I mentioned earlier, you're going to have feedback coming from your attorney director, who's going to reach out to you at least twice throughout the course.

Lee Burgess: Okay. And before we jump over to talk more about UWorld, no one ever thinks it will happen to them, but a percentage of the people who sit for the bar exam don't get positive results. How does Themis handle if a student is unsuccessful on the exam? Any continued access to resources or ongoing support?

Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, absolutely. I would like to say that, of course, we want everyone to pass the bar the first time they take it, and we'll do everything we can to help you get there, but there is absolutely no shame in not being successful on the bar the first time you take it. And we offer every student that uses Themis a completely free repeat of the course; you do not have to complete any specific number of questions to qualify for that free repeat, it's just, are you a first-time Themis taker – yes or no? And if "Yes", you get a free repeat with us in that same jurisdiction for the directly following administration of the bar exam.

Lee Burgess: Okay, great, and I definitely know plenty of folks utilize that resource. Hopefully whoever is listening doesn't find themselves in that situation, but if you do fail the bar, you're in excellent company. Plenty of wonderful and successful people have struggled with the bar exam. Before we move over to talk more about UWorld and MBE and multiple choice prep, there are a number of, we call them "commercial bar programs" – these kind of larger programs that everyone goes through, you end up wanting to choose one when you're a third-year. What do you think is unique about Themis that sets it apart from its competitors?

Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah. We are the only bar review company that publishes consistent and truly data-backed pass rates every year. So, if you go on our website, you can see our pass rates spanning all the way back to... I think they go back to 2015 right now on the site, but we have a few years that you can request even before then as well. And we publish the state first-time taker rate, the Themis first-time taker rate, and the Themis first-time taker rate for students who completed 75% or more of the course. We use that 75% threshold because that's the point in the course where you've gotten through all of the substantive material and you're really into that practice and review, where that's all you're doing all day every



day, so that's a really good historical marker for where students end up being successful. And we include every Themis student, every Themis first-time taker in those results. That really does set us apart because your success as a student very much reflects our success as a company and vice versa, if we are willingly putting that data out there. I think one of the other things that sets us apart is that we really do offer that personalized service and the ability to speak with human beings whenever you really need to, throughout your time studying for the bar, so that you are not left on your own navigating this process. It is obviously a very arduous and sometimes overwhelming process, and we pride ourselves on being a company that cares very much about making sure that you feel supported during your time studying.

Lee Burgess: Awesome, thanks for that. Okay, now you get to give your voice a rest for a minute, but don't worry, I'm going to still come back to you. We're going to put Jeff in the hot seat, and before we dig into the specifics of the two tools, these tools have a relationship to each other, and a corporate structure that has them kind of working together. So, could one of you give me a picture of what UWorld is and what Themis is, and how they relate to each other? And then we'll go dive into UWorld-specific tool.

Jeff Allcorn: So, UWorld as a whole company, we focus on high stakes professional licensure exams, and we're also growing into the SAT/ACT college prep space as well. And UWorld acquired Themis to expand our offerings in the legal space, because it's a huge market. There're a lot of people going to law school, a lot of people sitting for the bar exam, and I would say the bar exam is one of the more feared professional exams out there. So, that was definitely a focus of UWorld to expand more into the bar prep space by acquiring Themis.

Lee Burgess: Okay, so Themis is its own tool, UWorld is this parent company, and then UWorld has its own UWorld tool that I think is what probably most law students have started hearing about, and that focuses specifically on the multiple-choice portion, or the MBE portion of the bar exam. Is that right?

Jeff Allcorn: Yeah, that's correct. And also, when you sign up for Themis, you get access to the UWorld tool through Themis.

Lee Burgess: Great. Or you can purchase it separately.

Jeff Allcorn: Or you can purchase it separately.

Lee Burgess: Excellent. Well, when UWorld joined the bar space a few years back for their multiple choice program, we definitely started getting some feedback, the students really liked the tool. One of the things that students found resonated



with them was the quality of the explanations – and I know you do write some of the content, I believe, in the tool, so maybe you can take some certain pride in this.

Jeff Allcorn: Oh, I do.

Lee Burgess: Oh, good, good. So students like the explanations, especially the visual nature of some of the explanations. So, what do you think is unique about the explanations that you UWorld provides for multiple choice questions?

Jeff Allcorn: Yeah, I think that... First I'll say thanks; it's always nice to hear that someone out there, outside of our building likes what we're doing. That always makes it a little bit more fun. But I think that company-wide, UWorld, we pride ourselves on our explanations. We think that that's where the majority of the learning happens when you're taking all of these practice questions, because whether you got the question right or you got it wrong, a nice thorough but readable explanation of just walking you through the analysis and these things that maybe you didn't pick up on that you should think about. We think that having that kind of information at your fingertips of, "This is at least one way that you could have thought through these facts and reach the right answer" – we think that that's huge in terms of you learning the material. So, because of that, we put just a ton of our focus, when we're writing these questions, into the explanation itself with pretty strict word counts. No one likes to read three pages worth of dry legal text about the rule against perpetuities, for example.

Lee Burgess: Nobody. Nobody out there.

Jeff Allcorn: Nobody.

Lee Burgess: No, nobody. I even think real estate lawyers don't want to read that stuff, so...

Jeff Allcorn: Not one.

Lee Burgess: Not one.

Jeff Allcorn: So, we try and be very thoughtful about how we're wording things. Would someone who maybe didn't have the exact same law school experience as those of us who are writing the questions, would they understand this? If you had a bad Contracts professor, are you going to understand these otherwise basic concepts like consideration and stuff, or should we explain what consideration is? And I think because we're putting so much thought and effort into these explanations, that's what students are really liking about the product, is that it's conversational, it's polite. No judgment, we're just trying to explain why the



right answer is right, why the wrong answer is wrong, and why you should pick one over the other. And I would say as far as the visuals – that is, at least in my opinion, the hardest and also most fun part of what I do, just because all of us lawyers are very word-based and language-based, so trying to put these legal principles into a visual form can be a little bit of mental gymnastics. I worked on an image a few months ago of a long-arm statute, and how do you explain a long-arm statute in a picture?

Lee Burgess: Yeah, you've got to get pretty creative, and I think it's important to acknowledge that students have all sorts of different learning styles that make pictures resonate with them more. My business partner, Alison, she's a very visual learner, and so she would often draw her own pictures or do diagrams of things, and that's just how she memorized stuff. And if you know that about yourself, it's important to find a tool that is going to give you explanations that resonate with you, because it's going to make the studying most efficient.

Jeff Allcorn: Yeah, exactly, and that's kind of what we're going for in our visuals, is we want to capture every student no matter what their preferred learning style is. So, if you look at this long-arm statute question and this image speaks to you – so happy to hear that. If the image makes no sense and you prefer the words – that's cool too. That's kind of where I am at.

Lee Burgess: So, for the law students that are listening to this episode, some of them may not be fully up to speed on what the multiple choice, the MBE portion of the bar exam is. We're recording this in the summer of 2023, and if you are sitting for the bar exam soon, you will take a full day of multiple choice questions, six hours in one day, unless you got accommodations that changes the way that you sit for the exam. And it's a doozy of a day, I'll just be honest. It's a doozy. I remember my MBE day – it's long. It's long, it takes a lot of practice and discipline to get through that exam day. And studying for that really requires doing a lot of questions, and when we talk to students who have struggled with the bar exam, one of the questions I often ask is, "How many questions did you do?" And I will hear students say things like 400 or 500. And the day of the exam, you have two sets each of 100, so you do 200 questions in one day. So, you can't do 400 questions in your bar prep. That's not enough, right?

Jeff Allcorn: Right.

Lee Burgess: So, UWorld, does your team have a recommended amount of questions that you should build into your bar prep?



- Jeff Allcorn: I don't know if we have a recommended amount, but you're definitely right that just the fact that you're going to be taking 200 on exam day means you should probably take a substantial amount of practice questions more than 400.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. We're talking about thousands.
- Jeff Allcorn: Yeah.
- Rebecca Petrilli: We recommend that students take about 1600 to 1800 practice questions during their time studying for the bar.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah, I think the closer you can get to that 2000 mark is great. And I think one of the things that's cool about both of these tools is the ability to start a little bit early. And I often recommend to students, from my perspective, if you are struggling with multiple choice – and many of us don't like multiple choice questions – that you can start working on this piece of the test and putting deposits in your study bank. Just start chipping away at that thousands of questions that you might want to try and do, because it can sound daunting to say, "Do 1800 MBE questions." Most people would say, "That's wild, I'm not going to do that." And then you end up doing it, or hopefully you end up doing it. But you do want to think about it as, it takes a lot of time and energy to study for this portion of the test, especially if you're a person who's not naturally gifted at multiple choice.
- Jeff Allcorn: Right. And because of that, you can really sign up and start taking questions on the MBE QBank, really anytime you want. You could start now if you really wanted to. I would probably say if you're a first-year law student, maybe don't.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah, I mean, you could probably wait a little bit.
- Jeff Allcorn: Yeah, give it some time. You've got your own things to worry about at the moment than the bar exam. I agree with Rebecca that you do need to take quite a few of these things. What I like about the MBE – which I know it's crazy to say that you like anything about the MBE – but it's a learnable test. If you take enough of the questions, you kind of start getting a feel for how the NCBE – that's the organization that drafts these questions – you can get a feel for what they're asking, what kind of things they are looking for. And the more of that product that you see, the more you'll be able to get halfway through the question and be like, "Okay, this is one of those." So, I'll look down at my answer choices and be like, "Okay, I know it's probably not going to be A or D. Let's focus on B and C." So yeah, I would definitely recommend taking as many little MBE questions as you can.



- Lee Burgess: Yeah. They do become repetitive after a while, but you have to take a lot of them to see the repetition.
- Jeff Allcorn: Absolutely.
- Lee Burgess: They can only get so creative when they write these tests. So, I think another important part of the multiple choice preparation is being able to use statistics to help guide your studying, both to identify subject areas that you may be weak in, or timing issues that might come up. What statistics does UWorld provide to help you have visibility into your strengths and weaknesses?
- Jeff Allcorn: We provide accuracy statistics, so that you can see what subjects are you not so accurate in, what's your overall accuracy rate for when you're taking these questions. Also, the way the tool is set up, you can create your own test where you can tell the system, "I want to take this many questions under these time constraints and I want to see..." You can either do the big broad subject areas like Contracts, Real Property, etcetera, or you can get really granular and say, "I want to see questions about contract formation or the statute of frauds." And the system will kind of weed out everything else and just give you what you're asking for. So, I think that's a great tool that students can use too. After you've seen your overall broad statistics to just really hone in on subject areas or topics that you're struggling with, or you just want to be able to... On exam day, your strategy is, "I just want to nail every single Torts question. I'll be happy as long as I just get all the Torts questions right, and that'll give me a good base for my final score." So, if that's your strategy, that's how you can set up your testing in UWorld.
- Lee Burgess: Okay, great. And what about timed practice tests? I mentioned that the MBE is a tough day, you have to be able to sit for three hours and do a three-hour set of multiple choice questions. The first time you do that should not be on bar exam day, unfortunately. What sort of practice test options does UWorld provide?
- Jeff Allcorn: I think, first I'll give a bit of a shoutout to the Themis product, and there are multiple simulated MBEs in the Themis course that are just scheduled into your general schedule. So, I would say those are a really great starting point for students, because it's exactly the way it's going to be set up on test day where you're going to have two banks of 100 questions and timed. On the UWorld side of things, you can kind of create your test day conditions – you can set the maximum number of questions you'd like to see, your time period, and just select all for, "I want to see questions from any subject, any topic", randomize it. And I would say it's pretty important to practice your actual test day strategy long before exam day. I remember when I took the bar here in Texas, I've never seen so many just hollow, distraught faces than at the end of the MBE day.



You've got a thousand people in a giant conference room, just shuffling out in complete silence at 5:00 PM. So, it's definitely something you want to have some experience with before day of.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, that is definitely true. Sitting for the bar is a very unique experience. Okay, well, I want to shift here in a moment to talking about the future of the bar exam, but does Themis or UWorld or both have any help for the MPRE, which for those who may not know what that is, is sometimes called the "ethics bar", but it is a small multiple choice professional responsibility test that you are required to take, that oftentimes folks will take in their 3L year. It's technically part of the bar exam, but you take it separately. But are there any resources to help with MPRE prep?

Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, Themis offers a completely free comprehensive MPRE course, and it will take you through everything that you need to know to pass the MPRE. It has simulated MPREs in the course as well. So that's lecture videos, an outline, and everything you need in terms of practice questions to get you through. And actually a little plug for the Themis course here is that our MPRE course is completely free, as I mentioned, but it is set up in terms of structure and format, just like the bar review course. So it's a great opportunity for you to not only get through the material you need to know for the MPRE, but also to get a feel for what the bar review course is like, how our professors are, how our questions are set up, etcetera, before you actually commit to purchasing a bar review course.

Lee Burgess: And is that the best way to try out the tools? If you want to get a better picture of them before committing money to purchasing these programs?

Rebecca Petrilli: So, we have our MPRE course, we also have what we call our "law school essentials" courses, and those are going to be all of your first-year bar tested courses, and then a good number of your upper level bar tested courses as well. Video lectures, outlines, practice questions, practice essays, as well as some supplemental resources for how to brief a case, things like that. Those are all completely free. We offer that with... You do not have to make a commitment to purchase Themis to sign up for and utilize those. Those are all set up similarly. The MPRE course is the closest approximation to a comprehensive study plan. The other courses, the law school essentials, are a little bit more piecemeal, broken down by subject. Then UWorld, the QBank, also offers a seven-day free trial.

Lee Burgess: Great. Well, I encourage listeners to try out the tools. It's the best way to know if it's going to be a good fit for you. But I think utilizing it, especially for the MPRE is a great test to see if it feels like a good fit. Now, before we go on to the



future of the bar exam, I just have to pick your brains – I do this with a lot of guests. If you could go back and talk to your bar exam studier self, what would be one piece of advice or one thing you wish you knew while you were studying for the bar exam? Rebecca, do you want to go first? I'm going to put you on the spot.

Rebecca Petrilli: Sure, sure. I wish I would've known how important it is to have a really structured routine. And by that I mean once I figured out that I needed to wake up every day at the same exact time and go to my study location at the same time and treat every day of studying essentially like it was sitting for the bar exam. In terms of your time spent there, you're taking a reasonably short lunch break, you're coming back and you're studying. You're building up that consistency because as all of us have mentioned at various points during this, sitting for the exam, the two or three days, if you're in a state that does three days – I took a three-day bar exam – that's really, really grueling. And the more you can build up that consistency in your brain and your body, the better off you're actually going to be on exam day.

Lee Burgess: Great suggestions. I'm a big fan of routine as well. Jeff, what about you?

Jeff Allcorn: I think if I could go back, I wish I would've had a greater appreciation for just the amount of mental bandwidth that studying for the bar takes. I'm also a first-generation law school grad, and I just had no idea just how much of your brain power goes into learning all of this information and being able to apply it. And I remember near the end of my bar prep, a few weeks before the exam, I was doing just all sorts of odd things. I kept trying to go to the wrong apartment because I'd go up one flight upstairs too high or one flight too short. Or I'd put random stuff in the fridge throughout the day and my wife would come home and be like, "Why is this candle in the freezer?" And I'd say, "I don't remember putting it in there." So, I wish I could've known more on the frontend that it was going to take a lot more of my mental acuity than I assumed it was going to take to study for the bar exam, and maybe prepare myself a little bit better for that before I actually got into it.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, I think we all had an interesting moment or two while studying, that's for sure. Well, Rebecca, you mentioned that you were a student representative for Themis at your law school. If anyone listening to this is interested in exploring those roles, how do students learn more about that program?

Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, that is a great question. So, there're a couple of different ways that you could get in contact with us to learn more about that – one, you can send an email to info@themisbar.com, or you can find your local Themis director or a student rep on your campus and have them put you in touch with your local



director. If you go through the email route, we're just going to put you in touch with your local director too, but some people don't know who their local director is. But that's the best way to go about getting information.

Lee Burgess:

Awesome. Well, before we wrap up, it is time to look into the future, because changes are coming to the bar exam and they're not super clear. It's not exactly clear which states are going to adopt which option for the bar exam at what time. But the National Conference of Bar Examiners, who runs the bar exam in most states, or at least the multiple choice portion of the bar and the UBE, is in the process of finalizing something they're calling "[the NextGen Bar Exam](#)". And so, if you're a new law student, it is possible you are going to end up taking this new exam, depending on where you sit and how the rollout actually happens. So I'm curious to hear – I'm sure there are many conversations going on at UWorld and Themis about the new test – what your teams have been working on and what's in store for students who may be looking to prepare for this different type of exam.

Jeff Allcorn:

Yeah, so without getting too into the weeds, the main change that the NextGen exam is going to focus on is kind of a shift away from just pure legal memorization and more toward testing a student's ability on a skills-based level. Not just, "Have you memorized all these rules of federal procedure and these substantive elements of law?", but "If we ask you to draft a client memo, can you?" or, "If we give you facts that say something like, 'A person walks into your office and hands you a letter from their landlord', do you know what to do?" So, it's been very fun, very fun, very challenging to think through how are these questions going to look like, how are they going to be graded? Especially if you've got a question that seems like it could lead to some pretty subjective answers. One of the skills that the NCBE wants to test is legal strategy. And I think all three of us know that one of the most fun parts about being a lawyer is that there're lots of different ways to get to the result that you want. You just kind of have to choose the best one or just be really good at advocating for your preferred one if it's not the best one. So, here on the content team, we started working on what we thought the NextGen product would look like more than a year ago. We kind of took what information we did have, because NCBE has been releasing information in little dribs and drabs for the last year and a half. And we just tried to imagine what this product could look like and kind of leverage our knowledge of the NCBE and how they function to come up with what we thought our best approximation of a NextGen question would look like. And fortunately, we've started to get more information from the NCBE and including some sample answers and some sample questions, which was very good. And now we're just kind of trying to gear more of our content development toward how do you test these skills and how do you kind of marry the current bar exam and a skills exam into one comprehensive knowledge and



skills exam. So, it's pretty exciting – pretty challenging, not going to lie, but pretty exciting as well, to kind of try out something new and see how close we can get. I think at the end of the day, we feel very confident that we can have a product ready for students and that they're going to be successful.

- Lee Burgess: And I think that's probably one of the takeaways, is these bar prep companies are not necessarily going anywhere, but are going to provide support for this new exam.
- Jeff Allcorn: Yeah, we'll be here no matter what the exam looks like. We'll be here, we'll give you questions that hopefully look very similar to what you're going to see on the exam, and we are here for you.
- Lee Burgess: Great. Rebecca, do you have anything to add about the future?
- Rebecca Petrilli: I think Jeff covered it really nicely. I'll just reiterate that no matter what changes come to the bar exam landscape, Themis and UWorld plan to always be at the forefront of that to make sure we're providing the most comprehensive and best possible service to our students.
- Lee Burgess: Awesome. Well, we are going to link in our show notes to some episodes that my team has done about the upcoming changes to the bar exam, but I'm sure this will not be the last conversation we'll all have about the new changes of the next generation bar exam. Well, we are about out of time. Again, would you both just summarize the best way that students can learn more about your tools as they start to think about their upcoming exams?
- Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, absolutely. You can always check out our website, themisbar.com. Or you can feel free to send us a direct message on social media. Either I or one of the other members of the marketing team will see that message and make sure you get the information that you need. We're @themisbar on all of our social platforms, or you can always send an email to info@themisbar.com.
- Jeff Allcorn: And for UWorld, you can find us at our website at legal.uworld.com, and that's where you can get a link to the free trial or you can sign up. And there's also a link that sends you right back to Themis if you're looking for the comprehensive course.
- Lee Burgess: Amazing. Well, I thank you both so much for taking the time to chat with me today. We will link to all these resources in our show notes, and I hope you both have a wonderful rest of your day.
- Rebecca Petrilli: Thank you so much, Lee. This was a pleasure.



Jeff Allcorn: Yeah, thanks for having us.

Lee Burgess: Okay, great. Well, thank you both for taking the time. I think it was a really interesting conversation and I think we were able to give a nice overview of what the tools offer.

Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, definitely.

Jeff Allcorn: Yeah, thanks. This was fun.

Rebecca Petrilli: Yeah, thank you so much.

Lee Burgess: And with that, we are out of time. If you enjoyed this episode of the Law School Toolbox podcast, please take a second to leave a review and rating on your favorite listening app. We'd really appreciate it. And be sure to subscribe so you don't miss anything. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to reach out to Lee and Alison at lee@lawschooltoolbox.com or alison@lawschooltoolbox.com. Or you can always contact us via our website [contact form](http://LawSchoolToolBox.com) at LawSchoolToolBox.com. Thanks for listening, and we'll talk soon!

RESOURCES:

[Themis Bar Review](#)

[UWorld](#)

[UWorld Legal](#)

[NextGen Bar Exam](#)

[Podcast Episode 52: Bar Exam Tips – Mastering the MBE](#)

[Podcast Episode 72: Seeking Accommodations in Law School and on the Bar Exam \(with Dr. Jared Maloff\)](#)

[Podcast Episode 372: The NextGen Bar Exam \(w/Doretta McGinnis\)](#)