

REVIEW OF THE  
COURT REPORTING PROGRAM  
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Members: Linda Mottison, Instructor, Chair  
Barbara Coulibaly, Instructor  
Kevin Van Dewark, Instructor  
Pam Wood, Instructor  
Tara Lohman, Humphreys College Graduate, CSR  
Andrea Mathis, Student  
Desiree Britt, Student

### **Program Objectives**

The Court Reporting Program is a skill-based program that "is designed to prepare the student to meet the qualifications to sit for and pass the state certified shorthand reporters exam." The Court Reporting Program is an integral part of Humphreys College and encourages its students to seek a Bachelor of Science degree in Court Reporting, thus requiring students to take additional academic courses.

The major learning objectives of the Court Reporting Program are listed below:

1. To develop mastery and application of a conflict-free machine shorthand language.
2. To develop a minimum of 97.5% accuracy in the transcription of live single-voice dictation material dictated at 200 wpm.
3. To develop a minimum of 97.5% accuracy in the transcription of live three-voice deposition material dictated at 180 wpm.
4. To develop a minimum of 97.5% accuracy in the transcription of live four-voice court material dictated at 200 wpm.
5. To gain knowledge of the general and special terminologies likely to be encountered in court proceedings, depositions, hearings, and other meetings and/or legal proceedings.
6. To gain a thorough knowledge of the computer technology currently in use by court reporters in performing realtime computer-aided transcription.
7. To develop fluency and accuracy in reading steno notes aloud in class, as directed by the instructor.
8. To develop a thorough knowledge of transcript formats used by court reporters.
9. To develop a thorough knowledge of research materials and techniques available to court reporters.

This list of objectives shows at a glance that Court Reporting is different from many other programs of study normally associated with a college education. Even when compared to hands-on training in advanced chemistry or biology programs, court reporting requires very specific levels of accuracy of its students. In some ways this is a pass or fail program, with each level requiring high degrees of competency and skill before a student can be allowed into the next higher level. In addition, very diligent and intelligent students may be unable to attain adequate mastery of the "skill" involved in realtime transcription, and one student may take a year more or longer than another student to attain a specific speed or accuracy.

### **Purpose of the Review**

The purpose of this review is to evaluate the Court Reporting Program in terms of the college's educational effectiveness C-DATA model.

### **Community**

**Issue:** How effectively has the department consistently engaged the community through professional development activities, memberships, its advisory committee, graduates, and prospective students?

**Review and Analysis of Evidence:** In evaluating the community element of the C-DATA model, the team used the following submitted by the Court Reporting Department for its Program to form its assessment and recommendations: list of faculty memberships, faculty trip reports, minutes of advisory committee meetings, academic plans, and academic budget requests.

**Conclusions and Recommendations:** In reviewing the list of faculty memberships and professional licenses and certification, we found that our Department Chair, Kay Reindl and adjuncts, Brenda Nottoli and L. Poirier all maintain current Certified Shorthand Reporters Licenses (CSR). Most of the faculties are professional members of the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA). Four faculty members have earned and maintain NCRA certifications as Certified Reporting Instructors (CRI). Humphreys College adheres to the comprehensive standards of the state of California. Kay Reindl is also a member of the Deposition Reporters Association, California Court Reporters Association, California Official Court Reporters Association, and Northern California Court Reporters Association.

We recognize the long list of professional organization memberships and the ongoing support of faculty in professional development. In reviewing the program's advisory committee minutes, we found extensive evidence of ongoing interaction with the Court Reporting Department faculty who attended conferences, conventions, workshops, and various career day presentations given at local high schools.

### **Curriculum Development**

**Issue:** How effectively has the department used community input and program assessment results to improve its programs, and are program offerings aligned with major learning objectives as reflected in degree plans, course descriptions, and course syllabi that include course learning objectives and other syllabus requirements stated in the faculty handbook?

**Review and Analysis of Evidence:** The Court Reporting Department has used a method of direct assessment for many years in the form of portfolios. A portfolio is required of every student in order to qualify for the state examination to become a court reporter. It is called the "senior project." Additionally, students must transcribe a minimum of 20 consecutive pages from both a deposition proceeding and a court proceeding. The Court Reporting Department utilized the senior project as the method by which these requirements are documented. It consists mainly of work completed in the internship program – a requirement of the California Court Reporters Board is that the student completes an internship program prior to qualifying for the state examination.

The Court Reporting Department used the portfolios in March 2006 to assess major learning objective #8 (MLO #8): to develop a thorough knowledge of transcript formats used by court reporters. Specifically, they analyzed the required transcript pages to complete the assessment project. Based on the recommendations contained in the MLO #8 report, the department incorporated multivoice requirements into the existing requirement classes. The department also added the additional instruction with the CAT 164 class (Computer Aided Transcription) to ensure that students know how to utilize their software to produce the reviewed elements of the transcript. Some of the written responses on the Graduate Review Surveys were those of concern on how to adapt a transcript to another layout, keeping track of billings, and also that there was no emphasis on realtime class and theory. These are applications that are now covered in the CAT 164 class and also in the CR 290 (Professional Practice & Ethics class).

**Conclusions and Recommendations:** Upon review of the Court Reporting Department meeting minutes for the previous four years, we found evidence of ongoing discussions and resulting actions taken in the area of curriculum development.

It is recommended that the Court Reporting Department continues its current practice of holding faculty meetings once per quarter and continue the ongoing discussions in regard to curriculum improvements in order to fully meet the expectations of student success and curriculum development.

It is recommended that the Court Reporting Department continue its current practice of using the senior project portfolios for every student which utilizes the project to document the mandated requirements of the California Court Reporters Board in several areas.

### **Advising**

**Issue:** Court Reporting course schedule plans and student needs.

**Review and Analysis of Evidence:** Advising within the department is accomplished through different methods, and there are certain components of the advising process that are required by the Court Reporters Board of California (CRBC). The students are divided by speed level between the two full-time faculty members for degree and registration advising. Students are required to obtain the advisor's signature on each quarterly registration form. In addition, students must schedule an annual advising appointment where the student's progress is discussed as required by the CRBC. At this meeting, the student completes an advising form that asks specific questions about their progress and their awareness of options and changes within the court reporting profession.

There is a procedure in place for advising students who must enroll for a machine class for which they have received three or more "IP" (in progress) grades. The student must complete a form, "Petition to Re-enroll in Machine Courses," which is then signed by the program coordinator and the dean of instruction. Upon completion of five consecutive quarters at the same speed level, a meeting may be scheduled between the student and the department chair to review the student's progress (attendance, homework, class work, etc.). The dean of instruction will be advised and may also attend the meeting. At this meeting, alternate programs and career choices may be discussed.

Career advising is accomplished within the classroom through discussions of current trends in legislation and career opportunities that are published in professional periodicals and other publications. Students are also encouraged to attend professional workshops and conventions whenever possible and are encouraged to join professional associations of court reporters. Speakers are brought in to address many different facets of the profession, and field trips are occasionally taken to the courthouse or to a deposition firm. Students participate in mock trial opportunities at law schools or through high school events. Students are also encouraged to join online mentoring programs through professional associations which match students with a working reporter.

**Conclusions and Recommendations:** Career advising is a great way of providing the student the relevant and up-to-date information on opportunities that may be available to he or she and as they need to schedule future courses. There are certain components of the advising process that are required by the CRBC, this should be continued for each student to help make the student aware of their progress. It is recommended that the Court Reporting Department continues its current practice of quarterly advising within the department, which is accomplished through different methods, and there are certain components of the advising process that are required by the Court Reporters Board of California (CRBC).

### **Teaching Effectiveness**

**Issue:** How effectively has the department delivered course content to students as reflected in teaching methods, text selection, course assessment practices, writing across the curriculum requirements, instructor evaluations, peer reviews, and the Humphreys College Court Reporting Graduate Survey; and how effectively has the department supported student learning through use of tutorial services?

**Review and Analysis of Evidence:** The Court Reporting Program provided the team the following items for review and analysis: 1) 16 syllabi from Court Reporting Program courses, and 2) the Committee sent out 23 graduate surveys and had 14 surveys returned.

The Court Reporting Department currently does not survey or assess students who drop out of the program. The completion rate for the court reporting program is higher than the national average for court reporting; however, the graduation rate for the program is lower than the college average.

The committee sent out 23 surveys by USPS mail, addresses were verified through the Humphreys College Jenzabar system and also through the CRB for any updates or changes in addresses. We had 14 responses returned and none of the envelopes were returned as being undeliverable. These students were called and emailed, each reminded that the survey had been mailed the previous week; we asked that they might fill out the survey as quickly as possible.

The review team was especially interested in evaluating the sample of 16 syllabi and the graduate survey. The team analyzed the syllabi using the following list of requirements. The team also analyzed the graduate surveys from the perspectives of student perceived educational value, quality of teaching within the major, higher order thinking skills developed within the major, and overall experience in the major as these areas were determined to be most relevant to teaching effectiveness.

The team reviewed the samples of the syllabi to see if they included the following 10 categories of information required by the college:

1. Heading.
2. Catalog course description.
3. Faculty contact information.
4. Textbooks and other required or recommended material.
5. Learning objectives.
6. Course policies.
7. Course assignments.
8. College support services.
9. Grading policies and procedures.
10. Weekly schedule of classes.

**Conclusions and Recommendations:** The evidence presented reflects that the Court Reporting Program is very different from other programs, in that a student progresses at their own speed and may be in this same class for numerous quarters. Thus, each syllabus included a weekly schedule; however, they were not specific when explaining assignments. College Support Services was rarely mentioned in any of the syllabi due to the nature of the program, library services are not likely used.

The analysis of the Graduate Survey supported the fact that students perceive that the Court Reporting Program faculty and curriculum were perceived in a very satisfactory light with average scores throughout the relevant portion of survey, pertaining to their major, of 3.35 on a 4.0 scale. In addition, the graduate students perceived that the program prepared them well not only for their profession but contributed significantly to their writing, speaking and higher order thinking ability.

Institutional data confirmed that the Court Reporters Board Examination Statistics exceed the state's average pass rate by 32.9%.

	<u>Our Pass Average</u>	<u>CA Overall % Pass</u>	<u>Humphreys College Difference</u>
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Dictation	88.9%	45.0%	+43.9%
English	100%	72.45%	+27.5%
Professional Practice	48.2%	20.9%	+27.3%

The number of students enrolled in the Court Reporting Program has varied over the last five years. The beginning of the fall quarter of the 2005 academic year showed 65 enrollees. The numbers have slowly risen and held steady since then, the fall 2006 quarter showing 67 enrollees and the fall 2008 quarter was at 71. The biggest jump was in 2008 when the fall quarter enrollment went up to 85. The 2005-2008 enrollment records show an increase of 23.5% in the Court Reporting Program; this is exceptionally high when compared to the overall college 2005-2008 increase of 10.3%.

Of all students enrolled in the Court Reporting Program since 2007, 5 received a degree but have not yet qualified to take the CSR Exam, 18 received degrees or certificates and qualified to take the CSR Exam, and the remaining 62 students are currently working on their certificate or degree

The team recommends that the program continue to monitor the course syllabi to ensure that they include all required categories of information, perhaps by considering the inclusion of a template covering the inclusion of all items that can be standardized. It was found that the faculty contact information might be more convenient to the student if included in the header of each of the syllabi. We also recognize the increase in enrollment and recommend that the department continue encouraging high quality faculty performance to help continue this trend.

### **Assessment**

**Issue:** How effectively has the department assessed student attainment of major learning objectives through ongoing implementation of program assessment plans, and how is student attainment informed by other success indicators, such as program enrollments, course enrollments, retention and graduation rates, job placement, professional certification of its graduates, and alumni enrollment in graduate programs?

**Review and Analysis of Evidence:** The team reviewed the Court Reporting Program Assessment Plan and Learning Objectives. It was found that most classes in the Court Reporting Program are aimed at building speed on the steno machine. However, emphasis is also placed on clean steno notes, fluency in the read back of steno notes, transcript formatting, learning the shorthand language, and the use of English (including specialized terminologies), grammar, and punctuation in transcripts.

Each instructor understands the importance to the student of speed building on the steno machine. Dictation material in every class is of professional quality, much of it being actual courtroom and deposition transcripts or legislative record. All testing material has been selected by instructors and meets all testing standards established by the California Court Reporters Board. In this way, each instructor is prepared to provide instruction that is most beneficial to our students and encourage them to reach their goal of over 200 words per minute on the steno machine, with a solid foundation and understanding of English terminologies.

The full-time faculty members are available to assess and discuss plans that might assist a student who is struggling at a speed plateau. Students requesting assistance in areas of English, grammar, or punctuation are encouraged to seek the assistance of our college tutorial staff through the tutoring center. The Department Chair, Kay Reindl conducts review sessions for those students who have qualified to take the state exam. The tutoring prepares the students for the state exam in the areas of professional practice, ethics, medical and legal terminology, and knowledge of the codes and laws relating to the court reporting profession.

**Conclusions and Recommendations:** The review team is impressed with the program's progress in assessment. The department is aware that their goal is to provide students with the skills and knowledge to enter into a quality career

and to provide the professional community with qualified individuals in the area of court and freelance reporting. It is recommended that the department continue its current practice of preparing students to meet the qualifications to sit for and pass the state certified shorthand reporter's examinations.

It is also the recommendation of the committee that a survey instrument be developed to help understand the reasons students withdraw from the Court Reporting Program at Humphreys College. By identifying these factors the department may be able to address some of the issues which the college has direct control over and then may be able to influence. Furthermore, the study may validate the assumption that students drop out because of the difficulty of the curriculum and not for any controllable factors. Either way this study would be of value to the department.

### **Overall Conclusions and Recommendations**

The Court Reporting Program has done a very good job of meeting all of the elements of the C-DATA model. The following is a summary of our recommendations:

#### **Community:**

- It is recommended that the Court Reporting Department continue its current practice of adhering to the comprehensive standards of the state of California with recognizing the importance of the professional memberships the Court Reporting Department faculty are members of. Also to continue, the extensive evidence of those who attended conferences, conventions, workshops, to keep up with standards and then being able to bring the information to various career day presentations given at local high schools.

#### **Curriculum Development:**

- It is recommended that the Court Reporting Department continue its current practice of holding faculty meetings once per quarter and continue the ongoing discussions in regard to curriculum improvements in order to fully meet the expectations of student success and curriculum development.
- It is recommended that the Court Reporting Department continue its current practice of using the senior project portfolios for every student which utilizes the project to document the mandated requirements of the California Court Reporters Board in several areas.

#### **Advising:**

- It is recommended that the Court Reporting Department continue its current practice of quarterly advising within the department, which is accomplished through different methods, and there are certain components of the advising process that are required by the Court Reporters Board of California (CRBC).

#### **Teaching Effectiveness:**

- The team recommends that the program continue to monitor the course syllabi to ensure that they include all required categories of information, perhaps by considering the inclusion of a template covering the inclusion of all items that can be standardized.
- We recommend that faculty contact information should be included in the header of each syllabus, just making it easy to find the instructor contact information. Again, this may be a consideration of the inclusion of a template, covering a standardized header.

#### **Assessment:**

- It is recommended that the department continue its current practice of preparing students to meet the qualifications to sit for and pass the state certified shorthand reporter's examinations.
- It is also the recommendation of the committee that a survey instrument be developed to help understand the reasons students withdraw from the Court Reporting Program at Humphreys College, the study may validate the assumption that students drop out because of the difficulty of the curriculum and not for any controllable factors. Either way this study would be of value to the department.



## Humphreys College Graduate Survey – SUMMARY CR

### **A. Your Overall Humphreys College Experience**

1. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following items.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Summary
Your overall Humphreys experience	7	5			3.58
Overall value of Humphreys education related to cost	1	7	2	1	2.72
Overall quality of your interaction with Humphreys instructors	9	3			3.75
Overall quality of your interaction with staff (non-instructors)	5	7			3.42
Overall quality of college services provided (registration, admissions, etc.)	6	6			3.50
Overall value of extra-curricular activities on campus		6	2		2.75

2. Would you recommend Humphreys to others considering college? (9) ☐ Yes (1) ☐ No ☐ Maybe

3. Did you participate in any of the following activities while enrolled at Humphreys?

	Yes	No
Internship, field experience, or practicum	9	1
Community service or volunteer work	3	6
Student organizations	1	8
Culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis/senior project, student teaching, etc.)	6	4

### **B. Your Experience in Your Major**

4. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with each of the following aspects of your major.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not Applicable	Summary
Quality of teaching in your major	9	2	1			3.67
Accessibility of faculty in your major	10	1			1	3.58
Faculty concern for your academic/professional development	9	2		1		3.08
Transcription skills developed by courses in your major	6	3				3.67
Computer Aided Transcription skills developed by courses in your major	3	2	3	1		2.78
Critical thinking/problem solving skills developed by your major courses	2	4	1			3.14
Ability to work effectively with others developed by courses in your major	6	2	1			3.56
Availability of classes in your major	6	2	1			3.56
Quality of academic advising in your major	7	2	2			3.45
Overall adequacy of space and/or facilities for classes in your major	7	4				3.64
Overall adequacy of classroom resources for classes in your major (computers, lab equipment, etc.)	7	3	1			3.55
Overall experience in your major	7	2	1			3.00
Overall preparation for employment	8	2	1	1		3.42
Usefulness of your internship, field experience, or practicum	6	3	1			3.50
Usefulness of your culminating senior experience (comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis/senior project, student teaching, etc.)	4	2	2		2	2.60

5. If you could start over again, would you choose the same major?

(10) ☐ Definitely Yes

(1) ☐ Probably Yes

(1) ☐ Probably No

☐ Definitely No



**6. Please estimate how helpful your HC General Education courses were in contributing to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas:**

	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Not Too Helpful	Not Helpful At All	Summary
Thinking critically and analytically	5	4	1		3.40
Speaking clearly and effectively	6	5	1		3.40
Writing clearly and effectively	8	4			3.67
Reading for content and analysis	8	4			3.67
Analyzing quantitative problems	4	4	2		3.20
Applying scientific knowledge and skills		10	1		3.91
Appreciating great works of art, music, drama	4	2	2	3	2.64
Appreciating cultures or groups other than my own	3	5	1	2	2.82
Awareness of global issues and events	3	6	1		3.20
Awareness of ethical implications of my own and others' actions	3	7			3.30
Developing creativity	1	3	2	1	2.14
Using information research skills	5	4	1		3.40
Acquiring a broad general education	5	4	1		3.40
Developing leadership skills	3	6	1		3.20
Learning effectively on my own	6	4			3.60

**7. What would have improved your OVERALL Humphreys experience?**

**C. Additional Education**

**8. Are you planning to further your education?**

- (3) ☐ Yes, I am currently furthering my education      (2) ☐ Yes, I plan to further my education  
 (2) ☐ Probably, but I am not sure when      (2) ☐ Maybe, but I have no specific plans      (2) ☐ No, I have no plans

(if yes) **I prefer to further my education at Humphreys if my program of interest were offered:** (4) ☐ Yes (2) ☐ No

(if yes) **What is the nature and purpose of your additional education?**

- ☐ Coursework toward Associate degree  
☐ Coursework toward Certificate program  
 (5) ☐ Coursework toward Bachelor's degree  
 (1) ☐ Coursework toward Master's degree  
☐ Coursework toward Doctorate degree (Ph.D., Ed.D., J.D., etc.)  
 (3) ☐ Coursework for personal or professional growth  
☐ Workshop to complete Continuing Education Units for professional standing

**D. Current Employment Status**

**9. Are you currently employed?**

- (9) ☐ Yes, in a position **closely related** to my Humphreys academic preparation (skip to 10)  
 (1) ☐ Yes, in a position **not closely related** to my Humphreys academic preparation (skip to 9a)  
☐ No, but I am **seeking employment** (skip to 9b)  
☐ No, and I am **not seeking employment** (skip to 9b)

**9a. If your current position is NOT CLOSELY RELATED to your Humphreys academic preparation, was this a result of your personal preference/choice, or was it a result of other factors?**

- (1) ☐ Yes, it was my **personal choice**  
☐ No, it was a result of **other factors**

**9b. If you are not employed, which one of the following best describes the reason?**

- ☐ No jobs available in my field in my geographic area  
☐ No jobs in this field in any location  
☐ Jobs are available but many people are competing for them  
☐ I do not yet have all of the required credentials  
☐ Family responsibilities influenced my employment options  
☐ My continuing education influenced my employment options

**10.** (7) ☐ I am working full-time      (2) ☐ I am working part-time

**11.** (3) ☐ I am self-employed (5) ☐ I am NOT self-employed

**The following comments were written on the survey forms:**

1. I was not prepared for state test. I was given study things and let go. I should have been helped when it was given to me. I should not have had to do it on my own for the money I paid.
2. Having Humphreys accredited by the NCRA. After completing school, I moved to a new state and was unable to obtain an official ship in court because Humphreys wasn't accredited by the NCRA. Their hiring requirements in Wisconsin to be hired in court was having an RPR license or being a graduate from a school accredited by the NCRA. I felt as though Humphreys should have been accredited by the NCRA (National Court Reporters Association). I felt that we pay enough money, and Humphreys should have been a part of that organization. I'm not sure if they are now, but I think they should be.
3. More scholarship opportunities or aid. Lower Costs.
4. Cheaper Costs.
5. More practical application of actual skills in a working environment. The differences between being a student and working in the field are too broad and require an ability to adapt to situations and environments not taught by actual classroom experience. I think more of a practical, fluctuating environment where you have to use all of your learning, instead of the same anticipatory situations would broaden the experience and give a more practical learning environment.

For example, often in court you need to be able to quickly identify multiple people beyond the basic school set up. You leave school with four identifiers. You often need six or more. Quite often you have multiple participants and unidentified persons speaking in a courtroom setting. Your training at Humphreys does not address this, nor does it adequately become evident in the intern setting. I honestly think you should be prepared to know how to read a docket, how to identify attorneys and participants efficiently and be comfortable with interrupting in court to clarify who someone is. You really only get one chance sometimes. You want your students to shine.

Jury charge is a joke. Of all of the jury charges I've heard during my time at Humphreys, I've still haven't heard one in the field. More often in court it is arraignments, sentencing, or pleas. What a waste of time jury charge is. Allow the students to pass multiple 2 voice takes. The 2 voice interaction is more practical than the straight matter or jury charge. Make students pass the takes that will encompass the majority of their work not dictated letters or congressional takes. I only know of one student in the past 15 years who has worked in a congressional setting. That's Rhett Simmons. Read an arraignment or a sentencing or charges. These are the things that you hear on a daily basis.

Allow the students to use their computers in the classroom. You won't be working in court or at a deposition without your laptop/notebook. You need to know how to use your software in a real setting. I can't imagine not using mine.

I STILL don't know how to hook up to attorneys in a realtime setting. I never learned that at Humphreys, which is supposed to teach a realtime class and theory.

We never have any experience in using parentheticals, which I use all the time.

Actual transcripts take time. Being able to assess a firm's layout and adapt a transcript to that layout is paramount. This can take a beginner a lot of time if they don't understand how to change a layout. No emphasis is put on this. Also, you need to be able to make a cover page that makes sense. No emphasis is put on this. How do you keep track of your work, your billings, your firms? That is never covered. The assumption is that the firm will babysit you. They don't have time to train you. I work for at least five different firms to keep busy. They all use a different layout, certificate; cover page, index, and billing sheet.

I think the cost for Humphreys in comparison to some of the other schools is a deterrent. Considering the time involved in completing the program and the lack of work for most reporters at this time. I think you do your students a disservice charging

them more than \$40K. You need to be able to make your loan payments, and with the current economy and reduction in work (furloughs or reduction in discovery) you need to be able to make a living and make your loan payment.

Also, please, please quit using the phrase contributory negligence. Not only is that phrase out of date, but I think California quit using that standard over twenty years ago. The correct term to replace that phrase in ALL of the numerous takes would be comparative negligence, which is the current standard.

I think the program is slowly evolving. I think you need to bring it up to date, and give it a facelift. I think the old program is not working in this new technological age. The program needs to come up to current standards. Quit relying on outside sources, be it agency owners/supervisors in court/guest speakers to give your students the cutting-edge information they need. Equip your students with practical situations and material. They need to be challenged.

Why not survey firm owners/court supervisors to find out what THEY want from a new student???

**6.** Have more upper division classes available such as Family Law, Probate, Tax Law, so we can gain knowledge in the area we would like to focus in.

**7.** Units too expensive.