

Keeping Up to Data – May 2019

Welcome to LSAC's May 2019 podcast. This is Susan Krinsky, director of enrollment management at LSAC.

Not surprisingly, applications for the current cycle have slowed down considerably. Given where we were last year at this time, it appears that we have now received 91% of this year's likely applicants, as compared to 90% a month ago. So, we may still see more applicants. As of this week, there are just over 56,000 applicants, up 1.8% as compared to last year.

Although applicants are up, slightly, JD **applications** to ABA-accredited law schools are down 2.8%, with just over 355,000 applications submitted, about 10,000 fewer than last year at this time. As was the case last month, only the South Central region is experiencing a small increase in applications, with the state of Texas showing the largest increase.

Overall, 75 law schools are showing application volume increases, and 120 schools are experiencing decreases, with 7 experiencing no change.

LLM applications to US law schools are down 3.9%, and LLM applicants are down 3.5%. Looking at the countries where applicants obtained their first law degree, the largest numbers of LLM applicants are from China, the U.S., India, the United Kingdom, Brazil, and Nigeria. Of those countries, only Nigeria showed a significant increase.

In Canada, where 98% of likely applicants have now applied, Canadian member law schools are experiencing small decreases as compared to last year, with applications down 4.4%, and applicants down 2.3%.

The final number of LSAT registrants for the 6 test administrations in 2018-19 is now available. 2018-19 registrants were up 6.8% over registrants for the 4 test administrations the previous year. The final **test-taker** counts showed an increase in 2018-19 test-takers of 7.3 % over the prior year. First-time test takers accounted for 51% of 2018-19 test-takers overall, as compared to 61% the previous year. Looking at each test administration separately, the largest percentage of first-time test takers took the test in June and July of 2018 — for both of those administrations, 69% of test takers were taking the LSAT for the first time. The largest test administration in 2018-19 was the November test, when almost 38,000 tests were administered, and 51% of those were administered to first-time test takers. For the January 2019 test, 46% of the test takers were first-time test takers. The March 2019 test was a relatively small administration, with about 15,500 test takers, of whom 53% were taking the test for the first time. Although we saw an increase of about 9,400 overall test-takers this year as compared to last year, the number of **first-time** test takers decreased by just under 8,000.

The next LSAT administration — the first in the new cycle — will take place on Monday, June 3. Over 23,000 individuals are registered for the June test, and since the registration deadline has passed, this figure will not increase. June will be the first test during which there will be no writing section administered as a part of the LSAT on the test day — candidates taking the test for the first time in June will take the writing section, now known as LSAT Writing, anytime within the following 12 months, as a separate event. The cost is included in the main LSAT fee. For candidates taking the test as repeaters in June and thereafter, it will not be necessary to take LSAT Writing,

as those candidates have already completed the writing section during a prior test administration. For those candidates who wish to provide another writing sample, there will be a fee, to be announced in the next few weeks.

Registration is also open for the Monday, July 15 test administration — as you know, this will be the first administration of the Digital LSAT. For the July test administration, approximately half of the test takers will be administered the Digital LSAT, and the other half will be administered the traditional paper-and-pencil test. The registration deadline is June 4, and as of now, over 13,000 candidates have registered.

In other news, I want to remind you that each year, usually in May, we ask you to choose your index formula for the upcoming application cycle. You should see an announcement about this shortly. As you know, the index value appears on the CAS report that you receive for each applicant to your school and is based on a weighted combination of the candidate's LSAT score and undergraduate grade point average. Many schools use the index as a part of their admission process. Some schools use a formula based on their annual correlation study, while others use a formula based on other considerations. You will be able to choose your index formula on ACES.

As always, remember that we update the current volume data for both JD and LLM programs on our website every night. Go to www.LSAC.org, and look for Data & Research and then Data Library. The Current Volume Interactive Summary will show you a number of data visualizations and drill-downs. If you're an LSAC member and you log in, remember we have many more data and research reports available to you.

Let us know if you find these podcasts useful. We'd love to hear your questions or suggestions. Just write to us at podcast@LSAC.org. Thanks for listening. Until next time, this is Susan Krinsky at LSAC.