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## Does the 1L Curriculum Make a Difference?

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# DOES THE 1L CURRICULUM MAKE A DIFFERENCE?\*

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## **Abstract**

Georgetown Law’s Curriculum B (also known as Section 3) offers a unique opportunity to study an alternative 1L curriculum. The standard 1L curriculum has been around for decades and is still offered at the vast majority of U.S. law schools. Leaders in the legal academy often talk about experimenting with the 1L curriculum, but hardly anyone does it. Georgetown Law has. We study whether Georgetown’s Curriculum B yields measurable differences in student outcomes. Our empirical design leverages the fact that enrollment in Curriculum B is done by lottery when it is oversubscribed—meaning our study is effectively a randomized controlled trial. We measure treatment effects of Curriculum B by comparing outcomes of students who received the treatment (Curriculum B) with outcomes of students who received the placebo (Curriculum A) but wanted the treatment. Because students in both the treatment and control groups elected to enroll in Curriculum B, our empirical design overcomes the issue of selection bias. We find that taking Curriculum B decreases students’ performance in two business law electives (Corporations and Securities Regulation) and reduces the rate at which they graduate with Latin honors. In addition, we find that it increases students’ propensity to take certain public law electives and decreases their propensity to take certain business law electives. We further find that taking Curriculum B decreases students’ likelihood of working in the private sector (law firm or business/industry), increases their likelihood of working in the public sector (government or public interest) or doing a judicial clerkship, and reduces their average annual salary. At the same, however, we find no statistically significant effects on other outcomes, including students’ cumulative GPA, their chances of passing the bar exam or being employed 10 months after graduation, or their rate or amount of alumni giving.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In the United States, the first year of law school (“1L”) is legendary. Indeed, the 1L year is notorious not only within the legal community but also among the general public. It has been the subject of bestselling books,<sup>1</sup> blockbuster movies,<sup>2</sup> and an award-winning television series.<sup>3</sup>

A key element of the 1L mystique is its curriculum. The standard 1L curriculum includes five core courses—Civil Procedure, Contracts, Criminal Law, Property, and Torts—all taught using the case method, often in the Socratic style.<sup>4</sup> The roots of the standard 1L curriculum trace back to Dean Christopher Columbus Langdell and Harvard Law School in 1870.<sup>5</sup> By 1950, virtually every U.S. law school had adopted some version of the Langdellian curriculum,<sup>6</sup> and today the vast majority of schools continue to require 1L students to take these five core courses.<sup>7</sup>

Leaders in the legal academy often talk about experimenting with the 1L curriculum, but hardly anyone does it.<sup>8</sup> Since 1991, Georgetown University Law Center (“Georgetown Law” or “GULC”) has offered an alternative 1L curriculum (“Curriculum B”) alongside its version of the standard 1L curriculum (“Curriculum A”).<sup>9</sup> Curriculum B was designed to provide “critical” perspectives on the law and respond to important changes in legal practice and theory in the years since the standard 1L curriculum was first developed, including the emergence of the regulatory state, the breakdown of conventional doctrinal boundaries, and the influence of other disciplines such as economics, history, and philosophy.<sup>10</sup> The core courses in Curriculum B are Bargain, Exchange, and Liability; Democracy and Coercion; Government Processes; Legal Justice; Legal Process and Society; and Property in Time.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For example, *One L* (Turow, 1977) and *The Paper Chase* (Osborn Jr., 1971).

<sup>2</sup> For example, *Legally Blond* (Luketic, 2001) and *The Paper Chase* (Bridges, 1973).

<sup>3</sup> For example, *The Paper Chase* (Roth & Thompson, 1978-1979 & 1983-1986).

<sup>4</sup> See Gordon (2007, pp. 340-341).

<sup>5</sup> See Gordon (2007), Stevens (1983), and Chase (1979).

<sup>6</sup> See Gordon (2007, p. 340).

<sup>7</sup> See Carpenter (2012, p. 50).

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Rubin (2007).

<sup>9</sup> See GULC (1990). Curriculum B is also known as Section 3, the 1L section in which Curriculum B is offered.

<sup>10</sup> See Cassidy (2012).

<sup>11</sup> See GULC (2021, p. 3). Descriptions of these courses are set forth in the Appendix.

Georgetown Law’s Curriculum B offers a unique opportunity to study an alternative 1L curriculum. We study whether Curriculum B yields measurable differences in student outcomes in three categories: (A) academic performance in law school; (B) bar passage and post-graduate employment; and (C) alumni engagement. Our empirical design leverages the fact that enrollment in Curriculum B is done by lottery when it is oversubscribed—meaning our study is effectively a randomized controlled trial. We measure treatment effects of Curriculum B by comparing outcomes of students who received the treatment (Curriculum B) with outcomes of students who received the placebo (Curriculum A) but wanted the treatment. Because students in both the treatment and control groups elected to take Curriculum B, our empirical strategy overcomes the issue of selection bias.<sup>12</sup>

We find that Curriculum B has a number of interesting treatment effects. In particular, we find that taking Curriculum B decreases students’ performance in two popular business law electives (Corporations and Securities Regulation) and reduces the rate at which they graduate with Latin honors. In addition, we find that it increases students’ propensity to take certain public law electives and decreases their propensity to take certain business law electives. We further find that taking Curriculum B decreases the frequency with which students work in the private sector (law firm or business/industry), increases the frequency with which they work in the public sector (government or public interest) or do a judicial clerkship, and reduces their average annual salary.<sup>13</sup> At the same, however, we find that taking Curriculum B has no statistically significant effect on any of the other outcomes that we study, including students’ cumulative GPA and post-1L cumulative GPA,<sup>14</sup> their chances of passing the bar exam on the first attempt or being employed 10 months after graduation, or their rate or amount of alumni giving.

We also demonstrate that selection effects would have biased our results had we performed “naïve comparisons” between students who took Curriculum B and students who took Curriculum A (including students who did not apply to take Curriculum B). More specifically, we show that failing to account for selection effects would lead one to conclude that Curriculum B has positive effects on academic performance (cumulative GPA and post-1L cumulative GPA) and alumni engagement (rates of alumni giving and attendance at alumni events) that we do not

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<sup>12</sup> Selection bias occurs when the selection of subjects for treatment results in systemic differences (other than treatment status) between the treatment and control groups that can explain differences in their outcomes. See, for example, Johnson & DiNardo (1997, p. 447). Selection bias is a concern whenever the selection of subjects for treatment is not random (e.g., self-selection). See, for example, Barnow et al. (1980).

<sup>13</sup> The employment outcomes we study are all measured at 10 months after graduation.

<sup>14</sup> For the avoidance of doubt, GPA stands for grade point average. We measure all grades on Georgetown Law’s 4.0 scale, in which A+ = 4.33, A = 4.00, A- = 3.67, B+ = 3.33, B = 3.00, B- = 2.67, C+ = 2.33, C = 2.00, D = 1.00, and F = 0. See GULC (2021, p. 11).

find in our main analysis. Finally, we report the results of a survey of Georgetown Law’s full-time faculty which show that faculty perceptions of Curriculum B do not always match reality—and sometimes track our naïve findings.

The remainder of the Article proceeds as follows. Section II provides a brief history of the standard 1L curriculum and an overview of Georgetown Law’s Curriculum B. Section III describes our empirical strategy and our dataset. Section IV presents the results of our main analysis, which compares the outcomes of students in the treatment group (students who took Curriculum B) with those of students in the control group (students who applied for Curriculum B but took Curriculum A). Section V reports the results of our naïve comparisons, which compare the outcomes of students in the treatment group with those of two broader groups of students who took Curriculum A.<sup>15</sup> Section VI presents the results of the faculty survey. We offer concluding remarks in Section VII, including our thoughts about the main takeaways from our analysis and what lessons can (and cannot) be drawn from our study. The Appendix reports supplemental results. It also provides descriptions of the courses offered in Curriculum A and Curriculum B.<sup>16</sup>

## II. THE 1L CURRICULUM

### *A. Brief History of the Standard 1L Curriculum*

The roots of the modern 1L curriculum trace back to the pioneering innovations of Dean Christopher Columbus Langdell at Harvard Law School in the late nineteenth century.<sup>17</sup> Prior to 1870, law was taught as an undergraduate subject, both in four-year liberal arts colleges and in law schools that were primarily trade schools.<sup>18</sup> Students in general chose either college or law school, not both.<sup>19</sup> Langdell, who served as the dean of Harvard’s law school from 1870 to 1895, established law school as we know it today—a three-year, post-baccalaureate program with mandatory first-year courses.<sup>20</sup> The first-year curriculum comprised five courses: Civil Procedure, Contracts, Criminal Law, Property, and Torts.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> The first naïve comparison is with all students (full- and part-time) who took Curriculum A, while the second is with all full-time students who took Curriculum A.

<sup>16</sup> The course descriptions were taken from the 2021-2022 Georgetown Law Curriculum Guide, which we accessed at <https://curriculum.law.georgetown.edu/course-search/>.

<sup>17</sup> See generally, for example, Stevens (1983) and Gordon (2007). Langdell shares much of the credit with Charles W. Eliot, then President of Harvard University. See Chase (1979).

<sup>18</sup> See Stevens (1983, p. 35).

<sup>19</sup> See Stevens (1983, p. 36).

<sup>20</sup> See Stevens (1983, pp. 36-37) and Gordon (2007, pp. 340-341).

<sup>21</sup> See Gordon (2007, p. 341).

During the second and third years, students chose electives from a limited menu of offerings.<sup>22</sup> Except for Criminal Law and Constitutional Law (a third-year elective), the Langdellian curriculum was made up entirely of private-law subjects.<sup>23</sup>

Langdell also introduced a new inductive-reasoning method of legal instruction, the “case method,” to replace the old lecture-and-recite method.<sup>24</sup> The case method complemented and favored the “pure law” private-law curriculum over the interdisciplinary public-law curriculum that it displaced.<sup>25</sup> Under the case method, rather than recite black-letter rules catalogued in legal treatises, students induce legal principles through Socratic inquiry of appellate cases.<sup>26</sup> The case method aims to teach students “legal reasoning,”<sup>27</sup> or how to “think like a lawyer.”<sup>28</sup>

The aim of the Langdellian project was to “establish law as a distinctive discipline and autonomous technical subject that was different from everything else in the academy.”<sup>29</sup> By the middle of the twentieth century the Langdellian model had been adopted by virtually every full-time university-based U.S. law school.<sup>30</sup> Despite pushback from legal realism and subsequent anti-formalist movements in American legal thought (e.g., critical legal studies, feminist legal theory, and law and economics),<sup>31</sup> which spurred failed efforts by Columbia and Yale to establish curricula that integrated law and the social sciences,<sup>32</sup> the Langdellian model to this

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<sup>22</sup> See Gordon (2007, p. 341).

<sup>23</sup> See Gordon (2007, p. 341).

<sup>24</sup> See Stevens (1983, pp. 51-72) and Gordon (2007, pp. 341-342).

<sup>25</sup> See Gordon (2007, pp. 341-342 & 348) (“The study of public law inevitably adulterated pure law with political science, economics, and history, and was this to be avoided.”).

<sup>26</sup> See Stevens (1983, pp. 53) and Gordon (2007, pp. 341-342).

<sup>27</sup> See generally, for example, Levi (1949) and Burton (1985).

<sup>28</sup> See Llewellyn (1930, p. 102) (“But there remain, before we have placed the curriculum in its relation to practice, some observations as to the arrangement of the work in the three years. The first year, I have already stated, aims to drill into you the more essential techniques of handling cases. It lays a foundation simultaneously for law school and law practice. It aims, in the old phrase, to get you to ‘thinking like a lawyer.’”).

<sup>29</sup> See Gordon (2007, p. 348) and also Stevens (1983, pp. 52-55).

<sup>30</sup> See Gordon (2007, p. 340).

<sup>31</sup> See generally, for example, Faralli (2005, pp. 75-81).

<sup>32</sup> See generally, for example, Kalman (1986), Schlegel (1995), and Denning (2002). In the wake of Columbia’s failed curricular reform, two Columbia law professors, Herman Oliphant and Hessel Yntema, left Columbia for Johns Hopkins University’s upstart Institute of Law, which also had a mission to integrate law and social science, but which also failed in short order. See, for example, Schlegel (1995, pp. 174-210). Although these efforts to overhaul the Langdellian curriculum failed, many U.S. law schools have successfully tinkered with it at the edges. For

day provides the backbone framework for legal education throughout the United States.<sup>33</sup> In particular, the vast majority of U.S. law schools still have a mandatory 1L curriculum that includes the original five Langdellian first-year courses.<sup>34</sup>

### *B. Georgetown Law's Curriculum B*

For decades, Georgetown Law has divided its 1L class into multiple sections of more than 100 students each. Prior to the 1991-1992 academic year, Curriculum A, Georgetown's version of the standard (Langdellian) 1L curriculum, was taught in every 1L section. The core courses in Curriculum A are Civil Procedure; Constitutional Law I; Contracts; Criminal Justice; Property; and Torts.<sup>35</sup> Descriptions of these courses are set forth in the Appendix.

In 1988, Georgetown Law embarked on a long-range planning process under the leadership of Dean Robert Pitofsky.<sup>36</sup> The long-range planning committee, *inter alia*, reviewed the 1L curriculum.<sup>37</sup> It concluded that reform was needed and recommended the creation of a special 1L section that would experiment with a substantially different 1L curriculum.<sup>38</sup> Pursuant to the committee's recommendation, Dean Judith Areen, who had succeeded Pitofsky in 1989, appointed a curricular reform committee, chaired by Professor Louis Michael Seidman, to devise the alternative 1L curriculum, known today as Curriculum B.<sup>39</sup>

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instance, the University of Chicago and George Mason University include courses in their mandatory 1L curricula that introduce students to the law as an integrated discipline (Elements of the Law at Chicago and Economic Foundations of Legal Studies at George Mason).

<sup>33</sup> See Gordon (2007, p. 349) (“[A]t least in its outward skeletal form, the Harvard-ized core curriculum has remained remarkably stable. The basic structure is the same: a three-year post-graduate course . . . that uses the case method as the primary means of instruction.”).

<sup>34</sup> See Carpenter (2012, p. 50) (“In 2010, the vast majority of respondents continued to require Civil Procedure, Contracts, Property, Torts, [and] Criminal Law” in the 1L curriculum) and Gordon (2007, p. 349) (“The required first-year courses are largely the same today as in 1871 . . .”). As recently as 2002, 94.8 percent of full-time accredited U.S. law schools required Civil Procedure; 94.8 percent required Contracts; 86.9 percent required Criminal Law; 86.1 percent required Property, and 88.6 percent required Torts. See American Bar Association (2004, p. 25).

<sup>35</sup> See GULC (2021, p. 2). Criminal Justice covers criminal procedure as opposed to substantive criminal law. It was added to Curriculum A in 1967. See Ernst (1995, p. 195).

<sup>36</sup> See GULC Curricular Reform Committee (1991, p. 1).

<sup>37</sup> See GULC Curricular Reform Committee (1991, pp. 1-2).

<sup>38</sup> See GULC Curricular Reform Committee (1991, pp. 1-2).

<sup>39</sup> See Cassidy (2012, pp. 33-34), GULC (1990), GULC (1991), and GULC Section 3 Ad Hoc Review Committee (2017, p. 1). The members of the curricular reform committee and architects of Curriculum B were Professors Anita Allen, Daniel Ernst, William Eskridge, Gary Peller, Louis Michael Seidman, and Mark Tushnet. See Cassidy (2012, p. 33) and GULC Section 3 Ad Hoc Review Committee (2017, p. 1).

Starting with the 1991-1992 academic year, Curriculum B has been offered at Georgetown Law in a single 1L section (Section 3) each year.<sup>40</sup> Curriculum B was designed to provide “critical” perspectives on the law and respond to important changes in legal practice and theory since the late nineteenth century, including the emergence of the regulatory state, the breakdown of conventional doctrinal boundaries, and the influence of other disciplines such as economics, history, and philosophy.<sup>41</sup> The core courses in Curriculum B are:

- Bargain, Exchange, and Liability, which is a mixture of contracts and torts (six credits, fall and spring semesters);
- Democracy and Coercion, which covers constitutional law and criminal justice (four credits, spring semester);
- Government Processes, which is akin to a course in administrative law (four credits, spring semester);
- Legal Justice, which introduces students to twentieth- and twenty-first century American legal thought (three credits, fall semester);
- Legal Process and Society, which is akin to a course in civil procedure (five credits, fall and spring semesters); and
- Property in Time, which covers property in light of the history of American legal thought (four credits, fall semester).<sup>42</sup>

More complete descriptions of these courses are set forth in the Appendix.<sup>43</sup> Although the core courses are different, students in Curriculum B take the same number of credits as students in Curriculum A, and the courses in both curricula are subject to the same mandatory 1L grading curve.<sup>44</sup>

Students admitted as 1Ls to Georgetown Law’s full-time J.D. program are given the opportunity to indicate which 1L curriculum, Curriculum A or Curriculum B, they would prefer to take.<sup>45</sup> According to Georgetown Law’s

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<sup>40</sup> See GULC (1990), GULC (1991), and Cassidy (2012, p. 32).

<sup>41</sup> See Cassidy (2012, pp. 34 & 37), GULC Curricular Reform Committee (1991, pp. 4-5), and GULC Section 3 Ad Hoc Review Committee (2017, pp. 1 & 3).

<sup>42</sup> See GULC (2021, p. 3). See also Cassidy (2012, pp. 29-31) and GULC Section 3 Ad Hoc Review Committee (2017, p. 1).

<sup>43</sup> For additional details, see GULC Section 3 Ad Hoc Review Committee (2017, pp. 4-9).

<sup>44</sup> See GULC (2021, pp. 7 & 12) and GULC Section 3 Ad Hoc Review Committee (2017, p. 3).

<sup>45</sup> See GULC Section 3 Ad Hoc Review Committee (2017, pp. 14-15).



administration, when more students indicate a preference for Curriculum B than can be accommodated in one 1L section—in other words, when Section 3 is oversubscribed—seats in Section 3 are awarded by lottery. According to the data we collected from the administration, Section 3 has been oversubscribed every year between 2011 (the earliest year for which data on curricular preferences are available) and 2017 (the latest year for which we collected data on the entering class). Between 2011 and 2017, Section 3 was oversubscribed by 14.6 students on average. It was oversubscribed by nine or fewer students in four years (2012, 2013, 2105, and 2016) and by 10 or more students in three years (2011, 2014, and 2017), including by as few as two students in 2012 and by as many as 44 students in 2011.

In many ways, the Curriculum B experiment at Georgetown Law had similar motivations as the earlier curricular form efforts at Columbia and Yale. Unlike those failed efforts, however, Curriculum B has endured, remarkably, for more than 30 years. It therefore offers a unique opportunity to empirically study an alternative 1L curriculum and its effects on law student outcomes.

### III. STRATEGY AND DATA

#### A. *Empirical Strategy*

We wish to study the treatment effects of Curriculum B. That is, we wish to study whether taking Curriculum B causes students to have different outcomes than they would have had if they had taken Curriculum A (the baseline curriculum).

To measure the treatment effects of Curriculum B, we cannot simply compare the outcomes of students who take Curriculum B with the outcomes of students who take Curriculum A. The reason is that students self-select into Curriculum B, and the students who self-select into Curriculum B might be “different” than the students who prefer to take Curriculum A. Such a naïve comparison, therefore, would confound treatment effects and selection effects.

To see the problem more precisely, let  $T_i$  indicate whether student  $i$  takes Curriculum B. That is,  $T_i = 1$  if student  $i$  takes Curriculum B and  $T_i = 0$  otherwise. Let  $Y_i$  denote the outcome of interest, e.g., student  $i$ 's post-1L cumulative GPA. Finally, let  $Y_{1i}$  and  $Y_{0i}$  denote student  $i$ 's two potential outcomes: her GPA if she takes Curriculum B and her GPA if she takes Curriculum A, respectively. Of course, only one of these potential outcomes is realized; the other is counterfactual.

The outcome  $Y_i$  can be written in terms of the potential outcomes as follows:  $Y_i = Y_{0i} + (Y_{1i} - Y_{0i})T_i$ . As it should,  $Y_i = Y_{1i}$  if  $T_i = 1$  and  $Y_i = Y_{0i}$  if  $T_i = 0$ . What makes this formulation especially useful is that  $Y_{1i} - Y_{0i}$  is the quantity of interest: the treatment effect of Curriculum B. In general, the treatment effect can

be different for different students. For this reason, we focus on learning about the average treatment effect, denoted  $E[Y_{1i} - Y_{0i}]$ .

If we make a naïve comparison of average outcomes by treatment status, we are measuring the following quantity:  $E[Y_i|T_i = 1] - E[Y_i|T_i = 0]$ . The first term is the average GPA for students who take Curriculum B, and the second is the average GPA for students who take Curriculum A. Recall that  $Y_i = Y_{1i}$  if  $T_i = 1$  and  $Y_i = Y_{0i}$  if  $T_i = 0$ . We therefore can rewrite this quantity as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} E[Y_i|T_i = 1] - E[Y_i|T_i = 0] &= E[Y_{1i}|T_i = 1] - E[Y_{0i}|T_i = 0] \\ &= E[Y_{1i}|T_i = 1] - E[Y_{0i}|T_i = 1] \\ &\quad + E[Y_{0i}|T_i = 1] - E[Y_{0i}|T_i = 0]. \end{aligned}$$

The first difference on the right-hand side,  $E[Y_{1i}|T_i = 1] - E[Y_{0i}|T_i = 1]$ , captures the average treatment effect for students who take Curriculum B (known as the average treatment effect on the treated), because

$$E[Y_{1i}|T_i = 1] - E[Y_{0i}|T_i = 1] = E[Y_{1i} - Y_{0i}|T_i = 1].$$

The second difference,  $E[Y_{0i}|T_i = 1] - E[Y_{0i}|T_i = 0]$ , captures selection effects: the difference in average  $Y_{0i}$  (potential GPA under Curriculum A) between students who take Curriculum B and students who take Curriculum A. Unless this difference equals zero—that is, unless the average baseline potential of students who take Curriculum B is the same as the average baseline potential of students who take Curriculum A—the naïve comparison confounds treatment and selection effects.

To overcome the selection problem, we restrict our attention to only those students who apply (i.e., select) to take Curriculum B. As we explain above in Section II.B, when Curriculum B is oversubscribed, seats are awarded by lottery. In other words, among students who apply to take Curriculum B, there is random assignment between Curriculum B (treatment) and Curriculum A (baseline).<sup>46</sup> Random assignment solves the selection problem. This is because it makes a student's treatment status,  $T_i$ , independent of her base potential outcome,  $Y_{0i}$ . Accordingly,  $E[Y_{0i}|T_i = 0] = E[Y_{0i}|T_i = 1]$ , and hence

$$\begin{aligned} E[Y_i|T_i = 1] - E[Y_i|T_i = 0] &= E[Y_{1i}|T_i = 1] - E[Y_{0i}|T_i = 0] \\ &= E[Y_{1i}|T_i = 1] - E[Y_{0i}|T_i = 1] \\ &= E[Y_{1i} - Y_{0i}|T_i = 1]. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, by restricting our attention to students who apply to take Curriculum B, we can measure the average treatment effect on the treated—i.e., the average

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<sup>46</sup> The only caveat, which we note in Section III.B and revisit in Section IV, concerns the apparent failure of random assignment with respect to students' race/ethnicity.

treatment effect of Curriculum B for students who take Curriculum B—by comparing the average outcomes of students who take Curriculum B with those of students who apply to take Curriculum B but end up taking Curriculum A. This strategy enables us to learn something about the treatment effects of Curriculum B, at least for the population of students who prefer to take Curriculum B.<sup>47</sup>

We employ this strategy in our main analysis, the results of which we report below in Section IV. As a supplement to our main analysis, in Section V we perform two naïve comparisons between students who took Curriculum B and students who took Curriculum A. Naïve comparison I compares students who took Curriculum B with all students (full- and part-time) who took Curriculum A. Naïve comparison II compares students who took Curriculum B with all full-time students who took Curriculum A. By comparing the results of these naïve comparisons with our main results, we can draw inferences about selection effects in our data and illustrate the consequences (and pitfalls) of failing to account for selection bias.

### *B. Data Description*

We collected data on every student who enrolled as a 1L in the J.D. program at Georgetown Law between 2011 and 2017 and graduated by 2020. We begin with students who matriculated in 2011 because that is the first year in which we can observe a variable critical to our empirical strategy: whether the student applied to take Curriculum B. We end with students who matriculated in 2017 because it takes at least three years to complete the J.D. program and we wish to study several post-graduation outcomes, including bar passage, employment, and alumni engagement.

The full data set comprises 3,778 students. In our main analysis (reported in Section IV), we restrict attention to two subgroups: the 749 full-time students who applied for and took Curriculum B (the “treatment group”), and the 99 full-time students who applied for Curriculum B but took Curriculum A (the “control group”). Together, the treatment and control groups comprise 848 students. The remaining students—2,631 full-time students and 299 part-time students—did not apply for Curriculum B and, therefore, took Curriculum A.<sup>48</sup> As we explain above in Section III.A, by comparing the average outcomes of students in the treatment and control groups, we can measure the average treatment effects of Curriculum B for students who take Curriculum B.

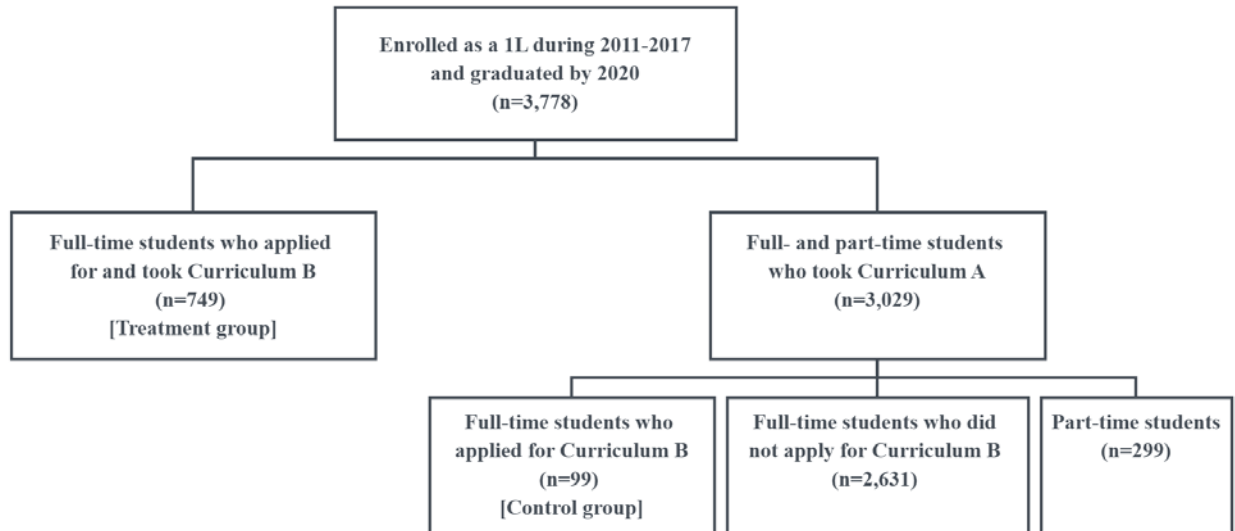
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<sup>47</sup> As we highlight in the Conclusion, we cannot necessarily infer that our treatment effect findings would carry over to students outside the population of students who prefer to take Curriculum B. Of course, if there were random assignment between curricula for all students, then  $E[Y_{1i} - Y_{0i} | T_i = 1] = E[Y_{1i} - Y_{0i} | T_i = 0]$  and we would be able to measure the average treatment effect for all students, including those who prefer to take Curriculum A.

<sup>48</sup> Only full-time students are eligible to apply for and take Curriculum B.

Figure 1 provides a simple flow chart indicating how we arrive at the treatment and control groups.

Figure 1: Flow Chart of Dataset



Notes: Only full-time students are eligible to apply for and take Curriculum B. Hence, the treatment and control groups contain only full-time students and together encompass all full-time students who applied for Curriculum B (n=848).

Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for the sample of full-time students who did not apply for Curriculum B (n=2,631) and the sample of full-time students who did apply for Curriculum B (i.e., the combination of the treatment and control groups; n=848).<sup>49</sup> It also reports the p-values from two-sample t-tests comparing the means of the listed variables in the two samples. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.<sup>50</sup> All of the underlying data was provided by four Georgetown Law administrative offices: the Office of Admissions, the Office of Alumni Affairs, the Office of Career Strategy, and the Office of the Registrar.

<sup>49</sup> Additional statistics are reported in Table A1 in the Appendix.

<sup>50</sup> Throughout our study, we adopt a 5 percent rejection rule for all hypothesis tests.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, Full-Time Students

Variable	Full-time students who did not apply for Curriculum B (n=2,631)	Full-time students who applied for Curriculum B (n=848)	Comparison of means		
	Mean	Mean	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Age at matriculation (years)	30.02	30.68	<b>0.66</b>	<b>4.76</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Gender (male = 0; female = 1)	0.51	0.53	0.03	1.38	0.17
Race/ethnicity (white = 0; non-white = 1)	0.32	0.30	-0.02	-0.97	0.33
Citizenship/residency (US = 0; non-US = 1)	0.93	0.96	<b>0.03</b>	<b>3.18</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Undergraduate GPA (4.0 scale)	3.65	3.66	0.01	0.91	0.36
LSAT score (highest reported)	165.94	166.46	<b>0.52</b>	<b>2.59</b>	<b>0.01</b>
Law school cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	3.45	3.47	<b>0.02</b>	<b>2.47</b>	<b>0.01</b>
Post-1L cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	3.53	3.56	<b>0.03</b>	<b>3.37</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Latin graduation honors (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.34	0.38	<b>0.04</b>	<b>2.07</b>	<b>0.04</b>
Order of the Coif (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.09	0.13	<b>0.03</b>	<b>2.56</b>	<b>0.01</b>
Passed bar on first attempt (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.92	0.88	-0.03	-1.91	0.06
Employed 10 months out (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.95	0.96	0.01	0.66	0.51
Annual salary if employed (US dollars)	138,043	106,172	<b>-31,870</b>	<b>-10.81</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Alumni giving (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.59	0.63	<b>0.04</b>	<b>2.30</b>	<b>0.02</b>
Giving amount if positive (US dollars)	109	174	66	1.24	0.21
Attended alumni event (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.44	0.50	<b>0.06</b>	<b>2.92</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Notes: White indicates non-Hispanic white. Employed 10 months out includes enrolled in graduate studies. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Statistically significant differences are marked in **bold**.

The descriptive statistics reported in Table 1 suggest that the population of full-time students who apply to take Curriculum B are somewhat different than the population of full-time students who do not apply to take Curriculum B. (Again, only full-time students are eligible to apply for and take Curriculum B.) In particular, they suggest that:

- Students who apply to take Curriculum B are a bit older on average (30.68 years old vs. 30.02 years old).
- A higher fraction of students who apply to take Curriculum B are non-U.S. citizens/permanent residents (96 percent vs. 93 percent).
- Students who apply to take Curriculum B have a higher average LSAT score (166.46 vs. 165.94), law school cumulative GPA (3.47 vs. 3.45), and post-1L cumulative GPA (3.56 vs. 3.53), and a higher fraction graduate with Latin honors (38 percent vs. 34 percent) and are elected to membership in the Order of the Coif (13 percent vs. 10 percent).

- Post-graduation, students who apply to take Curriculum B have a lower average annual salary (\$106,172 vs. \$138,043),<sup>51</sup> but they have a higher alumni giving rate (63 percent vs. 59 percent) and a higher attendance rate at alumni events (50 percent vs. 44 percent).

These differences foretell the selection effects that bias the results of the naïve comparisons (reported in Section V), which compare the outcomes of the treatment group (the students who applied for and took Curriculum B) with the outcomes of the students who took Curriculum A. By design, however, these selection effects do not bias the results of our main analysis (reported in Section IV), which compares the outcomes of the treatment group with the outcomes of the control group (the students who applied for Curriculum B but took Curriculum A).

Our empirical strategy relies on the assumption of random assignment between the treatment and control groups. This assumption is based on representations made by Georgetown Law’s administration that seats are awarded by lottery when Curriculum B is oversubscribed, and that Curriculum B was oversubscribed each year between 2011 and 2017.<sup>52</sup> To test the assumption of random assignment, we use two-sample t-tests to compare the means between the treatment and control groups of the following six variables: age at matriculation, gender, race/ethnicity, citizenship/residency, undergraduate GPA, and LSAT score.

The results are set forth in Table 2.<sup>53</sup> For each variable (save one), the difference between the means is not statistically significant at the 5 percent level. The sole exception is the race/ethnicity variable, for which the difference between the means—32 percent non-white in the treatment group versus 18 percent non-white in the control group—is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Overall, the results support the assumption that the assignment between the treatment and

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<sup>51</sup> The difference in average annual salary reflects (at least in part) the fact that a smaller fraction of the students who applied for Curriculum B are employed in the private sector (45 percent vs. 68 percent).

<sup>52</sup> The Office of Admissions invites admitted students to request a seat in Curriculum B. The Office of the Registrar conducts the lottery among matriculated students who requested a seat. Because the individual in the Office of the Registrar who conducted the lottery during the years in question is no longer at Georgetown, we were unable to ask them directly for further details. The individual who currently conducts the lottery assured us that it is random. However, a member of the Office of Admissions (who does not conduct the lottery) speculated that a student who indicates that they will withdraw if they do not get a seat in Curriculum B “might” get preferential treatment.

<sup>53</sup> Additional statistics are reported in Table A2, Panel A in the Appendix.

controls groups is as good as random, except perhaps with respect to students’ race/ethnicity.<sup>54</sup> We discuss the import of this caveat below in Section IV.<sup>55</sup>

Table 2: Random Assignment Tests

Variable	Treatment group	Control group	Comparison of means		
	(n=749)	(n=99)	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Age at matriculation	Mean 30.66	Mean 30.89	-0.23	-0.55	0.58
Gender (male = 0; female = 1)	0.54	0.54	0.00	-0.02	0.98
Race/ethnicity (white = 0; non-white = 1)	0.32	0.18	<b>0.14</b>	<b>3.09</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Citizenship/residency (US = 0; non-US = 1)	0.96	0.94	0.02	0.76	0.45
Undergraduate GPA (4.0 scale)	3.65	3.70	-0.05	-1.84	0.07
LSAT score (highest reported)	166.45	166.53	-0.08	-0.13	0.89

Notes: White indicates non-Hispanic white. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Statistically significant differences are marked in **bold**.

#### IV. MAIN ANALYSIS

We study the effects of Curriculum B on three categories of student outcomes: (A) academic performance in law school; (B) bar passage and post-graduate employment; and (C) alumni engagement.

##### *A. Academic Performance in Law School*

We study five outcomes relating to academic performance in law school.

(A.1) *Law school cumulative GPA*: cumulative grade point average in all courses taken in law school.

(A.2) *Post-1L cumulative GPA*: cumulative grade point average in all courses taken in law school after the first year.

(A.2.1) In the main analysis, we also look at grades in 13 “popular” elective courses (electives taken by at least 50 students in our sample including at least 10 students in the control

<sup>54</sup> Of course, we may be making a type I error in rejecting the assumption of random assignment with respect to students’ race/ethnicity. (A type I error means rejecting a true hypothesis.) This would be more likely if the size of the control group were positively correlated with the share of white applicants. As it turns out, however, these variables are negatively correlated ( $\rho = -0.35$ ).

<sup>55</sup> Strictly speaking, to test the assumption of random assignment we should compare the treatment and control groups after adding back to each group any students who were excluded from the full sample because they did not graduate by 2020. Doing so, however, adds only 30 students to the treatment group and three students to the control group and has no material effect on the results. See Table A2, Panel B in the Appendix.

group) and at selection into 20 elective courses (the 13 popular electives plus seven additional electives taken by at least 25 students in our sample and in which the enrollment percentage differs by at least four percentage points across the treatment and control groups).

- (A.3) *Professional responsibility grade*: grade in the post-1L course taken to satisfy the professional responsibility graduation requirement.<sup>56</sup>
- (A.4) *Latin graduation honors*: receipt of Latin graduation honors (cum laude, magna cum laude, or summa cum laude), which signifies graduating in the top third of the class.<sup>57</sup>
- (A.5) *Order of the Coif*: election to membership in the Order of the Coif, an honor society for U.S. law school graduates, which signifies graduating in the top decile of the class.<sup>58</sup>

Table 3, Panel A presents the results of our analysis of academic performance.<sup>59</sup> It reports the means of the foregoing outcome variables within the treatment and control groups, as well as the results of two-sample t-tests comparing the means for the two groups. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

We find that taking Curriculum B does not have a statistically significant effect on students' cumulative GPA or post-1L cumulative GPA, on their grades in 11 out of 13 popular electives or in professional responsibility, or on their chances of being elected to membership in the Order of the Coif. However, we find that taking Curriculum B does have a statistically significant effect on students' grades in two popular electives and on their chances of graduating with Latin honors. Specifically, we find that taking Curriculum B decreases students' average grade (as measured on a 4.0 scale) by 0.14 points in Corporations (3.36 vs. 3.50) and

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<sup>56</sup> A requirement of Georgetown Law's J.D. program is that every student must successfully complete an upperclass course meeting the professional responsibility requirement. See GULC (2021, p. 5).

<sup>57</sup> See GULC (2021, pp. 21-22). We note that 35 percent of the students in our data received Latin graduation honors. We do not know the precise reasons why this number exceeds one-third. However, we are aware of two possible reasons. First, both students' GPAs and the cutoffs for Latin graduation honors are rounded to the nearest hundredth. This could lead to ties that result in more than one-third of students meeting the minimum cutoff. Second, the cutoffs for Latin graduation honors for students who graduated in 2020 (spring or fall) were based on GPAs as of fall 2019. This was due to a grading policy change, adopted in response to the coronavirus pandemic, mandating that all spring 2020 grades for J.D. students were Pass/Fail. See GULC (2021, pp. 21-22).

<sup>58</sup> See GULC (2021, p. 22)

<sup>59</sup> Additional statistics are reported in Table A3, Panel A in the Appendix.



Securities Regulation (3.48 vs. 3.63), and reduces the frequency with which they graduate with Latin honors by 13 percentage points (36 percent vs. 49 percent). Taken together, these findings suggest two key takeaways. First, Curriculum B leads to a mean preserving contraction in overall grades, with more students bunched around the (unaffected) mean and fewer students in the tails of the grade distribution.<sup>60</sup> Second, at the same time, Curriculum B leads to diminished performance in (arguably) the two most important business law electives.

Table 3, Panel A: Main Analysis, Academic Performance in Law School

Variable	Treatment group	Control group	Comparison of means		
	(n=749)	(n=99)	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Law school cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	3.47	3.49	-0.02	-0.80	0.43
Post-1L cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	3.55	3.57	-0.02	-0.69	0.49
Grades in popular electives (4.0 scale)					
Administrative Law	3.32	3.45	-0.13	-1.07	0.29
Antitrust Law	3.57	3.75	-0.18	-1.89	0.07
Constitutional Law II	3.41	3.42	-0.01	-0.17	0.87
Corporations	3.36	3.50	<b>-0.14</b>	<b>-2.89</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Criminal Law	3.38	3.35	0.04	0.42	0.68
Decedents' Estates	3.33	3.48	-0.15	-1.25	0.23
Evidence	3.36	3.41	-0.05	-1.09	0.28
Federal Courts and the Federal System	3.60	3.42	0.18	2.06	0.06
International Law I	3.46	3.64	-0.18	-1.58	0.14
Negotiations	3.66	3.70	-0.04	-0.78	0.44
Securities Regulation	3.48	3.63	<b>-0.14</b>	<b>-2.29</b>	<b>0.03</b>
Taxation I	3.39	3.41	-0.03	-0.32	0.75
Trial Practice	3.71	3.62	0.09	1.17	0.26
Professional responsibility grade (4.0 scale)	3.41	3.36	0.05	1.17	0.24
Latin graduation honors (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.36	0.49	<b>-0.13</b>	<b>-2.49</b>	<b>0.01</b>
Order of the Coif (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.12	0.14	-0.02	-0.46	0.64

Notes: A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Statistically significant differences are marked in **bold**.

Table 3, Panel B presents the results of our analysis of course selection.<sup>61</sup> It reports and compares the proportions of students in the treatment and control groups that enrolled in 20 elective courses—the 13 popular electives studied in Panel A plus seven additional electives taken by at least 25 students and in which the difference in proportions is at least four percentage points. We find that Curriculum B increases students' propensity to take Advanced Criminal Procedure, the Criminal Defense and Prisoner Advocacy Clinic, and International Law I, and decreases their propensity to take Administrative Law, Antitrust Law, Bankruptcy

<sup>60</sup> In particular, there are fewer students in the top third (though no fewer in the top decile).

<sup>61</sup> Additional statistics are reported in Table A3, Panel B in the Appendix.

and Creditors' Rights, Corporations, Decedents' Estates, and Securities Regulation. The negative effect on selection into Administrative Law is undoubtedly due to the fact that students who have taken Government Processes (a core Curriculum B course) are precluded from taking most sections of Administration Law because of the overlap in the course material. Setting Administrative Law aside, we see a pattern in which Curriculum B has a positive effect on selection into three public law courses and a negative effect on selection into five business law courses.

Table 3, Panel B: Main Analysis, Course Selection

Course title	Treatment group	Control group	Comparison of proportions		
	(n=749)	(n=99)	Difference	z-statistic	p-value
Administrative Law	0.03	0.32	<b>-0.29</b>	<b>-11.25</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Advanced Constitutional Law Seminar	0.07	0.02	0.05	1.85	0.06
Advanced Criminal Procedure	0.13	0.05	<b>0.08</b>	<b>2.21</b>	<b>0.03</b>
Antitrust Law	0.06	0.13	<b>-0.07</b>	<b>-2.43</b>	<b>0.01</b>
Bankruptcy and Creditors' Rights	0.02	0.07	<b>-0.05</b>	<b>-2.58</b>	<b>0.01</b>
Constitutional Law II	0.70	0.64	0.06	1.28	0.20
Corporations	0.56	0.69	<b>-0.12</b>	<b>-2.36</b>	<b>0.02</b>
Criminal Defense and Prisoner Advocacy Clinic	0.06	0.00	<b>0.06</b>	<b>2.54</b>	<b>0.01</b>
Criminal Law	0.32	0.27	0.05	0.96	0.34
Decedents' Estates	0.09	0.16	<b>-0.07</b>	<b>-2.11</b>	<b>0.03</b>
Environmental Law	0.11	0.05	0.06	1.85	0.06
Evidence	0.74	0.78	-0.04	-0.90	0.37
Federal Courts and the Federal System	0.18	0.12	0.06	1.54	0.12
Immigration Law and Policy	0.13	0.07	0.06	1.64	0.10
International Law I	0.23	0.12	<b>0.11</b>	<b>2.41</b>	<b>0.02</b>
Race and American Law	0.04	0.08	-0.04	-1.93	0.05
Negotiations	0.40	0.42	-0.02	-0.43	0.67
Securities Regulation	0.16	0.32	<b>-0.16</b>	<b>-4.02</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Taxation I	0.26	0.34	-0.09	-1.84	0.07
Trial Practice	0.16	0.14	0.02	0.45	0.65

Notes: A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the proportions is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Statistically significant differences are marked in **bold**.

### *B. Bar Passage and Post-graduate Employment*

We study six outcomes relating to bar passage and post-graduate employment.

- (B.1) *Passed bar on first attempt*: passage of the bar exam in any jurisdiction on the first attempt.
- (B.2) *Employed 10 months out*: employed in a paid position or enrolled in graduate studies 10 months after graduation (including if the start date is deferred).

- (B.3) *Employed in private sector*: employed 10 months after graduation in a law firm or business/industry.
- (B.4) *Employed in public sector*: employed 10 months after graduation in the government (other than a judicial clerkship) or public interest.
- (B.5) *Employed in clerkship*: employed 10 months after graduation in a judicial clerkship.
- (B.6) *Annual salary*: annual salary if employed 10 months after graduation.

Table 3, Panel C presents the results of this analysis.<sup>62</sup> We find that taking Curriculum B does not have statistically significant effects on first-time bar passage rates or employment rates 10 months after graduation. However, we find that taking Curriculum B does have a statistically significant effect on students' employment sector choices and (consequently) on their salaries (again, in each case, 10 months after graduation). In particular, we find that taking Curriculum B decreases the frequency with which students work in the private sector (41 percent vs. 56 percent) 10 months after graduation and increases the frequency with which they work in the public sector (39 percent vs. 27 percent) or in a judicial clerkship (12 percent vs. 5 percent) 10 months after graduation.<sup>63</sup> When we break down the public sector effect, we find more specifically that taking Curriculum B increases students' take-up of public interest jobs (25 percent vs. 15 percent; p-value = 0.01) but not of non-clerkship government jobs (13 percent vs. 12 percent; p-value = 0.81). We further find that taking Curriculum B leads to a \$30,582 reduction in students' average annual salary (\$102,953 vs. \$133,535) 10 months after graduation. This result is mainly attributable to Curriculum B's effect on students' employment sector choices—when we condition on employment sector (whether private, public, or judicial clerkship), the average annual salary in the treatment group is not statistically different than the average annual salary in the control group.

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<sup>62</sup> Additional statistics are reported in Table A3, Panel C in the Appendix.

<sup>63</sup> When we break down Curriculum B's effect on students' employment sector choices by gender, we find that female students are driving these results.

Table 3, Panel C: Main Analysis, Bar Passage and Post-graduate Employment

Variable	Treatment group (n=749)	Control group (n=99)	Comparison of means		
	Mean	Mean	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Passed bar on first attempt (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.88	0.86	0.03	0.32	0.75
Employed 10 months out (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.96	0.93	0.03	1.14	0.26
Employed in private sector (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.41	0.56	<b>-0.14</b>	<b>-2.68</b>	<b>0.01</b>
Employed in public sector (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.39	0.27	<b>0.12</b>	<b>2.39</b>	<b>0.02</b>
Employed in clerkship (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.12	0.05	<b>0.07</b>	<b>2.92</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Annual salary if employed (US dollars)	102,953	133,535	<b>-30,582</b>	<b>-3.89</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Notes: Employed 10 months out includes enrolled in graduate studies. Public sector includes government and public interest but excludes judicial clerkships. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Statistically significant differences are marked in **bold**.

### C. Alumni Engagement

Finally, we study three outcomes relating to alumni engagement.

- (C.1) *Alumni giving*: made a charitable gift to Georgetown Law.
- (C.2) *Giving amount if positive*: amount of charitable gifts made to Georgetown Law.
- (C.3) *Attended alumni event*: attended at least one Georgetown Law alumni event.

Table 3, Panel D presents the results.<sup>64</sup> We find that taking Curriculum B does not have statistically significant effects on alumni giving rates or amounts or on attendance rates at alumni events.<sup>65</sup> As it turns out, this is one of the results that a naïve comparison gets (partially) wrong due to confounding selection effects.

<sup>64</sup> Additional statistics are reported in Table A3, Panel D in the Appendix.

<sup>65</sup> We note that the alumni giving rates (63 percent for the treatment group and 65 percent for the control group) are being “juiced” by the class gifts at graduation. If we exclude gifts in the year of graduation, the alumni giving rates for the treatment and control groups are substantially lower (27 percent in the treatment group and 33 percent in the control group), though still statistically indistinguishable (p-value = 0.19). We further note that we have alumni giving data for varying periods of time depending on the date of graduation. For example, we have five years of data for students who graduated in 2017, compared to one year of data for students who graduated in 2020.

Table 3, Panel D: Main Analysis, Alumni Engagement

Variable	Treatment group (n=749)	Control group (n=99)	Comparison of means		
	Mean	Mean	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Alumni giving (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.63	0.65	-0.02	-0.32	0.75
Giving amount if positive (US dollars)	178	150	28	0.37	0.72
Attended alumni event (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.50	0.47	0.03	0.48	0.63

Notes: A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Statistically significant differences are marked in **bold**.

To recap our main results, we find that taking Curriculum B:

- decreases students’ performance in two key business law electives (Corporations and Securities Regulation) and reduces the rate at which students graduate with Latin honors;
- increases students’ propensity to take three public law electives (Advanced Criminal Procedure, the Criminal Defense and Prisoner Advocacy Clinic, and International Law I) and decreases their propensity to take five business law electives (Antitrust Law, Bankruptcy and Creditors’ Rights, Corporations, Decedents’ Estates, and Securities Regulation);
- decreases the frequency with which students work in the private sector (law firm or business/industry) and increases the frequency with which they work in the public sector (government or public interest) or in a judicial clerkship (in each case, 10 months after graduation); and
- decreases students’ average annual salary (again, 10 months out).<sup>66</sup>

At the same, we find that taking Curriculum B has no significant effect on any of the other outcomes that we study, including most notably students’ post-1L cumulative GPA, their chances of passing the bar exam on the first attempt or being employed 10 months after graduation, or their rate or amount of alumni giving.

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<sup>66</sup> The difference in average annual salaries means that students who took Curriculum B are contributing a larger share of their salaries to Georgetown Law (0.17 percent in the treatment group vs. 0.11 percent in the control group). However, we only observe salaries at 10 months after graduation, and the majority of the gifts that we observe are the relatively modest contributions associated with the class gifts at graduation. When we exclude giving in the year of graduation, we find larger mean gifts (\$365 in the treatment group and \$243 in the control group), though they are still statistically indistinguishable (p-value = 0.45). More and better data would be necessary to see if this result holds up for larger gifts in the decades following graduation.

In interpreting our main results, it is important to recall the caveat, highlighted in Section III.B, that the assignment between the treatment and control groups does not appear to be random with respect to students' race/ethnicity.<sup>67</sup> Because of this, it is possible that the differences we find with respect to students' employment sectors (and, hence, their salaries) confound treatment and selection effects—if white students (who are overrepresented in the control group) generally have a greater propensity to work in the private sector, and non-white students (who are overrepresented in the treatment group) generally have a greater propensity to work in the public sector and in judicial clerkships. However, when we look at the post-graduate employment outcomes of students who did not apply for Curriculum B, we find that (i) their race/ethnicity (white vs. non-white) is not related to their propensity to work in the private vs. public sector,<sup>68</sup> and (ii) white students have a greater propensity to work in a judicial clerkship than non-white students (9 percent vs. 6 percent).<sup>69</sup> This suggests that our main results on students' employment outcomes reflect treatment and not selection effects. Moreover, across the entirety of our findings, we obtain similar results when we limit the analysis to white students, who comprise a majority of the treatment and control groups.

## V. NAÏVE COMPARISONS

The empirical strategy we employ in our main analysis—restricting attention to the students who applied to take Curriculum B and comparing the outcomes of the students in the treatment group (Curriculum B applicants randomly assigned to take Curriculum B) with those in the control group (Curriculum B applicants randomly assigned to take Curriculum A)—isolates the treatment effects of Curriculum B and avoids confounding them with selection effects. In this section, we investigate the extent to which selection effects would have biased our results had we performed a naïve comparison between students who took Curriculum B and students who took Curriculum A. As we note in Section III.A, the value of this exercise is that we can learn about selection effects in our data and illustrate the consequences (and pitfalls) of failing to account for selection bias.

For each category of outcomes that we study in the main analysis, we report the results of two different naïve comparisons: (I) the treatment group versus all full- and part-time students who took Curriculum A; and (II) the treatment group

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<sup>67</sup> For the reasons set forth in footnote 52, we were not able to explore how or why the observed non-random assignment with respect to students' race/ethnicity came about.

<sup>68</sup> Among the students who work in the private or public sector 10 months after graduation, a chi-square test of the independence between their race/ethnicity (white vs. non-white) and their employment sector (private vs. public) yields a p-value of 0.38.

<sup>69</sup> A two-sample test of the equality of the proportions of white and non-white students who work in a judicial clerkship 10 months after graduation yields a p-value of 0.01.

versus all full-time students who took Curriculum A. Naïve comparison II is somewhat less naïve than naïve comparison I because part-time students (who are included in naïve comparison I but excluded from naïve comparison II) are not eligible to apply for Curriculum B.

Table 4, Panel A reports the results of both naïve comparisons for the five principal academic performance outcomes that we study in the main analysis.<sup>70</sup> Contrary to our main analysis, but as foretold by Table 1, naïve comparisons I and II both indicate that taking Curriculum B results in a statistically significant increase in students’ post-1L cumulative GPA and on their chances of being elected to the Order of the Coif, but that taking Curriculum B has no statistically significant effects on students’ chances of receiving Latin graduation honors. In addition, and also contrary to our main analysis and foretold by Table 1, naïve comparison II indicates that taking Curriculum B results in a statistically significant increase in students’ overall cumulative GPA.

Table 4, Panel A: Naïve Comparisons, Academic Performance in Law School

Variable	Treatment group (n=749)		Naïve comparison I (n=3,029)			Naïve comparison II (n=2,730)			
	Mean	Mean	Comparison of means			Mean	Comparison of means		
			Difference	t-statistic	p-value		Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Law school cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	3.47	3.45	0.02	1.74	0.08	3.45	<b>0.02</b>	<b>1.97</b>	<b>0.05</b>
Post-1L cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	3.55	3.53	<b>0.03</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>0.00</b>	3.53	<b>0.03</b>	<b>2.86</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Professional responsibility grade (4.0 scale)	3.41	3.40	0.01	0.71	0.48	3.40	0.01	0.72	0.47
Latin graduation honors (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.36	0.35	0.01	0.64	0.52	0.34	0.02	0.92	0.36
Order of the Coif (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.12	0.10	<b>0.03</b>	<b>2.10</b>	<b>0.04</b>	0.10	<b>0.03</b>	<b>2.17</b>	<b>0.03</b>

Notes: Naïve comparison I is the group of all full- and part-time students who took Curriculum A. Naïve comparison II is the group of all full-time students who took Curriculum A. It excludes part-time students, who are not eligible to apply for Curriculum B. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Statistically significant differences are marked in **bold**.

Table 4, Panel B report the results of the naïve comparisons for the six outcomes relating to bar performance and post-graduate employment.<sup>71</sup> Unlike the results in Panel A (on academic performance), the results in Panel B are consistent with the results of our main analysis. Specifically, naïve comparisons I and II both indicate that taking Curriculum B has no effect on first-time bar passage rates or employment rates 10 months after graduation, but that taking Curriculum B decreases the likelihood that students work in the private sector and increases the likelihood that they work in the public sector or in a judicial clerkship (and, consequently, leads to a material reduction in their average annual salary).

<sup>70</sup> Additional statistics are reported in Tables A4 and A5 in the Appendix.

<sup>71</sup> Additional statistics are reported in Tables A4 and A5 in the Appendix.

Table 4, Panel B: Naïve Comparisons, Bar Passage and Post-graduate Employment

Variable	Treatment group (n=749)		Naïve comparison I (n=3,029)			Naïve comparison II (n=2,730)			
	Mean	Mean	Comparison of means			Mean	Comparison of means		
			Difference	t-statistic	p-value		Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Passed bar on first attempt (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.88	0.91	-0.03	-1.66	0.10	0.92	-0.03	-1.75	0.08
Employed 10 months out (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.96	0.95	0.01	0.76	0.45	0.95	0.01	1.18	0.24
Employed in private sector (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.41	0.65	<b>-0.23</b>	<b>-11.75</b>	<b>0.00</b>	0.64	<b>-0.23</b>	<b>11.47</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Employed in public sector (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.39	0.20	<b>0.19</b>	<b>10.03</b>	<b>0.00</b>	0.19	<b>0.20</b>	<b>10.10</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Employed in clerkship (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.12	0.08	<b>0.04</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>0.00</b>	0.09	<b>0.04</b>	<b>2.91</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Annual salary if employed (US dollars)	102,953	138,650	<b>-35,697</b>	<b>-11.78</b>	<b>0.00</b>	137,892	<b>-34,939</b>	<b>-11.40</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Notes: Naïve comparison I is the group of all full- and part-time students who took Curriculum A. Naïve comparison II is the group of all full-time students who took Curriculum A. It excludes part-time students, who are not eligible to apply for Curriculum B. Employed 10 months out includes enrolled in graduate studies. Public sector includes government and public interest but excludes judicial clerkships. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Statistically significant differences are marked in **bold**.

Table 4, Panel C reports the results of the naïve comparisons for the three outcomes relating to alumni engagement.<sup>72</sup> Contrary to our main analysis, naïve comparisons I and II both indicate that taking Curriculum B results in a statistically significant increase in the rates of alumni giving and attendance at alumni events.

Table 4, Panel C: Naïve Comparisons, Alumni Engagement

Variable	Treatment group (n=749)		Naïve comparison I (n=3,029)			Naïve comparison II (n=2,730)			
	Mean	Mean	Comparison of means			Mean	Comparison of means		
			Difference	t-statistic	p-value		Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Alumni giving (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.63	0.58	<b>0.05</b>	<b>2.45</b>	<b>0.01</b>	0.59	<b>0.04</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>0.05</b>
Giving amount if positive (US dollars)	178	122	56	0.94	0.35	110	67	1.14	0.26
Attended alumni event (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.50	0.43	<b>0.07</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>0.00</b>	0.44	<b>0.06</b>	<b>2.88</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Notes: Naïve comparison I is the group of all full- and part-time students who took Curriculum A. Naïve comparison II is the group of all full-time students who took Curriculum A. It excludes part-time students, who are not eligible to apply for Curriculum B. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Statistically significant differences are marked in **bold**.

As the preceding discussion makes clear, had we compared the treatment group not to the control group but to one of the two naïve comparison groups, selection effects would have biased many of our results. In particular, we would have (incorrectly) inferred that taking Curriculum B:

- increases students' post-1L cumulative GPA;
- increases student's cumulative GPA (naïve comparison II only);
- has no effect on students' chances of graduating with Latin honors but increases their chances of being elected to the Order of the Coif; and

<sup>72</sup> Additional statistics are reported in Tables A4 and A5 in the Appendix.



- increases students' alumni giving rates and their attendance rates at alumni events.

Table 5 and Figure 2 expound these points by juxtaposing the statistically significant treatment effects in our main analysis with those from the two naïve comparisons.<sup>73</sup> As they indicate, when we compare the treatment group with the proper control group, five outcomes show a statistically significant effect from taking Curriculum B. By contrast, when we compare the treatment group with the naïve control groups, there are either eight (naïve comparison I) or nine (naïve comparison II) outcomes that show a statistically significant effect from taking Curriculum B. The naïve comparisons do not yield misleading inferences with respect to four outcomes relating to post-graduate employment, although the magnitudes of the estimated effects vary. With respect to the other six outcomes, however, the naïve comparisons (incorrectly) suggest that taking Curriculum B has a larger (and more favorable) effect than it in fact does. As these discrepancies illustrate, it is critical to use the proper control group, to account for selection effects and avoid incorrect inferences. This is true whether we are studying the effects of Curriculum B or those of any other policy intervention.

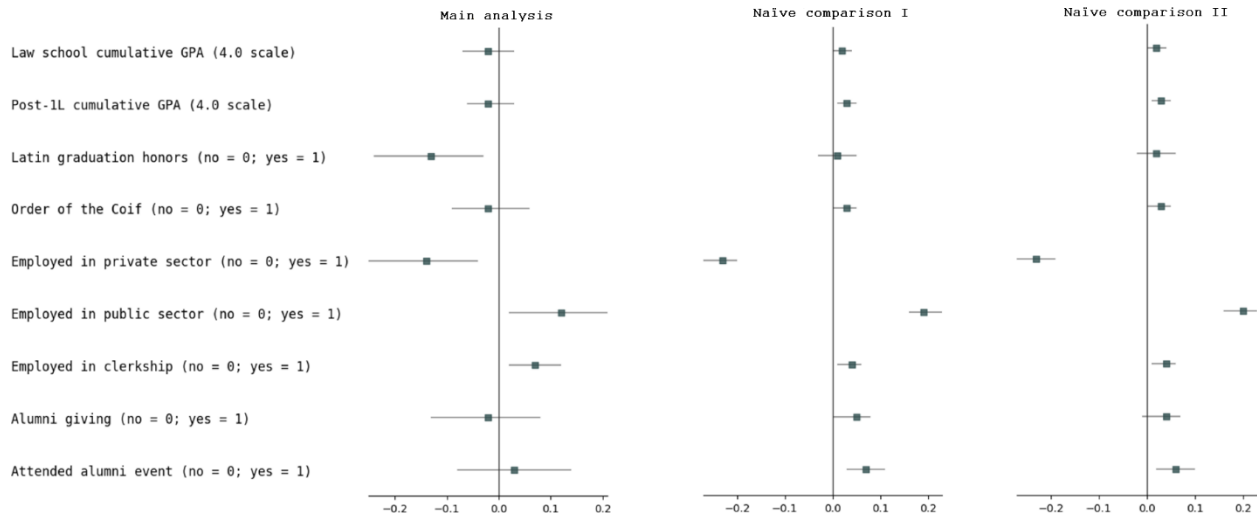
Table 5: Statistically Significant Effects in Main Analysis and Naïve Comparisons

Variable	Main analysis		Naïve comparison I		Naïve comparison II	
	Effect	p-value	Effect	p-value	Effect	p-value
Law school cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	-0.02	0.43	0.02	0.08	<b>0.02</b>	<b>0.05</b>
Post-1L cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	-0.02	0.49	<b>0.03</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.03</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Latin graduation honors (no = 0; yes = 1)	<b>-0.13</b>	<b>0.01</b>	0.01	0.52	0.02	0.36
Order of the Coif (no = 0; yes = 1)	-0.02	0.64	<b>0.03</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.03</b>	<b>0.03</b>
Employed in private sector (no = 0; yes = 1)	<b>-0.14</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>-0.23</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>-0.23</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Employed in public sector (no = 0; yes = 1)	<b>0.12</b>	<b>0.02</b>	<b>0.19</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.20</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Employed in clerkship (no = 0; yes = 1)	<b>0.07</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Annual salary if employed (US dollars)	<b>-30,582</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>-35,697</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>-34,939</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Alumni giving (no = 0; yes = 1)	-0.02	0.75	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.05</b>
Attended alumni event (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.03	0.63	<b>0.07</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.06</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Notes: Naïve comparison I is the group of all full- and part-time students who took Curriculum A. Naïve comparison II is the group of all full-time students who took Curriculum A. It excludes part-time students, who are not eligible to apply for Curriculum B. Employed 10 months out includes enrolled in graduate studies. Public sector includes government and public interest but excludes judicial clerkships. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. Statistically significant differences are marked in **bold**.

<sup>73</sup> For scaling reasons, Figure 2 does not show average annual salary. The information on average annual salary is reported in Tables A4 and A5 in the Appendix.

Figure 2: Forest Plot of Statistically Significant Effects in Main Analysis and Naïve Comparisons



Notes: 95 percent confidence intervals. For scaling reasons, the figure does not show average annual salary. The information on annual average salary is reported in Tables A4 and A5 in the Appendix.

## VI. FACULTY SURVEY

We were curious to learn whether faculty perceptions about the treatment effects of Curriculum B match reality. Accordingly, we surveyed Georgetown Law’s full-time faculty in November and December of 2021. We asked questions about the same outcome categories for which we had collected data—namely, academic performance in law school, bar passage and post-graduate employment, and alumni engagement. Eighty faculty members completed the survey, for a response rate of 60 percent.

Table 6 reports the results. Panel A lists the results for outcomes where the question called for respondents to indicate whether they believed that students who take Curriculum B have either a “higher,” “the same,” or a “lower” outcome (e.g., post-1L cumulative GPA) than students who do not take Curriculum B. Panel B lists the results for outcomes where the question called for respondents to indicate whether students who take Curriculum B are either “more likely,” “equally likely,” or “less likely” to experience the outcome (e.g., receive Latin graduation honors) than students who do not take Curriculum B. In each panel, the first column reports the share of respondents with no opinion on the listed outcome. The second, third, and fourth columns report the distribution among respondents who had an opinion on the listed outcome. The last column reiterates our finding on the listed outcome.

Table 6: Faculty Survey Responses

	Students who take Curriculum B relative to students who do not take Curriculum B				Our finding
	Respondents with an opinion				
	No opinion	Higher	Same	Lower	
<i>Panel A: Higher/same/lower questions</i>					
Post-1L cumulative GPA	65%	29%	61%	11%	Same
Alumni giving amount	65%	7%	57%	36%	Same
<i>Panel B: More/equally/less likely questions</i>					
	No opinion	More likely	Equally likely	Less likely	
Latin graduation honors	61%	32%	58%	10%	Less likely
Passed bar on first attempt	53%	8%	84%	8%	Equally likely
Employed 10 months out	58%	12%	73%	15%	Equally likely
Employed in traditional law firm	43%	0%	20%	80%	Less likely
Employed in public interest firm	34%	83%	15%	2%	More likely
Employed in government	41%	60%	38%	2%	Equally likely
Employed in clerkship	47%	36%	57%	7%	More likely
Alumni giving rate	61%	32%	42%	26%	Equally likely

Note: Eighty faculty members completed the survey, for a response rate of 60 percent.

A majority of faculty-respondents had no opinion on most of the topics covered in the survey. The exception was when we asked about employment outcomes by market sector—i.e., whether students who take Curriculum B are more, equally, or less likely to be employed in a traditional law firm, public interest firm, government, and judicial clerkship—where majorities did have an opinion.

Among the faculty-respondents who had an opinion, the most common response (aside from questions about employment outcomes by market sector) was “no difference.” However, a substantial fraction of faculty-respondents believed that students who take Curriculum B have a higher post-1L cumulative GPA (29 percent) and lower average alumni giving amounts (36 percent) and are more likely to receive Latin graduation honors (32 percent). At the same time, an equal or nearly equal fraction of faculty-respondents believed that Curriculum B students are more and less likely to pass the bar on their first attempt (8 percent and 8 percent), to be employed 10 months after graduation (12 percent and 15 percent), and to make alumni donations (32 percent and 26 percent).

We find greater polarization in the survey responses about post-graduate employment outcomes by market sector. No one who took the survey and had an opinion thought that students who take Curriculum B are more likely—and 80 percent thought they are less likely—to work in a traditional law firm. Similarly, 83 percent of those with an opinion thought that students who take Curriculum B are more likely—and only 2 percent thought they are less likely—to work in a public interest firm. The corresponding figures were 60 percent (Curriculum B more likely) and 2 percent (Curriculum B less likely) for government employment, and 36 percent (Curriculum B more likely) and 7 percent (Curriculum B less likely) for judicial clerkships.

When we compare the faculty-respondents' perceptions with our main results, we find a mix of conjunction and disjunction. Of those with an opinion, the majority (or plurality) view matches our results for all but three outcomes. The majority incorrectly believed that Curriculum B students are equally likely to receive Latin graduation honors (we find they are less likely),<sup>74</sup> are more likely to be employed in government 10 months out (we find they are equally likely), and are equally likely to be employed in a judicial clerkship 10 months out (we find they are more likely).<sup>75</sup> Even for the seven results where the majority (or plurality) view matches our results, a substantial minority of faculty-respondents had incorrect perceptions. For instance, a substantial minority incorrectly believed that students who take Curriculum B have a higher post-1L cumulative GPA (29 percent), have lower average alumni giving amounts (36 percent), and are more likely to make alumni donations (32 percent). Interestingly, some of the areas of disjunction dovetail with our findings in the naïve comparisons, which fail to control for selection effects. Human psychology (including but not limited to motivated reasoning) being what it is, we suspect that had we reported only these findings, many people would have nodded in agreement, instead of questioning our methodology. *Caveat lector.*

## VII. CONCLUSION

There are three main takeaways from our empirical study of Georgetown Law's alternative 1L curriculum, Curriculum B.

The first main takeaway is that Curriculum B has several important effects on students' academic performance in law school and post-graduate employment. With respect to academic performance, we find that Curriculum B leads to a mean preserving contraction in students' overall grades and to diminished performance in two important business law electives (Corporations and Securities Regulation). It also affects students' post-1L course selection, making them more likely to take certain public law electives and less likely to take certain business law electives. With respect to post-graduate employment, we find that Curriculum B steers students into lower-paying public interest jobs and judicial clerkships.

It is important to note that we do not know what exactly it is about Curriculum B that is driving these treatment effects. It may be the courses offered, the professors who teach them, peer effects, or some combination of these factors. It is also important to recall that we find these treatment effects among students

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<sup>74</sup> Indeed, only 10 percent of those with an opinion correctly believed that Curriculum B students are less likely to receive Latin graduation honors.

<sup>75</sup> Though 36 percent correctly believed that Curriculum B students are more likely to be employed in a judicial clerkship 10 months out.

who prefer to take Curriculum B. These effects may or may not carry over to students who prefer to take Curriculum A. Because no students who prefer to take Curriculum A end up taking Curriculum B, we cannot answer this question.

For similar reasons, we cannot say whether Curriculum B would have the same effects on students at other U.S. law schools, were they to offer Curriculum B. Due to a thicket of selection problems (students select where to apply, schools select which students to admit, and (conditional on being admitted) students select which school to attend), students who attend other law schools may differ from Georgetown Law students in important ways. One must therefore exercise caution when trying to extrapolate our findings to law schools other than Georgetown Law.

The second main takeaway of our study is that failing to account for selection effects would lead one to conclude that Curriculum B has positive effects on academic performance (cumulative GPA and post-1L cumulative GPA) and alumni engagement (rates of alumni giving and attendance at alumni events) that we do not find in our main analysis. Our naïve comparisons make it clear that selection effects are real and must be addressed to give credence to the results of any analysis of such topics. The empirical strategy that we employ in our main analysis does precisely this.

The final main takeaway is that Georgetown Law faculty perceptions of Curriculum B do not always match the reality of Curriculum B. What's more, their misperceptions sometimes track our naïve findings. These results should remind all legal educators of the dangers of making decisions, regarding curricular reform or any other domain of faculty governance, based on intuitions or anecdotal evidence, and of the importance of making data-driven decisions.

APPENDIX

Appendix Tables

Table A1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	25th percentile	Median	75th percentile	Obs.
<i>Panel A: Full-time students who did not apply for Curriculum B (n=2,631)</i>						
Age at matriculation (years)	30.02	3.49	28	30	32	2,631
Gender (male = 0; female = 1)	0.51	0.50	0	1	1	2,631
Race/ethnicity (white = 0; non-white = 1)	0.32	0.47	0	0	1	2,376
Citizenship/residency (US = 0; non-US = 1)	0.93	0.26	1	1	1	2,631
Undergraduate GPA (4.00 scale)	3.65	0.28	3.49	3.74	3.85	2,540
LSAT score (highest reported)	165.94	4.93	163	167	169	2,598
Law school cumulative GPA (4.00 scale)	3.45	0.23	3.31	3.46	3.61	2,630
Post-1L cumulative GPA (4.00 scale)	3.53	0.25	3.39	3.55	3.70	2,630
Latin graduation honors (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.34	0.47	0	0	1	2,631
Order of the Coif (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.09	0.29	0	0	0	2,631
Passed bar on first attempt (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.92	0.28	1	1	1	1,298
Employed 10 months out (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.95	0.22	1	1	1	2,631
Annual salary if employed (US dollars)	138,043	55,037	69,152	160,000	180,000	1,620
Alumni giving (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.59	0.49	0	1	1	2,631
Giving amount if positive (US dollars)	109	456	5	20	50	1,547
Attended alumni event (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.44	0.50	0	0	1	2,631
<i>Panel B: Full-time students who applied for Curriculum B (n=848)</i>						
Age at matriculation (years)	30.68	3.52	28	31	32	848
Gender (male = 0; female = 1)	0.53	0.50	0	1	1	848
Race/ethnicity (white = 0; non-white = 1)	0.30	0.46	0	0	1	764
Citizenship/residency (US = 0; non-US = 1)	0.96	0.20	1	1	1	848
Undergraduate GPA (4.00 scale)	3.66	0.27	3.51	3.75	3.85	826
LSAT score (highest reported)	166.46	5.08	164	167	169	838
Law school cumulative GPA (4.00 scale)	3.47	0.23	3.32	3.47	3.64	848
Post-1L cumulative GPA (4.00 scale)	3.56	0.22	3.42	3.58	3.72	848
Latin graduation honors (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.38	0.49	0	0	1	848
Order of the Coif (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.13	0.33	0	0	0	848
Passed bar on first attempt (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.88	0.32	1	1	1	388
Employed 10 months out (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.96	0.20	1	1	1	848
Annual salary if employed (US dollars)	106,172	60,250	50,000	70,637	180,000	532
Alumni giving (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.63	0.48	0	1	1	848
Giving amount if positive (US dollars)	174	1,196	5	15	69	536
Attended alumni event (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.50	0.50	0	0	1	848

Notes: White indicates non-Hispanic white. Employed 10 months out includes enrolled in graduate studies.

Table A2: Random Assignment Tests

Panel A: Treatment versus control group

Variable	Treatment group (n=749)			Control group (n=99)			Comparison of means		
	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Age at matriculation	30.66	3.46	749	30.89	3.97	99	-0.23	-0.55	0.58
Gender (male = 0; female = 1)	0.54	0.50	749	0.54	0.50	99	0.00	-0.02	0.98
Race/ethnicity (white = 0; non-white = 1)	0.32	0.47	676	0.18	0.39	88	0.14	3.09	0.00
Citizenship/residency (US = 0; non-US = 1)	0.96	0.20	749	0.94	0.24	99	0.02	0.76	0.45
Undergraduate GPA (4.0 scale)	3.65	0.27	729	3.70	0.03	97	-0.05	-1.84	0.07
LSAT score (highest reported)	166.45	5.02	740	166.53	0.56	98	-0.08	-0.13	0.89

Notes: White indicates non-Hispanic white. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

Panel B: Augmented treatment versus control group

Variable	Augmented treatment group (n=779)			Augmented control group (n=102)			Comparison of means		
	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Age at matriculation	30.72	3.57	777	30.90	3.91	102	-0.18	-0.45	0.65
Gender (male = 0; female = 1)	0.53	0.50	773	0.53	0.50	102	0.00	0.04	0.97
Race/ethnicity (white = 0; non-white = 1)	0.33	0.47	698	0.18	0.38	91	0.15	3.41	0.00
Citizenship/residency (US = 0; non-US = 1)	0.96	0.20	773	0.93	0.25	102	0.03	1.04	0.30
Undergraduate GPA (4.0 scale)	3.65	0.28	756	3.70	0.27	100	-0.05	-1.82	0.07
LSAT score (highest reported)	166.26	7.81	769	166.58	5.56	101	-0.32	-0.52	0.60

Notes: White indicates non-Hispanic white. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. The augmented treatment and control groups add back students who were excluded from the full sample because they did not graduate by 2020.

Table A3: Main Analysis

Panel A: Academic performance in law school

Variable	Treatment group (n=749)			Control group (n=99)			Comparison of means		
	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Law school cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	3.47	0.23	749	3.49	0.23	99	-0.02	-0.80	0.43
Post-1L cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	3.55	0.22	749	3.57	0.22	99	-0.02	-0.69	0.49
Grades in popular electives (4.0 scale)									
Administrative Law	3.32	0.42	22	3.45	0.46	32	-0.13	-1.07	0.29
Antitrust Law	3.57	0.36	48	3.75	0.28	13	-0.18	-1.89	0.07
Constitutional Law II	3.41	0.38	524	3.42	0.35	63	-0.01	-0.17	0.87
Corporations	3.36	0.42	421	3.50	0.36	68	-0.14	-2.89	0.00
Criminal Law	3.38	0.37	240	3.35	0.43	27	0.04	0.42	0.68
Decedents' Estates	3.33	0.36	70	3.48	0.45	16	-0.15	-1.25	0.23
Evidence	3.36	0.41	551	3.41	0.37	77	-0.05	-1.09	0.28
Federal Courts and the Federal System	3.60	0.37	138	3.42	0.29	12	0.18	2.06	0.06
International Law I	3.46	0.36	170	3.64	0.39	12	-0.18	-1.58	0.14
Negotiations	3.66	0.31	301	3.70	0.27	42	-0.04	-0.78	0.44
Securities Regulation	3.48	0.36	119	3.63	0.30	32	-0.14	-2.29	0.03
Taxation I	3.39	0.37	192	3.41	0.44	34	-0.03	-0.32	0.75
Trial Practice	3.71	0.27	119	3.62	0.26	14	0.09	1.17	0.26
Professional responsibility grade (4.0 scale)	3.41	0.41	728	3.36	0.40	94	0.05	1.17	0.24
Latin graduation honors (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.36	0.48	749	0.49	0.50	99	-0.13	-2.49	0.01
Order of the Coif (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.12	0.33	749	0.14	0.35	99	-0.02	-0.46	0.64

Note: A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

Panel B: Course selection

Course	Treatment group (n=749)			Control group (n=99)			Comparison of proportions		
	Proportion	Not enrolled	Enrolled	Proportion	Not enrolled	Enrolled	Difference	z-statistic	p-value
Administrative Law	0.03	727	22	0.32	67	32	-0.29	-11.25	0.00
Advanced Constitutional Law Seminar	0.07	698	51	0.02	97	2	0.05	1.85	0.06
Advanced Criminal Procedure	0.13	654	95	0.05	94	5	0.08	2.21	0.03
Antitrust Law	0.06	701	48	0.13	86	13	-0.07	-2.43	0.01
Bankruptcy and Creditors' Rights	0.02	731	18	0.07	92	7	-0.05	-2.58	0.01
Constitutional Law II	0.70	225	524	0.64	36	63	0.06	1.28	0.20
Corporations	0.56	328	421	0.69	31	68	-0.12	-2.36	0.02
Criminal Defense and Prisoner Advocacy Clinic	0.06	703	46	0.00	99	0	0.06	2.54	0.01
Criminal Law	0.32	509	240	0.27	72	27	0.05	0.96	0.34
Decedents' Estates	0.09	679	70	0.16	83	16	-0.07	-2.11	0.03
Environmental Law	0.11	666	83	0.05	94	5	0.06	1.85	0.06
Evidence	0.74	198	551	0.78	22	77	-0.04	-0.90	0.37
Federal Courts and the Federal System	0.18	611	138	0.12	87	12	0.06	1.54	0.12
Immigration Law and Policy	0.13	653	96	0.07	92	7	0.06	1.64	0.10
International Law I	0.23	579	170	0.12	87	12	0.11	2.41	0.02
Race and American Law	0.04	720	29	0.08	91	8	-0.04	-1.93	0.05
Negotiations	0.40	448	301	0.42	57	42	-0.02	-0.43	0.67
Securities Regulation	0.16	630	119	0.32	67	32	-0.16	-4.02	0.00
Taxation I	0.26	557	192	0.34	65	34	-0.09	-1.84	0.07
Trial Practice	0.16	630	119	0.14	85	14	0.02	0.45	0.65

Note: A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.



Table A3: Main Analysis (continued)

Variable	Treatment group (n=749)			Control group (n=99)			Comparison of means		
	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Passed bar on first attempt (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.88	0.32	367	0.86	0.36	21	0.03	0.32	0.75
Employed 10 months out (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.96	0.20	749	0.93	0.26	99	0.03	1.14	0.26
Employed in private sector (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.41	0.49	749	0.56	0.50	99	-0.14	-2.68	0.01
Employed in public sector (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.39	0.49	749	0.27	0.45	99	0.12	2.39	0.02
Employed in clerkship (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.12	0.33	749	0.05	0.22	99	0.07	2.92	0.00
Annual salary if employed (US dollars)	102,953	60,067	476	133,535	55,085	56	-30,582	-3.89	0.00

Notes: Employed 10 months out includes enrolled in graduate studies. Public sector includes government and public interest but excludes judicial clerkships. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

Panel D: Alumni engagement

Variable	Treatment group (n=749)			Control group (n=99)			Comparison of means		
	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
Alumni giving (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.63	0.48	749	0.65	0.48	99	-0.02	-0.32	0.75
Giving amount if positive (US dollars)	178	1,267	472	150	385	64	28	0.37	0.72
Attended alumni event (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.50	0.50	749	0.47	0.50	99	0.03	0.48	0.63

Note: A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

Table A4: Naïve Comparison I, Full- and Part-time Students

Variable	Treatment group (n=749)			Naïve comparison group (n=3,029)			Comparison of means		
	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
<i>Panel A: Academic performance in law school</i>									
Law school cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	3.47	0.23	749	3.45	0.24	3,028	0.02	1.74	0.08
Post-1L cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	3.55	0.22	749	3.53	0.25	3,028	0.03	3.12	0.00
Professional responsibility grade (4.0 scale)	3.41	0.41	728	3.40	0.41	2,963	0.01	0.71	0.48
Latin graduation honors (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.36	0.48	749	0.35	0.48	3,029	0.01	0.64	0.52
Order of the Coif (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.12	0.33	749	0.10	0.30	3,029	0.03	2.10	0.04
<i>Panel B: Bar passage and post-graduate employment</i>									
Passed bar on first attempt (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.88	0.32	367	0.91	0.28	1,487	-0.03	-1.66	0.10
Employed 10 months out (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.96	0.20	749	0.95	0.21	3,029	0.01	0.76	0.45
Employed in private sector (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.41	0.49	749	0.65	0.48	3,029	-0.23	-11.75	0.00
Employed in public sector (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.39	0.49	749	0.20	0.40	3,029	0.19	10.03	0.00
Employed in clerkship (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.12	0.33	749	0.08	0.28	3,029	0.04	3.01	0.00
Annual salary if employed (US dollars)	102,953	60,067	476	138,650	54,857	1,872	-35,697	-11.78	0.00
<i>Panel C: Alumni engagement</i>									
Alumni giving (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.63	0.48	749	0.58	0.49	3,029	0.05	2.45	0.01
Giving amount if positive (US dollars)	178	1,267	472	122	528	1,762	56	0.94	0.35
Attended alumni event (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.50	0.50	749	0.43	0.50	3,029	0.07	3.23	0.00

Notes: In this table, the naïve comparison group comprises all full- and part-time students who took Curriculum A. Employed 10 months out includes enrolled in graduate studies. Public sector includes government and public interest but excludes judicial clerkships. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

Table A5: Naïve Comparison II, Full-time Students

Variable	Treatment group (n=749)			Naïve comparison group (n=2,730)			Comparison of means		
	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Mean	Standard deviation	Obs.	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
<i>Panel A: Academic performance in law school</i>									
Law school cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	3.47	0.23	749	3.45	0.23	2,729	0.02	1.97	0.05
Post-1L cumulative GPA (4.0 scale)	3.55	0.22	749	3.53	0.25	2,729	0.03	2.86	0.00
Professional responsibility grade (4.0 scale)	3.41	0.41	728	3.40	0.41	2,668	0.01	0.72	0.47
Latin graduation honors (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.36	0.48	749	0.34	0.47	2,730	0.02	0.92	0.36
Order of the Coif (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.12	0.33	749	0.10	0.29	2,730	0.03	2.17	0.03
<i>Panel B: Bar passage and post-graduate employment</i>									
Passed bar on first attempt (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.88	0.32	367	0.92	0.28	1,319	-0.03	-1.75	0.08
Employed 10 months out (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.96	0.20	749	0.95	0.22	2,730	0.01	1.18	0.24
Employed in private sector (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.41	0.49	749	0.64	0.48	2,730	-0.23	11.47	0.00
Employed in public sector (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.39	0.49	749	0.19	0.39	2,730	0.20	10.10	0.00
Employed in clerkship (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.12	0.33	749	0.09	0.28	2,730	0.04	2.91	0.00
Annual salary if employed (US dollars)	102,953	60,067	476	137,892	55,028	1,676	-34,939	-11.40	0.00
<i>Panel C: Alumni engagement</i>									
Alumni giving (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.63	0.48	749	0.59	0.49	2,730	0.04	2.00	0.05
Giving amount if positive (US dollars)	178	1,267	472	110	454	1,611	67	1.14	0.26
Attended alumni event (no = 0; yes = 1)	0.50	0.50	749	0.44	0.50	2,730	0.06	2.88	0.00

Notes: In this table, the naïve comparison group comprises all full-time students who took Curriculum A. It excludes part-time students, who are not eligible to apply for Curriculum B. Employed 10 months out includes enrolled in graduate studies. Public sector includes government and public interest, but excludes judicial clerkships. A p-value of 0.05 or less indicates that the difference between the means is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

## *Curriculum A – Core Course Descriptions*

### **Civil Procedure**

This course examines what can happen in a civil lawsuit. It asks: What kinds of courts exist in the United States? What limits does the law impose on where cases can be brought? Who can sue? What remedies can a court impose? What choices do the parties have about who else participates in the lawsuit? How much information about the lawsuit must each side disclose in the initial pleadings, or at other times before trial? What opportunities are there for resolving disputes without trials? In trials, what are the respective roles of judges and juries? What are the tensions between a lawyer's duty to a client and the lawyer's duty to the system of justice? Who should make the procedural rules for lawsuits, and how, if at all, should those rules be changed?

### **Constitutional Law I: The Federal System**

This course addresses questions concerning the role of the Supreme Court in resolving legal problems that arise under our fundamental law, as well as issues concerning the Constitution's distribution of power between the national and state governments and among the branches of the national government.

### **Contracts**

Introduces students to the law of contracts, the branch of law primarily concerned with private exchange. The course considers how individuals and businesses make binding agreements and the consequences of doing so. The major topic areas are the bases for enforcing contracts; the agreement process; contract interpretation; remedies for breach of contract; arbitration clauses; good faith and best efforts; and the problems of substantive and procedural unfairness and unconscionability. Special attention will be paid to the connection between the cases studied and the drafting and negotiation of contracts. Reading materials include judicial opinions, the Uniform Commercial Code, and excerpts from legal and professional journals. The course provides a foundation for subsequent studies in commercial law.

### **Criminal Justice**

Introduces the administration of the criminal justice system and serves as a foundation for the advanced courses offered in upperclass years. The course explores the development and operation of the constitutional provisions regulating the federal and state governments in the enforcement of their penal laws and analyzes in depth each step in the criminal process up to the decision to charge, including some or all of the following issues: search and seizure, arrest, interrogation, identification procedures, and the right to counsel.

## **Property**

Examines classical and modern concepts of property, personal property issues, the nature of interests held in real property, the transfer of such interests, the law of landlord and tenant, and private and public restrictions upon the use of real property.

## **Torts**

Explores the basic principles governing private lawsuits for damages for wrongs that are noncontractual, including consideration of the concepts of strict liability, liability based on fault, intentional and negligent interference with personal and property interests and defenses thereto, recoverable damages, and related problems.

### *Curriculum B – Core Course Descriptions*

## **Bargain, Exchange, and Liability**

This course explores the ways in which the law can regulate relationships between individuals. Some of this regulation involves rules that individuals crafted for themselves; that is the core of the field of Contracts. Other aspects of the regulation of individuals' interactions entails enforcing rules society has established for people's behavior; this is the central focus of Torts. Rather than approaching Contracts and Torts separately, as the standard law school curriculum does, this course engages them together, emphasizing how they have changed in similar ways over the years as dominant legal ideas have changed. For example, both Contract and Tort must consider whether to regulate inaction as well as action. Both must determine how much law should defer to other relationships among individuals. Both face choices about how, if at all, to take into account the effects of broader societal conditions (such as inadequate employment opportunities or education) when assessing individuals' legal rights and obligations. And both must decide how much to focus on particular individuals' capabilities or states of mind and how much to impose generalized, one-size-fits-all rules. The first half of the course focuses on Classical Legal Thought, which rose to prominence after the Civil War and continues to have considerable influence on legal rules. The second half revolves around various ideas broadly grouped as Law and Economics, which began to emerge early in the 20th Century.

## **Democracy and Coercion**

What is democracy? What would be required to realize aspirations to democracy in a country like the United States, with a history of enslavement, dispossession of Native peoples, highly unequal application of the criminal law, and more broadly persistent inequality? How has constitutional law shaped controversies over the terms of democratic life in the United States? What role should criminal law enforcement play in a democratic society and how, if at all, should constitutional law inform the criminal process? This course will explore these questions regarding democracy, coercion and

constitutionalism, in both historical and contemporary perspectives, with particular attention to U.S. constitutional law and constitutional criminal procedure.

### **Government Processes**

This course examines the various instruments the legal system has to deal with social problems. It seeks to identify the advantages and disadvantages of each instrument as a means of dealing with social problems and to provide students with an understanding of why one rather than another instrument is chosen. Upon analyzing the various options, the course will then undertake an in depth analysis of the regulatory state. The emphasis will be on institutional analysis, exploring the institutional roles of public and private actors in the regulatory state and the procedural framework within which those various institutional actors operate.

### **Legal Justice**

Legal Justice introduces the students to styles of twentieth- and twenty-first century American legal thought. The course begins with classical legal thought and with the challenge posed by legal realism to classical conceptions of rights and legal reasoning. It then considers process theory, law and economics, legal liberalism, and perspectivist approaches to law, including Law & Society, critical legal studies, feminist legal theory and critical race theory. The course ends with units on modern conservative theories and approaches to statutory interpretation. Each week students attend a one-hour overview lecture given to all students in Curriculum B, and two hours of seminar, given in small sections. The aim of the course is to familiarize students with the theoretical and historical underpinnings of the doctrines studied in their other courses, in particular the other Curriculum B courses.

### **Legal Process and Society**

Introduces students to the procedures used in litigation and alternative dispute resolution. A variety of materials will be read, including cases, rules, statutes, social science studies and historical analyses. The course will explore various structures American society uses to resolve legal and political conflict, and introduce the basic doctrinal, constitutional and jurisprudential concepts used to resolve disputes.

### **Property in Time**

Takes up topics from the conventional Property course including the law of landlord-tenant, servitudes, nuisance, and takings law. Not only will students learn the basic doctrinal rules; they will also understand them in light of the history of American legal thought and some introductory concepts borrowed from the fields of law and economics and critical race studies.

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