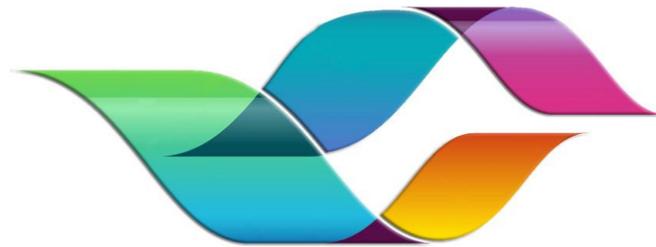


The Mindfulness Stress Managements & Peak Performance Program



Pilot Years: Fall 2016-Spring 2018
PROGRAM Report

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**PROGRAM
INTRODUCTION
&
IMPACT
SUMMARY**

Introduction

Professor Rebecca Simon and Professor Jarrett Green came together to create an innovative, science-based program that would have transformative effects on law student well-being. They spent a year developing The Peak Performance Program and then ran the pilot program for two academic years, from Fall 2016- Spring 2018, at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles.

Why This Program Is Needed at Law Schools

The law school experience is a truly invigorating one, combining vast intellectual expansion, personal growth, and professional metamorphosis. Despite being a haven for growth and expansion, law school can be an intensely stressful experience for so many students. Research reveals law students face a level of stress unmatched by any other graduate program in existence. The chronic stress of law school has two primary effects on students: (1) it reduces the happiness and joyfulness of the average law student; and (2) it negatively affects focus, energy, productivity, study habits, test performance, and overall academic success. The *Mindfulness, Stress Management, and Peak Performance Program* provides students with these critical core competencies of self-mastery. The program is designed to help students master the mental, emotional and decision-making aspects of law school. With this mastery students experience less stress, more joy, and greater success in law school.

Experience and Science Behind the Program

Professors Simon and Green have 24 combined years of studying the Science of Success, and take a multidisciplinary, science-based approach to optimizing the law school experience. The Peak Performance Program draws upon the following disciplines, among others:

- Neuroscience and Neuroplasticity
- Behavioral Psychology, Positive Psychology, and Applied Psychology
- Executive Coaching Techniques
- Peak Performance Research in Sports and Business
- Habit and Behavior Modification Research
- Mindfulness (secular-based meditation and MBSR principles)
- Nutrition and cutting-edge research findings in Mind-Body Connectivity
- Emotional Intelligence Literature, Mindset Theory, and Grit Theory.

Summary of Pilot Program Impact

The *Mindfulness, Stress Management, and Peak Performance Program* has provided students with tangible tools, techniques, and emerging practices for coping with the stressors and emotional difficulties that inevitably arise in law school. The program has assisted over 200 students thus far at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles in developing a mastery of the law through the teachings of self-management. The program has helped students to eliminate stress barriers and also to develop a mastery of themselves. Many of them have reported experiencing life-changing effects. The

testimonials you read in this report demonstrate that the students experienced greater joy and happiness, less anxiety and stress, and optimized academic performance. We know the students served will carry these stress management techniques into their legal careers and beyond. Most notably, the students who completed the program outperformed their peers not in the program (details below).

Co-Creators and Co-Directors of the Program



Rebecca A. Simon is the Co-Director of the Mindfulness, Stress Management, and Peak Performance Program currently at USC Gould School of Law. She was an Associate Professor of Law at Southwestern Law School from 2014-2018. She was a co-founder of the national Mindfulness In Law Society and served as the inaugural Executive Director from 2016-2018. Professor Simon spent several years teaching law school classes designed to enhance students' productivity, learning capacity, and overall academic success. She has provided several years of one-on-one coaching to hundreds of law students.



Jarrett Green is the Co-Director of the Mindfulness, Stress Management, and Peak Performance Program at Southwestern Law School, and Adjunct Associate Professor of Law. Professor Green practiced high-stakes business litigation for approximately 12 years before becoming a full-time stress management and performance enhancement consultant. Professor Green works with law firms, law schools, and corporations to help reduce stress and improve joyfulness, culture, productivity and performance within those organizations. www.jarrett-green.com/about-us/

National Attention for the Program

The Peak Performance Program is receiving significant – and continually increasing – attention and accolades across the country. We are being invited to speak at law schools, law school conferences, and other legal events across the country. Several industry experts have referred to the Peak Performance Program as “one of the most innovative” law school programs in the entire nation. The national attention includes:

- NALSAP Conference at UCLA Law School: We were honored to present at the National Association of Law Student Affairs Professionals (“NALSAP”) Conference at UCLA Law School. Our presentation focused on several core techniques from the PPP that allow students to experience less stress, greater focus, and improved academic performance in law school.
- Positive Psychology in Law Conference: We spoke at the Positive Psychology in Law Conference at Suffolk Law School on June 15, 2017. We presented on key aspects of Positive Psychology that have been incorporated into our Peak Performance Program.
- SEALS Conference in Florida: We spoke at the Southeastern Association of Law Schools (“SEALS”) Conference in Boca Raton, Florida, on August 4, 2017 about a collection of the core teachings of the Program.
- The **National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being**, co-sponsored by the ABA, recommended our program in its seminal report, “[Creating a Movement to Improve Well-Being in the Legal Profession](#).” The Task Force determined that our Peak Performance

Program is “the type of programming that can have a transformative effect on law student well-being.” (pg. 39.)

Statement of Gratitude

We offer our humble thanks to Southwestern Law School for allowing their students to experience the pilot program and also to the Lenz Foundation for its generous grant in support of our work.

We are deeply energized and enthused to run the program again in Fall 2018-Spring 2019 at USC Gould School of Law.

Contact Information

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions about this report or our program.

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**NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON
LAWYER WELL-BEING
REPORT TEXT**

TASK FORCE CHAIRS

Bree Buchanan
James C. Coyle

ENTITIES REPRESENTED:

ABA LAW PRACTICE DIVISION
ABA CPR PROFESSIONALISM
ABA/HAZELDEN STUDY
APRL
ALPS
CoLAP
CONFERENCE OF CHIEF JUSTICES
NCBE
NOBC

NATIONAL TASK FORCE ON LAWYER WELL-BEING

Creating a Movement To Improve
Well-Being in the Legal Profession

August 14, 2017

THE PATH TO LAWYER WELL-BEING:

Practical Recommendations
For Positive Change

33. PROVIDE EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES ON WELL-BEING-RELATED TOPICS.

33.1. Provide Well-Being Programming During the 1L Year.

We agree with the Survey of Law Student Well-Being report's recommendation that law schools should incorporate well-being topics into student orientation.¹⁵⁶ We recommend that during 1L orientation, law schools should include information about student well-being and options for dealing with stress. Communications should convey that seeking help is the best way to optimize their studies and to ensure they graduate and move successfully into law practice. Other vulnerable times during which well-being-related programming would be particularly appropriate include the period before fall final exams, the period when students receive their first set of law school grades (usually at the start of spring semester), and the period before spring final exams. The Task Force commends **Southwestern Law School's IL "Peak Performance Program"** and its goal of helping new law students de-stress, focus, and perform well in law school.¹⁵⁷ This voluntary program is the type of programming that can have a transformative effect on law student well-being.

¹⁵⁷ **Southwestern** Law School, Mindfulness, Peak Performance, and Wellness Programs, <http://www.swlaw.edu/student-life/support-network/mindfulness-peak-performance-and-wellness-programs>.



**FALL 2016 – SPRING 2017
PROGRAM SESSIONS
OVERVIEWS**

PROGRAM SESSIONS

Note: All classes are from 4:15p-5:15p in **W229**. *The content for Tuesday & Wednesday sessions are identical.*

#	<u>Tuesday</u> Dates	<u>Wednesday</u> Dates	Topics
1	<i>Everyone Come On Tuesday:</i> 8/23		First Session: The Stress Response, The Empowered Response, & Overview of the Program (All Attend Tuesday's Class)
2	8/30	8/31	Mindfulness Meditation Introduction
3	9/6	9/7	Mindfulness & Self-Awareness Techniques
4	9/13	9/14	Reactivity
5	9/20	9/21	Beliefs & Thoughts
6	9/27	9/28	Self Leadership & Awe
7	10/4	10/5	Habits, Will Power, & Self-Restraint
8	Week of 10/11 & 10/12		<i>No Peak Performance Class This Week – Instead: Use The Time For Self-Care</i>
9	10/18	10/19	Body, Energy, & Movement
10	10/25	10/26	Compassion & Loving Kindness
11	11/1	11/2	Communication & Conflict
12	11/8	11/9	Gratitude
13	11/15	11/16	Difficult Emotions: Anger, Fear, Sadness, etc.
14	Everyone <i>Come On Tuesday:</i> 11/22		Tying It All Together – <i>Last Session</i> (All Attend Tuesday's Class)



The Peak Performance 1L Program is a voluntary, no-credit program consisting of 14 one-hour sessions. In order to receive a *Certificate of Completion* in the program a participant must:

- **Attend** at least **10** of the 14 above sessions and participate meaningfully in the program.
- Commit to best effort for practicing the techniques and completing exercises at home.
- Agree to approach group discussions with professionalism, openness, and civility.

PROGRAM SESSION DATES – Monday Group

SESSION	MONDAY	Topics
1	2/27	SELF IDENTITY & RELATIONSHIP TO PERFORMANCE
<i>Spring Break (3/6-3/10): No Session This Week</i>		
2	3/13	BENEFITS OF FAILURES
3	3/20	SUCCESS & “REDEMPTION”
4	3/27	BENEFITS OF IMPERFECTION
5	4/3	RELAXED INTENSITY & PERFORMANCE QUALITY
6	4/10	SELF-JUDGMENT & SELF-COMPASSION
7	4/17	FINDING YOUR CONFIDENCE
8	4/24	PEAK PERFORMANCE FOR EXAMS & BEYOND

The program sessions fit together and build on concepts; therefore, it is critical to participate fully in the program to obtain maximum benefits.

The Peak Performance 1L Program is a voluntary, no-credit program consisting of 8 sessions in Spring. In order to receive a *Certificate of Completion* in the Spring program a participant must:

- **Attend** at least **6** of the 8 above sessions and participate meaningfully in the program.
- Commit to best effort for practicing the techniques and completing exercises at home.
- Agree to approach group discussions with professionalism, civility, and openness.

To read more about the program visit: www.swlaw.edu/pdfs/publicaffairs/peakperformance
We look forward to working with you!

**FALL 2017 – SPRING 2018
PROGRAM SESSIONS
OVERVIEWS**

Peak Performance | PROGRAM SESSIONS

Note: All classes are from 4:00p-5:15p in **Room W229**

#	Dates	Topics
0	Introduction on 8/16	The Stress Response vs. The Empowered Response & Overview of Program
1	8/23	Mindfulness Meditation
2	8/30	Reactivity
3	9/6	Body, Energy, & Movement
4	9/13	Beliefs & Thoughts
5	9/20 On Your Own	Self-Care Session <i>(not meeting in our classroom – do this hour on your own; we will give instructions)</i>
6	9/27	Self-Leadership & Awe
7	10/4	Habits, Will Power, & Self-Restraint
8	10/11	Self-Compassion & Compassion for Others (“Loving Kindness”)
9	10/18	Perfectionism & Self-Awareness
10	10/25	Gratitude
11	11/1	Communication & Conflict
12	11/8	Difficult Emotions: Anger, Fear, Sadness, etc.
13	11/15	Biggest Picture: Humanity, Identity, and Love
14	11/29	Tying It All Together – <i>Last Session</i>



The Peak Performance 1L Program is a voluntary, no-credit program consisting of 14 one-hour sessions. In order to receive a *Certificate of Completion* in the program participants will:

- **Attend at least 10** of the 14 above sessions and participate meaningfully in the program.
- Agree to approach group discussions with professionalism, openness, and civility.
- Commit to best effort for practicing the techniques and completing exercises together.

Note: All classes are on **Wednesdays** from 4:00pm to 5:15pm in **Room W329**

BE SURE YOU ARE REGISTERED ON “PEAK PERFORMANCE (2018)” ON TWEN PAGE FOR UPDATES

#	Dates	Topics
1	1/31	<i>Introduction & Overview of Program: Five Mindset Shifts</i>
2	2/7	Transitions
3	2/14	Smart Phone Addiction
n/a	2/21 On Your Own!	Self-Care Session <i>(not meeting in our classroom – do this Self-Care hour on your own; we will give instructions)</i>
4	2/28	Stress/Chaos and Peace
5	3/7	Responding to Being Judged or Mistreated
n/a	3/14 No Class!	<i>Spring Break This Week!</i> <i>(no class meeting)</i>
6	3/21	Will Power & Energy
7	3/28	Distractions: Multitasking and Self Control
8	4/4	Broadening Our Perspective
9	4/11	Role of Curiosity: The Transforming Power of “Learning Questions”
10	4/18	Tying It All Together
11	4/25	Certificate Day! Food & Drink & Excitement: The Dean will be presenting class with Certificates for all who complete the program! Last Session ☺

Peak Performance | PROGRAM SESSIONS

The Spring 2018 Peak Performance Program is a voluntary, no-credit program consisting of twelve 75-min sessions. In order to receive a *Certificate of Completion* in the program participants will:

- Attend *at least* 9 of the 12 above sessions and participate meaningfully in the program.
- Agree to approach group discussions with professionalism, openness, and civility.
- Commit to best effort for practicing the techniques and completing exercises together.

We are here for you if you need us. Emails: rsimon@swlaw.edu and jag@jarrett-green.com

**PRINTED
PROGRAM
BROCHURE
COPY**



Southwestern Law School

Mindfulness ~ Stress Management ~ Peak Performance Program

THE PEAK PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

Southwestern's Mindfulness, Stress Management, and Peak Performance 1L Program (the "Peak Performance Program") is designed to help students achieve law school success by increasing mental focus, decreasing stress, overcoming performance obstacles, and promoting greater cognitive performance and overall happiness.

The Peak Performance Program is premised on the notion that high stress and emotional struggles are not only unnecessary for optimal performance, but in fact obstruct optimal performance.

Students who participate in the Peak Performance Program will learn tangible tools, techniques, and skills that will allow them to optimize their law school performance by enhancing seven elements of peak performance: Attention, Beliefs, Emotions, Body, Energy, Purpose and Communication. Each person tends to be stronger or weaker in some of these facets of performance. But no matter who we are, if we want to maximize our performance and minimize our stress, we must be strong in all seven areas. When the core performance components function at maximal capacity and harmony with one another the results are inevitable: our stress plummets and our performance skyrockets.*



7 Elements of Peak Performance

1. ATTENTION

Attention involves the ability to reduce the incessant chatter of the "monkey mind" (also known as self-talk), and direct our focus with precision and single-pointedness to exactly what we are working on in that moment (and nothing else).

Improved attention results from learning how to quiet our distracting thoughts, how to resist the external distractions that arise throughout our day, and how to quickly release and return from the distractions when we inevitably succumb to them.

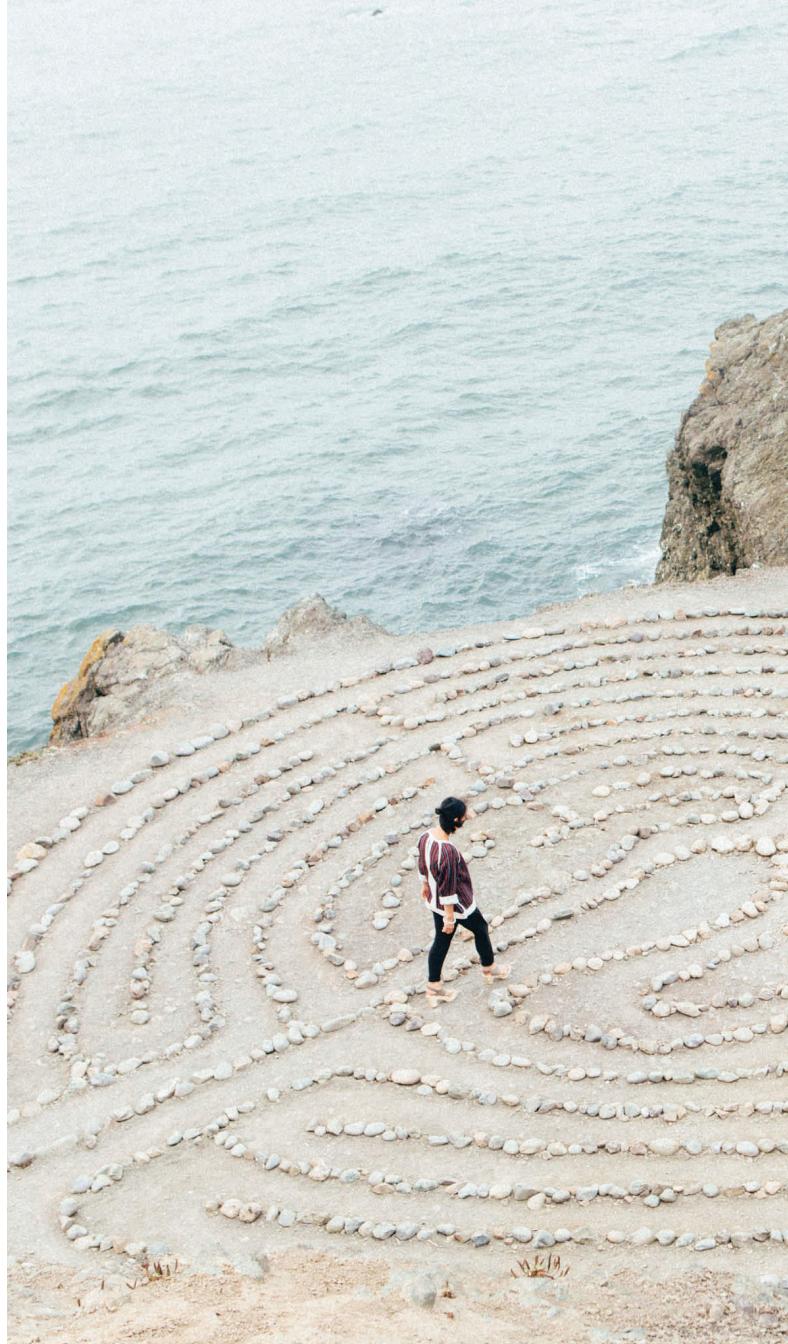
“I thank you sincerely. I honestly can’t believe I was able to stay calm for every session, especially during those insanely long instructions, in that environment. I had practiced your breathing techniques all summer and was just amazed that under all that pressure, it actually worked! I am so grateful. I am really proud of myself for holding it together all three days and be able to completely focus and do my best---entirely, entirely thanks to your Stress Management workshop. THANK YOU!”

–Summer Bar: SW Custom Course Student, 2016

2. BELIEFS

Although sometimes conscious and rational, our beliefs are often unconscious and uninvestigated assumptions and cognitions that interfere with our efficient and focused performance (and happiness). Many of our beliefs, although self-created, cause us unnecessary stress and cause us to waste valuable energy, attention, and time while performing.

Belief optimization involves learning how to observe our underlying beliefs, how to identify which ones interfere with our performance, and how to replace those beliefs with more adaptive beliefs that enhance our performance.



3. EMOTIONS

Regulation of our emotions is essential to Peak Performance. When we are in control of our emotions, we perform with focus, energy, efficiency and conviction. In contrast, when we lose control of our emotions (even in subtle and less obvious ways), or succumb to emotional disruptions, our performance is necessarily impeded.

Emotional regulation involves learning how to become mindful of our constantly-evolving emotional state, how to preempt maladaptive emotions before they take us over, and how to recover from emotional disruptions once they occur, so that optimal performance can be salvaged as efficiently as possible after a rupture.

“I want to thank you so much for helping me through last semester. I feel so much more hopeful and encouraged to continue working because of all the tools and skills you taught me. I will continue to put them into practice for the next semester.”

–Mindfulness Monday Participant, Fall 2015

4. BODY

Our body is our physical instrument of performance. When we treat our body with deep care and respect (whether through exercise, sleep, relaxation, nourishing food, deep breathing, mindful posture, and many other modes), it will provide us with more energy and vibrancy, and less tension and pain. In turn, we will be able to perform with greater focus, stamina, and force.

Optimizing our physical instrument involves learning how to “feel” what our body needs in order to perform at its best (irrespective of what the judgmental mind says), how to build greater will power – so that we can do the things that will optimize our body’s functioning (even if they are not enjoyable), and how to build self-restraint – so that we can resist doing the things that undermine our body’s functioning (even if they are pleasurable).



5. ENERGY

Our energy is our performance fuel. In order to maximize our energy levels, we must master energy preservation (how to preserve the valuable energy we possess at any given moment, rather than needlessly and unconsciously burning it), energy generation (how to generate new energy when we need it), and energy efficiency (how to modulate our energy expenditure based on our existing performance needs).

When we learn how to deliberately harness our energy levels, our mental state and performance abilities skyrocket.

“Last month when I was struggling with anxiety, I was worried that I might not be able to take the exam. I don’t think I would be where I am now, able to take the exam next week, without your support along the way. I feel so fortunate to have met you, and I learned so much about myself from speaking with you. . . . You have helped me tremendously, and I can’t thank you enough for your patience, support, guidance, and motivation. . . . [You] provided me with great insights about my personality so that I can start viewing my thoughts and behaviors differently. Through speaking with [you], I gained a greater understanding about myself, about meditation, and I’m more aware of my thoughts.”

–SW Class of 2016, Summer Bar taker.

6. PURPOSE

Feeling a sense of purpose while in law school is essential to performance optimization. When we feel uninspired (including by the rudimentary readings or assignments that all students face at times), or when we fall into “tunnel vision” about law school tasks without feeling their connection to our deeper passions, we experience attention problems, energy depletion, and maladaptive thinking – all of which disrupt our performance.

Learning how to more effectively connect to our inner purpose, how to increase our passion for our studies, and how to find “meaning in the mundane,” are critical to Peak Performance while in law school.

“People were absolutely unraveling all around me on the first day of the California Bar Exam, but I was able to calm myself down completely. That was entirely thanks to Professor Simon and Professor Green’s joint Stress Management workshop—it should be mandatory!”

–Lindsey Hay, Law Review Editor, Class of 2016



7. COMMUNICATION

How we communicate with our fellow students, friends, professors, and family throughout the day has a significant impact on the quality of our performance. Every interaction with another person (particularly regarding law school matters) can either advance our mindset, energy, purpose, focus and productivity, or dampen it.

In order to improve our communication skills, and thereby benefit our own internal state and performance abilities, we must learn how to express our desires and needs assertively but non-aggressively, how to listen actively and openly, and how to better understand the volatile emotional states of others. The result is not only far better relationships with others, but far better performance for ourselves throughout the day, and throughout law school.



Jarrett Green is the Co-Director of the Mindfulness, Stress Management, and Peak Performance 1L Program at Southwestern Law School, and Adjunct Associate Professor of Law. Professor Green practiced high-stakes business litigation for approximately 12 years before becoming a full-time stress management and performance enhancement consultant. Professor Green works with law firms, law schools, and corporations to help reduce stress and improve joyfulness, culture, productivity and performance within those organizations.

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Rebecca A. Simon is the Co-Director of the Mindfulness, Stress Management, and Peak Performance 1L Program at Southwestern Law School, an Associate Professor of Law, and full-time faculty member working with the Academic Success and Bar-Related Programs Department. Professor Simon is the Co-Chair of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Balance Section's Mindfulness Affinity Group (MAG) and the Executive Director of the national Mindfulness In Law Society (MILS). She serves as the Faculty Advisor for the MILS student chapter at Southwestern and facilitates their monthly "Mindfulness Monday" sessions.

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ADD "PEAK PERFORMANCE PROGRAM" TO YOUR TWEN COURSE LIST

We invite you to sign up for the Peak Performance Program through our TWEN page. This is your opportunity to learn priceless tools and skills that will help you experience less stress and more success while in law school, and beyond.

There will be 14 class sessions, beginning Tuesday August 23 at 4:15pm in room W229, and ending Tuesday, November 22. You must be registered to attend the classes. The Program is limited to the first 40 students who sign up on TWEN, so if this opportunity calls to you, take action now!



*Southwestern's Peak Performance 1L Program is an innovative science-based initiative, developed in collaboration between Professor Jarrett Green and Professor Rebecca Simon. The Program is premised on the “Peak Performance Path” developed by Jarrett Green, Esq.

For more information on the Program, please visit Jarrett-Green.com/lawschool



To sign up, add “Peak Performance Program” to your TWEN course list.

PILOT YEAR REPORT

MEMORANDUM

To: Dean Susan Prager and Vice Dean Chris Cameron
cc: Anahid Gharakhanian
From: Professors Rebecca Simon and Jarrett Green
Date: June 27, 2017
RE: 2016-2017 PILOT PROGRAM REVIEW/RESULTS/RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of this memorandum is to review the content, execution, and data results of our 2016-2017 pilot program, the Mindfulness, Stress Management, and Peak Performance 1L Program (the “Peak Performance Program”, or PPP) and to make recommendation regarding the program for next academic year (2017-2018). As revealed in detail in the below Report, the Peak Performance Program:

(1) was associated with superior academic performance by the students who completed the Program (based on the academic data that has thus far been made available to us);

(2) was widely praised and appreciated by the Peak Performance students, who reported experiencing less stress, more joyfulness, greater productivity, and improved academic outcomes as a result of the Program; and

(3) has brought significant – and ever increasing – national attention to Southwestern Law School.

For these reasons, we believe the Peak Performance Program was an undeniable success, and we recommend continuing the Program for a second year (2017-2018), and beyond.¹

(1) Students Who Completed The Peak Performance Program Significantly Outperformed Students Who Did Not

Although we only have access to a small portion of the performance data for the 1L class, the data to which we have access demonstrates that students who completed the PPP *significantly outperformed* students who did not.

Importantly, when analyzing the 1L students who academically “underperformed” in the first semester (as indicated by being placed in Southwestern’s Academic Success Program), the data reveals that *students who completed the PPP were 28.7% less likely to be placed in the Academic Success Program*. This finding is based on the following data: of the 185 total 1L students across Sections A, B and C, 36 of them completed the PPP,

¹ Enclosed herewith is a copy of our topics syllabus and our initial Proposal, which includes a summary of the purpose, contents, and topics of the Peak Performance Program.

and 149 did not. Of the 36 who completed the PPP, 10 landed in the Academic Success Program (“AS Program”). Thus, 27.7% of students who completed the PPP ended up in the AS Program. Conversely, of the 149 students who did not complete the PPP, 58 of them landed in the AS Program. Thus, 38.9% of students who did not complete the PPP ended up in the AS Program.

Accordingly, students who completed the PPP were significantly less likely to end up the AS Program. Only 27.7% of students who completed the PPP academically “underperformed” in their first semester of law school (according to Southwestern’s objective AS Program standard), yet 38.9% of students who did not complete the PPP academically “underperformed” in their first semester of law school.

This 11.2% difference between the two groups reflects that students who completed the PPP were 28.7% less likely to end up in the AS Program than students who did not complete the PPP (i.e., 11.2% divided by 38.9% equals 28.7%.) An Economist from the UCLA School of Economics who specializes in academic and other intervention programs, with whom we consulted, informed us that academic programs are considered successful if they yield a 3%-5% difference between groups. He stated that a 28.7% difference in group performance is extraordinarily high according to long-established industry and historical norms.

The 11.2% figure can also be conceptualized from the perspective of Southwestern 1L students who did *not* complete the PPP (i.e., the group of 149 students). According to the above data, *these 149 students had a 40.4% increased likelihood of being placed in the AS Program.* (i.e., 11.2% divided by 27.7% equals 40.4%.) This finding reveals that if a Southwestern 1L student did not to complete the PPP, she or he was significantly more likely to end up in the AS Program. Again, the UCLA Economist with whom we consulted stated that this figure is exceptionally high.

In sum, the available performance data reveals that students who completed the PPP significantly outperformed students who did not. When the data is conceptualized from the perspective of students who completed the PPP, these students had a *28.7% decreased likelihood* of being placed in the AS Program. When the data is conceptualized from the perspective of students who did not complete the PPP, these students had a *40.4% increased likelihood* of being placed in the AS Program.²

Additional pieces of academic data further support the effectiveness of the PPP. For example, of the 18 total “CALI Awards” earned by 1L students (daytime and evening students) during the first semester, *12 of these CALI Awards* were earned by students who completed the PPP. Thus, *66.6% of the CALI Awards were earned by PPP students.*

This statistic is even more alarming when considering the fact that PPP students represented a *small minority* of the total 1L students. Indeed, less than 19% of all 1L students completed the Program. However, notwithstanding that less than 19% of all 1L students completed the PPP (and more than 81% did not), 66.6% of the CALI Awards were earned by PPP students. In other words, PPP students earned CALI Awards at a

² While it is possible that these figures are moderated by a self-selecting bias, it is equally (if not more) likely that the self-selecting bias yielded a PPP population that was more likely to academically underperform than overperform, in comparison to the non-PPP population.

rate that was astronomically disproportionate to their representation among the entire 1L student population.

In order to conduct a more comprehensive statistical analysis of the academic performance of the two groups, we would need access to additional academic performance data from Southwestern's 1L class, such as GPAs from the entire class. To the extent that the institution grants us access to this data, we would be happy to conduct the appropriate statistical analysis, and are confident that such data will reveal that PPP students outperformed their peers across several statistical metrics.

(2) The Peak Performance Program Received Extraordinary Praise From The Students

The Peak Performance students consistently praised the program throughout the semester, emphasizing that the program was critical in helping them manage their stress, maximize their focus and attention, and enhance their academic performance. Moreover, our robust collection of student evaluations, following a formal survey of the program, further confirms that students who participated in the program experienced a decrease in stress and felt the program increased their mental health and academic performance.

Below are excerpts from a sample of the student evaluations that have been submitted by Peak Performance students. The full student evaluations are attached to this Report, for your further review.

As you can see, the Peak Performance Program was a smashing success among the students:

- “This program was one of the highlights of my first semester here at SW. Prof. Simon and Green are a fantastic team that gave us essential skills for life and school throughout the program. I had some truly enlightened moments during a few of the sessions and learned a lot over all. I'm sad we won't have it this semester unless maybe that's possible! This program is extremely essential to student success and MUST be offered next year. Please allow this to continue, I assure you I've meant every word of this very deeply. Thank you!”
- “This program is, without a doubt, one thing I could not have lived without this semester. The techniques that I learned have helped my 1L experience AND my personal life in more ways than I could have imagined. Both Professor Green and Professor Simon are incredible teachers, with so much information. Beyond that, though, is the amount of caring and compassion they put into the program and my individual experience. I cannot thank them enough! I hope that an elective program does become available. I would absolutely enroll in it.”
- “Though it was my dream to become an attorney ever since I was 5 years old, I came very close to dropping out, and I strongly believe that I would have done so if it had not been for Professor Simon and Professor Green. They helped me cope

with my enormous amounts of stress and stay focused on the task at hand. I have never met another person who understood my struggles and was able to provide unique solutions tailored specifically to me as effectively as Professor Simon, and I have never met someone who I have connected with so deeply and quickly as I did with Professor Green. If it had not been for the Peak Performance Program, I likely would not have completed my lifelong goal of becoming an attorney. But because I enrolled in the program and got the help that I needed, I now feel stronger than ever and look forward to continuing my legal education.”

- “I think this was a great way to ensure we were mentally on the right track in our 1st semester at law school. I believe if other students did this program, they might have stayed in school.”
- “I found that the techniques helped in coping with the stress of writing papers, reading for long periods and exam simulations. More importantly, the class was one of the few hours that I could dedicate to my mental health. The program/class hours also served as a midweek break between studying. I don’t think I would have been able to cope with the stresses of law school without many of the techniques we practiced in class.”
- “I cannot say enough good things about the Peak Performance Program and about Professor Simon and Professor Green as individuals and educators. . . . I consider myself extremely lucky that I was a 1L the year this program was launched, and I hope to participate in it and/or have meetings with Professor Simon and Professor Green throughout my career at Southwestern Law. The program that Professors Simon and Green have put together not only taught me to slow down and be introspective, in terms of stress management, but also to re-program how I approach problems in my study habits, and how I manage due dates. Just the focus alone on restructuring beliefs and encouragement of different approaches in itself has made me feel more confident in my law school work. I honestly don't know how anyone manages law school without being able to observe and address the state of their mental health. I have found myself much less intimidated by my 1L year since starting the PP program. I am able to tackle things like outlines, papers, exam studying, etc, with a clear mind and a confidence that I can get through it by being self-aware. I am very very grateful that I started my 1L year when the PP program was initiated. I feel very lucky. It's also wonderful to have a feeling of camaraderie in the classroom, to know that I am not alone in my need to have strategic and practical guidance to quiet the negative, stressful voices in my head. I also very much enjoy the energy from both Professor Simon and Professor Green - they are both exuberant people, very excited with their work, and clearly very caring for their students. I feel very lucky that I have them in my life.”

- “I loved the program. Both instructors were beyond amazing and really cared about the students. I wanted to attend all the classes and I regret that I didn't. I would definitely love to take this class again.”
- “I absolutely loved this course. Professor Simon & Professor Green’s lessons truly kept me grounded throughout this extremely difficult time. I honestly believe this class is responsible for my stability so far. Meeting once a week really replenished me and reminded me that along with rigorous studying, I need to engage in self-care to do my best. I’m sad it’s over. I wish this was a class next semester - it truly changed my law school experience.”
- “It was very helpful! I really enjoy the experience and I think it really helped me grow as a person.”
- “The peak performance program was a valuable experience and opportunity that I will take with me beyond my time in law school. The exercises we learned helped me deal with many personal roadblocks, which improved my ability to study and decreased the anxiety I experienced during the day. Professor Simon and Professor Green are great mentors, who demonstrate genuine interest in helping students reach their full potential. I think that the peak performance program is an asset to Southwestern, and I hope that more students in the future take advantage of the program.”
- “I was grateful for the opportunity to participate in this group. All the topics were relevant and the presentations and discussions were meaningful and insightful. The meetings felt like a refuge and I looked forward to every session. The professors did a great job creating a safe space, opening with a topic then leading a discussion. . . . Peak performance . . . really enhanced my experience at Southwestern. Any of my tuition money going towards these programs and to these professors was money well spent. Both professors were very positive, engaging, and knowledgeable. I appreciated how Professor Green shared his experiences about being a law student and attorney and also offer insightful personal stories and psychological angles. I appreciated his humor and enthusiasm too. I happen to know Professor Simon better because I had her for academic skills last semester and go to Mindfulness Mondays with her. Professor Simon enhanced my school experience with her passion, positivity, and knowledge. Her effect on me was greater than that of any other professor I had this year. Law school has overall been a positive in my life and pushed me to grow beyond what I thought was possible. That said however, I also found this first year to have plenty of negative undertones. Instead of learning for the joy of it we were learning for other things and the tone felt strange, artificial, shaming, ego-driven, and borderline toxic. And my main struggles related less to objective things like organization and

time management, but more to my subjective experiences, like isolation, self-doubt, and the like, which were feeding into my less-than-stellar performance. This program added a real-life, human, positive, big-picture perspective to what we were going through this year. . . This class gave me useful tools and ideas to reflect on. I would have liked the class to last longer, maybe 90 minutes. . . Also, I think an extra class for the students in the “regular” contracts class would have been popular. Offhand I know of three students who were super bummed they could not continue with PP1L after the first semester. I'm hopeful there will be a PP2L!”

- “The Peak Performance course was a great experience that proved to be very useful, not only while studying for finals, but for detailing with certain issues in general. I believe a course like this would be a great asset for all law schools to implement.”
- “I gained many valuable tools [and] it was great having a different way to process and interact with the law school experience. It was engaging beyond an intellectual level on a more personal and emotional level. I know I would have had a much more difficult experience if it wasn't for the tools I learned and practiced in peak. My performance improved immensely in the second semester and I felt I handled the emotional stress much better than I otherwise would have.”
- “It was a great way to take a break from 1L stress and focus on ourselves. . . . Loved that we had a space where we could all come together and take care of ourselves. As the classes progressed the meditations got deeper and deeper. My favorite session was the one about forgiving. It was very powerful and stuck with me to this day. Thank you Prof Green and Simon for doing this for us. Anyway I wanted to thank you for being such great support to us our first semester and for being there for me. It meant a lot. I survived finals and it was thanks to all of your help.
- “I loved this class and hope it becomes a class for credit. This class helped decrease stress levels and increase success in my law school experience. I don't know where I would be without this class and such passionate teachers to help guide me. The most impressive part of class is that all of their claims are backed by science and truly help you manage emotions, experiences, and stress productively.”
- “Loved it!! Has changed my perspective in several areas of my life. It's hard to put into words... I knew I struggled with anxiety but didn't realize I was habitually ignoring it. This class helped me EXPLORE the root of anxiety and the unhealthy coping mechanisms that have been unknowingly programmed in my system for years. I feel more self aware, emotionally more organized. This class helped me

recognize that my own negativity can paralyze my success. But! I found that negativity works in cycles and patterns, and that the hardwiring CAN be cut. It can! Profs Simon and Green taught me about mindfulness and that we each have the power to face our inner demons which have been consciously or unconsciously ignored. We are able to rewire our programming if we so choose. Wow! Thank you for all of your hard work! I am so grateful!!! You know, I sat back after the survey and realized you both have had a hand in shaping my soul! I have learned so much. You two are a power duo. Thank you from my future self!”

- “I loved the program goals and professors' energy.”
- “I loved the guided meditations. Some weeks, when I wasn't feeling particularly keen on taking the extra time to stay and attend class, I remember how great it is to have such enthusiastic professors who always give so much!”
- “[The Peak Performance Program] has been an experience of growth. Profound, deep, healing, calming, strengthening, physical, spiritual, intellectual and academic growth. From the first class to my last class, I have experienced a sustained betterment in my controlled positive interaction with my classmates, teachers, friends & family in and out of school, and approach to learning. My energy levels are higher than they would have been without this program; and my stress level lower. . . . I am very thankful for this program, the learning and friendships that have come from it.”
- “AMAZING! I didn’t know what to fully expect with this, but it seemed promising. . . . The lessons learned and the actions and thoughts I should have, or try to employ are incredibly helpful. These are things I know I will take with me for the rest of my life and I have seen the effects of this program already in some facets of my life. I’m very thankful for the opportunity to have been in this program and thank Professors Green & Simon for being such excellent models and guides for us along the way. They made this first semester of law school a much better experience than I was expecting.”
- “It was a great honor to be able to participate in the Peak Performance program. As a 1L Evening student, it was very beneficial for me to be able to come in to class every Wednesday and learn from the best -- Prof. Simon & Prof. Green. This program has allowed me to keep myself in balance during possibly the most difficult academic year of my career while adjusting to law school. I’ve learned how to be more mindful of what’s going on around me and to treat myself and others with respect. I appreciated all of the class exercises and activities, our conversations, and all the awesome advice! I would definitely recommend this program to all students and would definitely be interested in continuing this program, if offered. Thank you again!”

- “I am not sure where to begin describing my individual experience with this program because Peak Performance has truthfully provided me with such wonderful tools I was able to employ both in my academic and personal life. To begin I wish the Peak Performance program I attended in the Spring was available to me in the fall because I feel there were certain testing techniques made known to me that I had been unaware of in Fall. For example, before beginning an exam this semester I employed several mindfulness breathing techniques which made me much calmer before taking the exam than I had done the semester prior. I think however what Peak Performance contributed to me in my school life that has paid off tremendously was really understanding this notion of grit. I struggled both on a personal level and academic level with my LAWS professor this past semester and brought up the issues in Peak Performance sessions. There were remarks made by my professor that we're both discouraging and frightful however both Professor Green and Simon taught me not to fear criticism but to use it as a driving force to improve my overall academic performance. Second semester I followed their instruction and I was able to take the lowest and worst grade I received my last semester which was a C- in LAWS and turn it into a B this semester. I took this grade as encouragement and realized I may not have received my goal of an A but I now thrive on the challenge of being able to finally accomplish my goal of being able to do so because I realized I am more than able of it. Peak Performance taught me that we should not be frustrated by our setbacks but rather think of ourselves as problem solvers and when situations do not go our way the first time around, think: the way I approached this situation didn't work, and I am a problem solver, so I should employ a different strategy. Peak Performance is then there to provide the tools as to what different strategies are available and I am forever grateful to both professors for helping me access a strategy that worked best for me.”
- “Great experience. I found it gave me some awesome tools for dealing with life in and outside of law school.”
- “I really enjoyed my time. Each class I attended helped in a different way. My first semester went by smoothly. It may or may not be because of Peak Performance, however, it definitely didn't hurt. Meeting people outside my section helped demonstrate that all of 1L was experiencing the same as me. Two Thumbs Up!”
- “I felt that this program provided me with a lot of great resources as to how to manage stress. It was nice being in a low pressure classroom of my peers, knowing that everyone was having similar experiences of pressure and anxiety. The sessions were not only helpful but also interactive and humorous and felt like a respite from my studies.”

- “This course really helped me to stay grounded and engaged for my 1L semester. I knew every week was a chance to unwind in a safe place, share with others my experiences, and learn to be patient and mindful in my most stressful times. It was like a mini-retreat from law school each week. I looked forward to the engagement each week because it would give me a much needed outlet and new perspective. The course was also structured well. Each concept built on others and I felt like I got a good overview and practice of very fundamental concepts. It was good to learn how to decompress from the mental strain of law school and learn techniques to help manage life’s stressors. Both Professor Simon & Professor Green had such good positive participation, vulnerableness and genuine happiness and desire for our success that I felt accepted and loved. This experience was invaluable.”
- “I really enjoyed the program! I found myself looking forward to it every Tuesday because it gave me an opportunity to feel calm and at peace. . . . I find myself practicing what I learned on a daily basis. THANK YOU SO MUCH PROF GREEN & PROF SIMON!!!”
- “As someone who’d been out of school nine years before law school, as well as having a history with depression, I had a lot of anxieties and adjustments being back in school, and being in law school. Peak Performance. . .helped me to not feel so overwhelmed and deal with it all better, and what works best for me. . . . The weekly meetings really helped me to reconnect and still feel human when so often during 1L we don’t have time to have personal lives or connect with people we care about as much as we might be used to. The Peak Program helped me to remind myself to focus on myself, because a strong sense of self and confidence in one’s own ability is so necessary to do well in law school and beyond. I am very grateful.”
- “The program offers a wonderful space to learn more about how to become more aware and take care of yourself. The course introduced me to interesting and useful tools to better myself and my performance. Prof. Simon and Green are wonderful, positive and capable people who radiate kindness and energy.”
- “Law School has been very stressful for me, while dealing with doubt and uncertainty has not made it easy. However, this program has allowed me to learn techniques on how to release the pressure and understand that as long as I give my best, my best will be enough. I have learned how to undo every bad thought that has come to mind and it is very difficult to undo things that one once believed. Overall, this program has helped deal with the pressures of law school. Definitely helpful!”
- “Peak Performance was an excellent way to learn how to cope with the emotional ups and downs of law school. It helped put into words what were once

unarticulatable [sic] feelings and discover various paths and means of dealing with them. It was a therapy of sorts, an inner, reflective moment of the week during which I was reminded that my value is not simply based on my grades or how I represent myself to the world, but is based on what I think of me, how I treat others, and what I do to enact a positive message.”

- “I’m a Clinical Psychologist and have done a fair amount of mindfulness research training and practice with patients. I took this as a booster hoping to pick up a tidbit or two; I was pleasantly surprised at how much I learned and/or was able to build upon my base. Sessions didn’t feel like school, but more of a break from the academic (and other) intensity. I appreciated the open and warm environment and the encouragement to be our authentic selves.”
- “I felt empowered after each session and will take everything I learned and implement it in my daily life. Thank you so much for such an experience. I deeply admire and respect you both for your passion and dedication! Southwestern is extremely lucky to have you both!”
- “Peak Performance was a great program. I am very glad I attended the sessions. The program was practical and extremely relevant to the 1L experience. Initially, I worried the weekly hour spent participating in the program would interfere with my main purpose of studying. However, I quickly learned that although the sessions may be perceived as taking a step back (time-wise), the effect of attending them would always propel me forward a few more steps. I appreciated the accuracy of the concepts we explored from neuroscience. Thank you!”³

³ While each of the above statements was included in a formal “Student Evaluation” at the end of the course, we also received a large collection of emails and verbal expressions from students throughout the semester, thanking us for the Peak Performance Program and informing us how the Program was significantly impacting their law school experience, and lives. We would be happy to provide copies of these emails to you.

*One such email that was received in the middle of the first semester by a student who went onto receive several “As” that semester, stated the following: “Hi Professor Simon, I just wanted to thank you for Peak Performance. I know you probably have heard this a lot already but I really value the program and think it is so necessary in this environment. I respect the program and what you are trying to do on this campus so incredibly much and I feel so lucky to be a part of it. Without getting too personal, I too (as I am sure many “type A” people have experienced) use to feel entitled and the best at just about everything, similar to how you mentioned you use to be. Although I recognize this is in my past and I have done so much to perform for *myself* and be grateful and full of humbleness, I know that there is still so much for me to learn and so many ways in which I can better myself. I know law school will come with so many challenges. I know personally that I have already experienced this with the loss of my dad just a month before starting here. Like Professor Green mentioned yesterday though and really resonated with me, instead of letting all of that negative energy consume me, I let this terrible event and time in my life shape me and guide me into becoming a better person and better student. I share all of this with you because I feel that I related so much to you and Professor Green yesterday that I wanted to let you know how much I appreciate the both of you and the program so much. I really think you can help not only me, but every student in that class perform to the best of our abilities. See you in class! Thanks again, [Name]”*

(3) The Peak Performance Program Is Receiving Significant – And Ever Increasing – National Attention

Southwestern's Peak Performance Program is receiving significant – and continually increasing – attention and accolades across the country. We are being invited to speak at law schools, law school conferences, and other legal events across the country. Several industry experts have referred to the Peak Performance Program as “one of the most innovative” law school programs in the entire nation.

Despite being less than one year old, the Peak Performance Program is already receiving the following pieces of national attention:

NALSAP Conference at UCLA Law School: We were featured speakers at the National Association of Law Student Affairs Professionals (“NALSAP”) Conference at UCLA Law School from June 1-3. Deans, Associate Deans, and other student affairs professionals from over 100 law schools across the country attended. Our presentation focused on several core techniques from the PPP that allow students to experience less stress, greater focus, and improved academic performance in law school. After completing our presentation, we received extraordinarily positive feedback from several Deans and Associate Deans from across the country. The Chair of the Conference, Emily Scivoletto, who is Assistant Dean for Student Affairs at UCLA Law School, emailed us after the conference to inform us that countless attendees “RAVED” (in all capital letters) about our presentation. A copy of her messages to us is included at the end of this Report.

Positive Psychology in Law Conference: We were invited to speak at the Positive Psychology in Law Conference at Suffolk Law School from June 15-17. We presented on key aspects of Positive Psychology that have been incorporated into our Peak Performance Program.

SEALS Conference in Florida: We have been invited to speak at the Southeastern Association of Law Schools (“SEALS”) Conference in Boca Raton, Florida, from August 3-6. We will be speaking on a collection of the core teachings of the Program.

AALS Balance Section MAG Topics Call: We were recently invited to summarize the Southwestern Peak Performance Program for scores of law professors who are members of the American Association of Law Schools Balance Section's MAG. Our one-hour presentation was, again, met with extraordinarily positive feedback.

NALP Conference: We were requested by NALP to submit a proposal to be featured speakers at the National Association for Law Placement (“NALP”) Professional Development Conference in Washington D.C., from November 30 through December 1, to discuss Southwestern's Peak Performance Program and the core teachings from the

Program. Our proposal is currently under submission, and we anticipate being accepted as featured speakers at the NALP Conference.

Themis Bar Exam Preparation Course: We are currently in discussions with Themis to provide stress management and peak performance programming to the approximately 12,000 Bar Exam students that annually enroll in Themis' Bar Prep course. We have reached an agreement in principle on the contents of the programming, and now will be finalizing the terms.

Harvard Law School: We recently met with the Associate Dean of Harvard Law School, who reached out to us to inform us that she is interested in having us present aspects of our Peak Performance Program to Harvard Law students, including possibly at the Harvard Law School Orientation. We are also discussing the possibility of playing a role in a formal study of mental wellness at Harvard Law School.

Yale Law School: We are currently in discussions with the Associate Dean of Yale Law School to provide presentations and/or workshops to Yale Law students based on the core teachings of the Peak Performance Program.

Georgetown Law School: We are in touch with the Associate Dean of Georgetown Law School to provide presentations and/or workshops to Georgetown Law students based on the core teachings of the Peak Performance Program

Top-Tier Law Schools in California & Several Additional Law Schools Across the Country: We are currently in discussions with Deans and Associate Deans at several other top-tier law schools in California to provide presentations and/or workshops to their students based on the core teachings of the Peak Performance Program. We are also in discussions with Deans, Associate Deans, and Student Affairs professionals from several law schools across the country to provide presentations and/or workshops to their students based on the core teachings of the Peak Performance Program.

American Bar Association Study at Big Law: We have been approached by an influential individual in the legal industry who spent many years at the American Bar Association and who would like to conduct a joint study with us and the ABA across a select few international law firms. The study would evaluate whether the intervention techniques of the Peak Performance Program, when taught in "Big Law," lead to reduced stress and improved professional performance among the lawyers.

The Peak Performance Program is not even one year old, and it is already receiving *significant* national attention. Moreover, this national attention is continually and consistently growing over time. Thus, apart from the substantial benefits the Program is providing to the Southwestern students, themselves, the Program is also providing Southwestern Law School with an additional stream of attention and acclaim that it would not receive in the absence of the Program. It is highly likely that this

national attention and acclaim can translate into grants or other monetary benefit for the institution in the short and long-term.

Concluding Comment & Recommendation

In light of the above facts, we believe it is indisputable that the Pilot Year of the Peak Performance Program was an overwhelming success. The Peak Performance Program: (1) was associated with superior academic performance by the students who completed the Program; (2) was widely praised and appreciated by the Peak Performance students, who reported experiencing less stress, more joyfulness, greater productivity, and improved academic outcomes as a result of the Program; and (3) has brought significant – and ever increasing – national attention to Southwestern Law School.

For these reasons, we recommend continuing the Peak Performance Program for a second year (2017-2018), and beyond.

We look forward to a discussion on these results and our recommendations. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Rebecca A. Simon
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Co-Director, Peak Performance Program
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Jarrett Green
Adjunct Associate Professor of Law
Co-Director, Peak Performance Program
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Enclosures:

Program Content – Topic Syllabus
Student Testimonials
Original Program Proposal (May 2016)

**STUDENT
EVALUATIONS**

**FALL 2016
PROGRAM**

FALL 2016
PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

- 1 -

This program is, without a doubt, one thing I could not have lived without this semester. The techniques that I learned have helped my 1L experience AND my personal life in more ways than I could have imagined. Both Professor Green and Professor Simon are incredible teachers, with so much information. Beyond that, though, is the amount of caring and compassion they put into the program and my individual experience. I cannot thank them enough! I hope that an elective program does become available. I would absolutely enroll in it.

LOVE YOU GUYS!!!

YES/YES (Maddy Hefner)

mhefner16@swlaw.edu

- 2 -

The program offers a wonderful space to learn more about how to become more aware and take care of yourself. The course introduced me to interesting and useful tools to better myself and my performance. Prof. Simon and Green are wonderful, positive and capable people who radiate kindness and energy.

YES/YES (Xhesi Hysi)

xhysi16@swlaw.edu

- 3 -

Peak Performance was an excellent way to learn how to cope with the emotional ups and downs of law school. It helped put into words what were once unarticulatable [sic] feelings and discover various paths and means of dealing with them. It was a therapy of sorts, an inner, reflective moment of the week during which I was reminded that my value is not simply based on my grades or how I represent myself to the world, but is based on what I think of me, how I treat others, and what I do to enact a positive message.

YES/YES (Alanna Pires)

alannapires22@gmail.com

- 4 -

I think this was a great way to ensure we were mentally on the right track in our 1st semester at law school. I believe if other students did this program, they might have stayed in school.

The activities and being able to communicate with my peers were my favorite part.

YES/YES

- 5 -

This course really helped me to stay grounded and engaged for my L1 semester. I knew every week was a chance to unwind in a safe place, share with others my experiences, and learn to be patient and mindful in my most stressful times. It was like a mini-retreat from law school each week. I looked forward to the engagement each week because it would give me a much needed outlet and new perspective.

The course was also structured well. Each concept built on others and I felt like I got a good overview and practice of very fundamental concepts. It was good to learn how to decompress from the mental strain of law school and learn techniques to help manage life's stressors.

Both Professor Simon & Professor Green had such good positive participation, vulnerableness and genuine happiness and desire for our success that I felt accepted and loved. This experience was invaluable.

YES/YES (Melanie Rodriguez) mrodriguez@swlaw.edu

- 6 -

The meditations were very helpful to begin the semester with. I would like to have done more of them as the semester went on in class. I also wish we would have covered guilt more as a topic. I think there is a lot of guilt involved when we don't stay 2 days ahead in our reading & things like that. Being overwhelmed in guilt is not beneficial to getting back on track w/our assignments. I think this visualization was helpful of increasing our zone of emotion. I would like to have covered, in our further sessions, some of the representations we learned at the beginning of the program. THANK YOU for your time and effort in teaching us about mindfulness during our 1L year!!

** Another helpful tip I now realize, would be encouraging us to bring a Peak Performance journal or perhaps send us a take away email on Thursday or Friday. So much of the quotes or theories would be helpful to have in writing later on after the session.

YES/MAYBE

- 7 -

As someone who'd been out of school nine years before law school, as well as having a history with depression, I had a lot of anxieties and adjustments being back in school, and being in law school. Peak Program and speaking to Prof. Green in office hours helped me to not feel so overwhelmed and deal with it all better, and what works best for me. Though I was aware of, and sometimes practiced mindfulness on my own before law school, the Peak Program helped me to maintain the practice and the self-care needed to stay focused through the semester and re-center. The weekly meetings really helped me to reconnect and still feel human when so often during 1L we don't have time to have personal lives or connect with people we care about as much as we might be used to. The Peak Program helped me to remind myself to focus on myself, because a strong sense of self and confidence in one's own ability is so necessary to do well in law school and beyond. I am very grateful.

YES/YES (Chelsea Manfredi) cmanfredi16@swlaw.edu

- 8 -

I really enjoyed the Peak Program. Between working full-time and going to law school, it is easy to forget to take a moment to check in and feel how your body is doing. I learned how to focus on the present moment through breathing techniques. I also thought the body scan was an interesting technique that felt awkward, but it was very interesting to pay attention to specific parts of the body that we may ignore during our busy day.

YES/YES (Victori Ralis) vralis@swlaw.edu

- 9 -

The program was helpful in my transitioning to law school. I found that the techniques helped in coping with the stress of writing papers, reading for long periods and exam simulations. More importantly, the class was one of the few hours that I could dedicate to my mental health. The program/class hours also served as a midweek break between studying. I don't think I would have been able

to cope with the stresses of law school without many of the techniques we practiced in class.

YES/MAYBE (Ruth Rasiah)

rras707@lasierra.edu

- 10 -

As someone who had never done any mindfulness exercises before, and generally viewed them as not helpful, it was hard for me to fully commit to and do every exercise fully. But once I was able to settle in and "drink the kool-aid" as they say, it was much easier to understand the benefits of the exercises. Some I thought weren't that helpful and sometimes I couldn't tell if people truly meant what they were saying, but overall, I usually left each class feeling refreshed, as if my mind could finally take a break from everything and be clear. I kind of wish I had practiced mindfulness more outside of class, but it isn't instinctually for me and hard to remember to do instead of just sleeping. It might be more helpful to actually have a structured schedule for others like me. But overall, many of the sessions have had a positive impact on my day and life in general. Thank you.

YES/MAYBE (Esther Kim)

ekim16@swlaw.edu

- 11 -

Law School has been very stressful for me, while dealing with doubt and uncertainty has not made it easy. However, this program has allowed me to learn techniques on how to release the pressure and understand that as long as I give my best, my best will be enough. I have learned how to undo every bad thought that has come to mind and it is very difficult to undo things that one once believed. Overall, this program has helped deal with the pressures of law school. Definitely helpful!

YES/YES (M. Loumianlle)

mkoulouman16@swlaw.edu

- 12 -

It has been an experience of growth. Profound, deep, healing, calming, strengthening, physical, spiritual, intellectual and academic growth. From the first class to my last class, I have experienced a sustained betterment in my controlled positive interaction with my classmates, teachers, friends & family in and out of school, and approach to learning. My energy levels are higher than they would have been without this program; and my stress level lower. I find my relationships with people in the program to be very candid, more so than in the day to day passing by small talk that is pleasant and less engaging than with people in the program that

have become more open to letting our guard down. I am very thankful for this program, the learning and friendships that have come from it. Thank you.

YES/YES (Sean Halloran)

shalloran@gmail.com

- 13 -

It was a great honor to be able to participate in the Peak Performance program. As a 1L Evening student, it was very beneficial for me to be able to come in to class every Wednesday and learn from the best -- Prof. Simon & Prof. Green. This program has allowed me to keep myself in balance during possibly the most difficult academic year of my career while adjusting to law school. I've learned how to be more mindful of what's going on around me and to treat myself and others with respect. I appreciated all of the class exercises and activities, our conversations, and all the awesome advice! I would definitely recommend this program to all students and would definitely be interested in continuing this program, if offered. Thank you again!

YES/YES (Sabeen Armani)

Sarmani16@swlaw.edu

- 14 -

I felt that this program provided me with a lot of great resources as to how to manage stress. It was nice being in a low pressure classroom of my peers, knowing that everyone was having similar experiences of pressure and anxiety. The sessions were not only helpful but also interactive and humorous and felt like a respite from my studies.

Personally, I enjoyed the freedom of the class, since we were fully on a voluntary and honor code system. If it were offered as an elective P/NP credit course, I'm not sure how it would/could affect my overall happiness with being in the class.

YES/MAYBE (Christina Chang)

wchang16@swlaw.edu

- 15 -

I think that the class should have been 45 minutes once a week. I personally do not like meditations so it was difficult for me to sit still during 20 minute exercises. Overall, I thought this program was beneficial but also challenging. It sometimes made me more anxious and stressed. I did enjoy learning about the psychological tests and watching videos that helped my personal mindfulness. I am not sure I would do this again because it is not really my strong suit and was often times

very frustrating. I am happy that I was open to try new things and explore something new!

MAYBE/NO

- 16 -

I really enjoyed the program! I found myself looking forward to it every Tuesday because it gave me an opportunity to feel calm and at peace. My favorite session was the "Beliefs" one & I find myself practicing what I learned on a daily basis.

THANK YOU SO MUCH PROF GREEN & PROF SIMON!!!

YES/YES (Jezabel Chavez)

jchaveznavarro16@swlaw.edu

- 17 -

I found the stress reduction techniques somewhat helpful. I believe that it's true that when we are nervous and stressed that our brains do not work at their best. I hope to use these techniques in the upcoming exams.

MAYBE/NO

- 18 -

As you know from my email w/Erin in the office of advancement, I believe very much in this program, in its helpfulness, thoughtfulness, strategic analysis, and its overall positive energy that is given to the 1L year. I also want to add that it's been so very wonderful to have a classroom experience this semester that wasn't about me learning a certain way or behaving a certain way, wasn't about me stroking anyone's ego or being quiet. In other words, it was a feel-good and open space, an environment which is deeply needed in such a rigorous and strict academic environment. Thank you for the safe space.

YES/YES (Rena Kosnett)

RenaKosnett@gmail.com

- 19 -

I loved this class and hope it becomes a class for credit. This class helped decrease stress levels and increase success in my law school experience. I don't know where I would be without this class and such passionate teachers to help guide me. The most impressive part of class is that all of their claims are backed

by science and truly help you manage emotions, experiences, and stress productively.

YES/YES (Jasmine Lewis)

JLewis16@swlaw.edu

- 20 -

Nice review of things I learned before, esp. valuable to discuss while in law school
Very applicable, I care more about being a healthy and evolved person than just maximizing how well I do as a student or attorney

Learned new things; personal growth

Gave me time and space to think and consider things, often thought about stuff discussed in class after, sometimes for hours

I could do w/out references to being "elite" because that's not something that matters to me

Excellent instructors, so knowledgeable, approachable & motivating

YES/YES

- 21 -

Peak Performance was a great program. I am very glad I attended the sessions. The program was practical and extremely relevant to the 1L experience. Initially, I worried the weekly hour spent participating in the program would interfere with my main purpose of studying. However, I quickly learned that although the sessions may be perceived as taking a step back (time-wise), the effect of attending them would always propel me forward a few more steps. I appreciated the accuracy of the concepts we explored from neuroscience. Thank you!

YES/YES (Joseph Mendoza)

josephjm3653@gmail.com

- 22 -

I'm a Clinical Psychologist and have done a fair amount of mindfulness research training and practice with patients. I took this as a booster hoping to pick up a tidbit or two; I was pleasantly surprised at how much I learned and/or was able to build upon my base.

Sessions didn't feel like school, but more of a break from the academic (and other) intensity. I appreciated the open and warm environment and the encouragement to be our authentic selves.

YES/YES (Neal Ramer)

nramer@gmail.com

- 23 -

Although I wasn't able to attend a majority of the meetings, I definitely gained a lot from the sessions I did attend. I felt empowered after each session and will take everything I learned and implement it in my daily life. Thank you so much for such an experience. I deeply admire and respect you both for your passion and dedication! Southwestern is extremely lucky to have you both!

YES/YES (Eliana Kohanzad)

ekohanzad16@swlaw.edu

- 24 -

I attended 10 out of 14 sessions - For those I didn't attend it was because I wanted to spend my time on school. I was often frustrated by the time gap - get out of class at 3:30 on Tuesdays and 45 minutes is not much time to get anything done. However, I always felt a bit better after leaving a peak session. I think once school started getting crazy, peak performance became less of a priority. Although the time commitment was more than I wanted at times, I have no complaints about the program itself. There were a couple weeks when I really felt peak was what I needed to calm my nerves. While I have no complaints or constructive criticism, I almost feel detached because I didn't develop a strong connection to mindfulness in general - I honestly never have. I circle "Maybe" for recommending to a 1L only because time commitment is hard even though it's only 1 hour a week for 14 weeks - it's crazy how important 1 hr. becomes for studying.

MAYBE/MAYBE

- 25 -

AMAZING! I didn't know what to fully expect with this, but it seemed promising. I am really glad I went to most of the sessions. The lessons learned and the actions and thoughts I should have, or try to employ are incredibly helpful. These are things I know I will take with me for the rest of my life and I have seen the effects of this program already in some facets of my life.

I'm very thankful for the opportunity to have been in this program and thank Professors Green & Simon for being such excellent models and guides for us along the way. They made this first semester of law school a much better experience than I was expecting.

YES/YES (Matthew Lopez)

matthewdL1993@gmail.com

- 26 -

I enjoyed the program very much. That said, it was difficult for me to attend an afternoon class as a PLEAS Student. It was a hard time period. I would make the following suggestions for future classes:

1. More meditation practice days
 2. More meditation practice in individual classes
 3. Prof. Green playing the singing bowl in the hallway during finals week (Please ?!)
- Really good, though, generally. Thanks!

MAYBE (Difficult for part time day)/MAYBE (Time of day is an issue)

(Krishm Charles)

kcharles16@swlaw.edu

- 27 -

I really enjoyed my time. Each class I attended helped in a different way. My first semester went by smoothly. It may or may not be because of Peak Performance, however, it definitely didn't hurt. Meeting people outside my section helped demonstrate that all of 1L was experiencing the same as me. Two Thumbs Up! (with pictures of thumbs)

YES/YES (Jae Ahn)

jaeahn16@gmail.com

- 28 -

I absolutely loved this program. Professor Simon & Professor Green's lessons truly kept me grounded throughout this extremely difficult time. I honestly believe this class is responsible for my stability so far. Meeting once a week really replenished me and reminded me that along with rigorous studying, I need to engage in self-care to do my best. I'm sad it's over. I wish this was a class next semester - it truly changed my law school experience.

THANK YOU BOTH!!

YES/YES (Brianna Tsutsui)

briannatsutsui@gmail

**STUDENT
EVALUATIONS**

**SPRING 2017
PROGRAM**



SPRING 2017
PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

- 1 -

I am not sure where to begin describing my individual experience with this program because Peak Performance has truthfully provided me with such wonderful tools I was able to employ both in my academic and personal life. To begin I wish the Peak Performance program I attended in the Spring was available to me in the fall because I feel there were certain testing techniques made known to me that I had been unaware of in Fall. For example, before beginning an exam this semester I employed several mindfulness breathing techniques which made me much calmer before taking the exam than I had done the semester prior. **I think however what Peak Performance contributed to me in my school life that has paid off tremendously was really understanding this notion of grit.** I struggled both on a personal level and academic level with my LAWS professor this past semester and brought up the issues in Peak Performance sessions. There were remarks made by my professor that we're both discouraging and frightful however both Professor Greene and Simon taught me not to fear criticism but to use it as a driving force to improve my overall academic performance. Second semester I followed their instruction and I was able to take the lowest and worst grade I received my last semester which was a C- in LAWS and turn it into a B this semester. I took this grade as encouragement and realized I may not have received my goal of an A but I now thrive on the challenge of being able to finally accomplish my goal of being able to do so because I realized I am more than able of it. Peak Performance taught me that we should not be frustrated by our setbacks but rather think of ourselves as problem solvers and when situations do not go our way the first time around, think: the way I approached this situation didn't work, and I am a problem solver, so I should employ a different strategy. Peak Performance is then there to provide the tools as to what different strategies are available and **I am forever grateful to both professors for helping me access a strategy that worked best for me.**

YES/YES (Danielle Roth)

Droth16@swlaw.edu

- 2 -

I cannot say enough good things about the Peak Performance Program and about Professor Simon and Professor Green as individuals and educators. I've written a summation of my feelings about the program for Southwestern before, and I'm sharing that here again. I consider myself extremely lucky that I was a 1L the year this program was launched, and I hope to participate in it and/or have meetings with Professor Simon and Professor Green throughout my career at Southwestern Law. The Peak Performance program encourages self-analysis and mindfulness - these are qualities that we, as intellectuals in pursuit of erudition in a complex field of study, as well as high marks on challenging material, very often and very quickly put aside, to our detriment (at least, when I put my self-awareness aside, I find myself feeling very off-track). The program that Professors Simon and Green have put together not only taught me to slow down and be introspective, in terms of stress management, but also to re-program how I approach problems in my study habits, and how I manage due dates. Just the focus alone on restructuring beliefs and encouragement of different approaches in itself has made me feel more confident in my law school work. I honestly don't know how anyone manages law school without being able to observe and address the state of their mental health. I have found myself much less intimidated by my 1L year since starting the PP program. I am able to tackle things like outlines, papers, exam studying, etc, with a clear mind and a confidence that I can get through it by being self-aware. **I am very very grateful that I started my 1L year when the PP program was initiated. I feel very lucky.** It's also wonderful to have a feeling of camaraderie in the classroom, to know that I am not alone in my need to have strategic and practical guidance to quiet the negative, stressful voices in my head. I also very much enjoy the energy from both Professor Simon and Professor Green - they are both exuberant people, very excited with their work, and clearly very caring for their students. I feel very lucky that I have them in my life.

YES/YES (Rena Kosnett)

rkosnett16@swlaw.edu

- 3 -

I really enjoyed the peak performance class. Beyond giving me a place where **I felt comfortable sharing expressing what I had been holding in for months; if not years.** It also assured me that my classmates (and future colleagues) are feeling the same emotions as I was. It gave me confidence that I was not struggling alone. Moreover, It allowed me to become friends with people I would have never talked to otherwise because we all become a support group for each other.

YES/MAYBE (Ruben Ceja)

rceja16@swlaw.edu

- 4 -

I think it was very helpful to have this in law school. Mindfulness is so important in order to succeed in law school. I didn't really appreciate how important it was until I received my grades after Fall semester. It was great having a small group of like minded people to openly discuss our struggles. **I would recommend this program to every incoming 1L.**

YES/YES (Diana Aramyan)

daramyan16@swlaw.edu

- 5 -

The peak performance program was a valuable experience and opportunity that I will take with me beyond my time in law school. **The exercises we learned helped me deal with many personal roadblocks, which improved my ability to study and decreased the anxiety I experienced during the day.** Professor Simon and Professor Green are great mentors, who demonstrate genuine interest in helping students reach their full potential. I think that the peak performance program is an asset to Southwestern, and I hope that more students in the future take advantage of the program.

YES/YES (Anthony Bill)

anthony.j.bill@gmail.com

- 6 -

This program was very special to me. It was the only time I was able to be myself and not fake it. By that I mean I didn't have to pretend that I knew everything or to keep up appearances like most do in class pretending they understand everything in lecture when in reality they don't. I was able to talk about my fears and Professors Simon and Green were able to give us helpful techniques to get us. I've run out hurdles. There is a good quote from Muhammad Ali that fits here: *"It isn't the mountains ahead that slow you down, it is the pebble in your shoe."* **There are many law students who are very smart and capable but we have fears and insecurities. That is the pebble in our shoe. And Professors Simon and Green removed that pebble for me. I am forever grateful.** Many more students would benefit if they actually saw the work we did. Thank you Professors.

YES/YES (Arnold Ovsepyan)

Arnoldovsepyan@yahoo.com

- 7 -

Although the end goal in law school is to learn the material the best we can, there is so much more to it than what goes on in the classroom. My first year of law

school contained an adjustment into the most high-stress environment I've ever been in, my first time ever really being challenged academically (and correspondingly my first time ever doubting myself academically), my first serious relationship, and a terrible breakup. The amount of stress I had to deal with was unprecedented and I completely broke down unlike anything I had ever experienced before. **Though it was my dream to become an attorney ever since I was 5 years old, I came very close to dropping out, and I strongly believe that I would have done so if it had not been for Professor Simon and Professor Green.** They helped me cope with my enormous amounts of stress and stay focused on the task at hand. I have never met another person who understood my struggles and was able to provide unique solutions tailored specifically to me as effectively as Professor Simon, and I have never met someone who I have connected with so deeply and quickly as I did with Professor Green. If it had not been for the Peak Performance Program, I likely would not have completed my lifelong goal of becoming an attorney. But because I enrolled in the program and got the help that I needed, I now feel stronger than ever and look forward to continuing my legal education.

YES/YES (Michael D.)

- 8 -

I participated in both semesters and I gained many valuable tools each semester. It was great having a different way to process and interact with the law school experience. It was engaging beyond an intellectual level on a more personal and emotional level. **I know I would have had a much more difficult experience if it wasn't for the tools I learned and practiced in Peak. My performance improved immensely in the second semester and i felt i handled the emotional stress much better than I otherwise would have.**

YES/YES (Melanie R.)

- 9 -

It was a great environment to get encouraged and to really self reflect.

YES/YES (Victoria R.)

- 10 -

The Peak Performance course was a great experience that proved to be very useful, not only while studying for finals, but for detailing with certain issues in general. I believe a course like this would be a great asset for all law schools to implement.

YES/YES (Michelle M.)

- 11 -

Great experience. I found it gave me some awesome tools for dealing with life in and outside of law school.

YES/YES (Ernesto Prado) eprado16@swlaw.edu

- 12 -

I was grateful for the opportunity to participate in this group. All the topics were relevant and the presentations and discussions were meaningful and insightful. **The meetings felt like a refuge and I looked forward to every session.** The professors did a great job creating a safe space, opening with a topic then leading a discussion. Offhand, two of my favorite topics were shame resilience and self sabotage. Peak performance stuff last semester plus this semester really enhanced my experience at Southwestern. **Any of my tuition money going towards these programs and to these professors was money well spent.** Both professors were very positive, engaging, and knowledgeable. I appreciated how Professor Green shared his experiences about being a law student and attorney and also offer insightful personal stories and psychological angles. I appreciated his humor and enthusiasm too. I happen to know Professor Simon better because I had her for academic skills last semester and go to Mindfulness Mondays with her. Professor Simon enhanced my school experience with her passion, positivity, and knowledge. Her effect on me was greater than that of any other professor I had this year. Law school has overall been a positive in my life and pushed me to grow beyond what I thought was possible. That said however, I also found this first year to have plenty of negative undertones. Instead of learning for the joy of it we were learning for other things and the tone felt strange, artificial, shaming, ego-driven, and borderline toxic. And my main struggles related less to objective things like organization and time management, but more to my subjective experiences, like isolation, self-doubt, and the like, which were feeding into my less-than-stellar performance. **This program added a real-life, human, positive, big-picture perspective to what we were going through this year. One nice takeaway for me was that I had so much in common with other students and their behind-the-scenes feelings and experiences.** This class gave me useful tools and ideas to reflect on. I would have liked the class to last longer, maybe 90 minutes. Sometimes it felt like we had to rush or wrap things up too early at the end. Also, I think an extra class for the students in the "regular" contracts class would have been popular. Offhand I know of three students who were super bummed they could not continue with PP1L after the first semester. I'm hopeful there will be a PP2L!

YES/YES (Courtney M.)

**STUDENT
EVALUATIONS**

**FALL 2017
PROGRAM**



FALL 2017
PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

- 1 -

This program is unbelievable. It has changed my view on law school and how I view myself as a person. I had always heard how law school "changed" you, but I liked who I was and didn't really want this new found change. However, I stepped into Peak Performance on day one and realized this was the change and it was 100% for the better. This class has made me a better daughter, partner, and student, which is more than I imagined. This class gives you the tools to succeed by allowing you to be present in every piece of your life. I am forever grateful for this experience. I will use our class exercises for finals, the bar, and as a lawyer. This class gives me peace of mind that even if maybe I don't know the material as well as I want to, my mindset will be exactly where it needs to be to be as successful as I can be. Thank-you for an amazing experience!

YES/YES (Taylor Wright) twright17@swlaw.edu

- 2 -

When I first sat down in the first day of Peak, I thought to myself there is not much they can teach me in the form of mindfulness. That being said because I would read as many self-help and mindfulness books that I could get my hand on. I have an obsession with trying to better myself in any way I can. Boy, was I amazed to see how Professor Green and Professor Simon had to give me. They have taught me so much in such a small amount of time and really affirmed my belief that the Law of Attraction is real. I can, without a doubt, say in my whole academic career, no class will serve to my advantage like Peak Performance did. It has reaffirmed my beliefs that amazing professors still exist. Not the ones who pack a bunch of information into your head, but the ones who actually serve to guide you through this touch thing we call life. I will now only judge myself based on my own standards. I will do whatever it takes to win but at the same time, realizing that winning isn't everything.

But most importantly, I will love all those around me and continue to spread positive energy back into the world. I am forever grateful for all the time, energy and commitment Professor Green and Professor Simon have shown to me.

YES/YES (Justin Trad) jtrad17@swlaw.edu

- 3 -

This was nothing short of a blessing. As someone with anxiety (a mental illness that honestly defines the earliest memories of my life and has been with me every single day for two decades), this course was an opportunity to learn how to trust, love and forgive myself. I have learned more in that last couple months than ever before, and I keep these lessons with me each day, whether I am applying them in the classroom or just to my life in general. The meditation practice was always my favorite part and I am so grateful for all this program has taught me.

This program gave a very tense and stressful and scary experience (our first semester) a compassionate and human face. I thank you both from the bottom of my heart for your compassion, vulnerability, acceptance, willingness to listen, and your wisdom. This program was by far the best decision I made here at Southwestern, and I am truly lucky to continue my law school experience with these lessons in mind. I don't have any suggestions and maybe my comments are the opposite of helpful but this is honestly how I feel and I am so thankful!

YES/YES (Nadia Aboujawdah) naboujawdah17@swlaw.edu

- 4 -

I love the program. I find it excellent for us 1L law students to focus on substantive emotional development. Law school is an incredibly stressful time in our lives and a class that focuses us on ourselves is needed. I do not know how I can critique your performances other than practicing a lecture so you can get through your lesson plan. Thank you for teaching the program.

YES/YES (Adam Blankstein) asblankstein@gmail.com

This program is a must. I think during the most confusing, stressful and depress-ing time of my life (the start of law school), this program really grounded me. I tried meditation during my LSAT and found it to be extremely helpful. Since school has started, I found that I didn't have much time for it any more. But, this program really helped reinforce the importance of mindfulness and the power it has. Thank you guys so much!

YES/YES (Christine Vu) CVU@swlaw.edu

I felt that the program was phenomenal! I feel that this program would be extremely important for 1Ls who fear the trials & tribulations of law school.

The core message that was conveyed seems to be that we are the masters of our emotions, our interactions and our experiences. It's extremely refreshing to feel remotely in control of our fates, even if only for an hour a week.

I look forward to any follow-up from this program; my only suggestion being that you incorporate one more poem. You've both shared your wisdom and I'd like to share some that I've borrowed from my Dad: "IF" by Rudyard Kipling; a poem that inspired me to never stop pushing forward. Perhaps it's not the most applicable, but a fair chance for me to share something equally profound with you.

Thank you for a wonderful semester!

YES/YES (Ian To) ito17@swlaw.edu

Law school taught me that anxiety can hit anyone, especially me. However, despite the high amounts and levels of anxiety I experience daily, Peak Performance has really made a difference. I wish I could apply and remember the skills I learned here more, but when I do utilize them, there's truly a difference in me. If anything, I wish I could have taken more sessions because of certain days my schedule would conflict or I wasn't feeling well. If this class was offered year-round, I would

definitely sign up. Everything I've learned here is something I can apply in life, in or out of school. However, it's also a concept I can share with others, who should know of these skills.

YES/YES (Monique Kawata) mkawata17@swlaw.edu

- 8 -

Coming into law school, I would like to say I had it all together and at times, maybe I did. However, having Peak Performance is an experience unlike any other. I wish a program like this had existed in elementary school and middle school, etc.

Peak has changed my life for the better and I could not be more grateful for that. I have learned to battle through the hard day because there is so much more to life than a difficult day or moment. I am moved by how amazing I feel after every Peak class. Being a 1L is hard and joining Peak on top of an already busy workload is hard, but I could do it all over again if I could. Please realize how valuable this class and Professor Simon and Green really are. Thank you!

YES/YES (Talya Deluya) talyadeluya@gmail.com

- 9 -

I enjoyed the experience, it was a fun break to talk about something other than law school. I almost wish there was more time for group sharing, almost a group vent session, so I won't feel so alone in my emotions; there is a sort of "oneness" in the shitty feelings, to be able to laugh and angrily grunt in a group. I almost wish the class was longer in the amount of weeks we had it, as I feel there is a lot to learn. One critical comment, some of the meditation during some days felt too long and made me more nervous, which I don't know what that means. Maybe I need more of it, but my favorite parts were sharing in class and hearing other people share.

YES/MAYBE (Minely Grigorian) minelygrigoria@gmail.com

Loved Peak Performance this semester. I think it was helpful to have us come together as a group and share some of the things we were struggling with in the high stress environment of 1L 1st semester. I do think it would have worked better if it was on a day that was not between 2 classes of Torts (Wed., & Thur.) as reading always needed to be done if I hadn't read for both classes before Wed.

I think the gratitude and seeing blessings in our hardships were some of the most helpful of the lessons that we had.

A more "in the round" environment would be awesome - the days where more people shared were some of the best.

Felt the care and concern that have been less present in other teachers that help us succeed without judgment.

YES/YES (Alma Mills) almatheyoungest@hotmail.com

Before taking this class, I was skeptical. But, then again, that's my nature. After the first few sessions, I thoroughly enjoyed the philosophical discussions in class. Although I didn't talk in these sessions, I was really enjoying the subject matter. These sessions were a great way to take a break from law school and talk about things that people should really think about in their lives.

The nature of our country, government, businesses and economics teaches about individualism, ambition and self-interest. But this course focused on something greater that I wish more people thought about, and that is humanity. As a side note, I think there should be more activities either in class or outside, just to be more engaging. I would have liked more activities to do. Please continue this program!!

YES/YES (Amirata Mahallati)

I really enjoyed coming to the Peak Performance Program every week. It was all new information to me, as I've never meditated or anything before so I was happy that each week covered something different. I'd say the most helpful day for me was the Communication in Conflict discussion because I truly found myself using it multiple times. The classes about decreasing stress were also very helpful to me. Both Professor Simon and Professor Green did an incredible job in their respective presentations that I found myself telling others about. I am so happy I made the decision to join Peak Performance. Thank you for a great semester!

YES/YES (Bobby Hearn) rhearn17@swlaw.edu

- 13 -

I thoroughly appreciated the Peak Performance program. As someone going through an extensive amount of personal hardship and growth this semester, I recognize I needed Peak early. I am so glad I reached that realization. Professor Simon and Green love each and every one of their students and that feeling is palpable. They each have the extraordinary and beautiful ability to appreciate everything that comes at them. Thanks to their help, I was able to approach my 1L year with the grace and poise I always wished I had. We are coming up on finals and I am hoping that I remember the valuable lessons imparted upon me over the last 3 months. I hope my resilience to obstacles remains constant.

Thank You Professors!
I hope to work with you again next semester

YES/YES (Kya Coletta) kcoletta17@swlaw.edu

I enjoyed working with P.P. along this journey as a constant reminder to check back in with myself. It's a wonderful tool to have access to that and helps us remember WHY we're here and that everyone around us is facing the same issues . . . we're all human. I do wish we stayed more on schedule for some of the lessons because it felt like we weren't able to get to some exercises that could be really beneficial to us all because of extending certain lectures.

It has been a wonderful space to feel vulnerable and I hope the program can continue for future students and not just 1L.

THANK YOU!

YES/YES (Kya Coletta) KColetta17@swlaw.edu

I appreciated the weekly sessions-it was the perfect amount of time to consistently check in and center myself without being too time consuming. I feel like I did get a lot out of this program, mainly being able to see myself and my life in a bigger picture than simply being in the stressful world of law school and feel like I have more tools and knowledge to cope with my emotions and daily challenges. Although I, myself, did not share much with the group verbally, one of the best/most impactful parts of the program was listening to my peers and understanding their thoughts and experiences, and finding that I was not alone in many of my own struggles and feelings.

Thank you for your time and effort in making this program meaningful!

YES/YES (Melissa Zigrang) mzigrang17@swlaw.edu

I am an extremely anxious person by nature and coming to law school scared me to no end. I was sure that I was going to crumble under the pressure. But, I really believe that this program stopped that from happening. I am actually shocked by how calm I've been able to stay throughout this semester. I've been stressed and worried and anxious, but I have not once allowed it to stop me from moving forward as I have done in the past. Some of my favorite moments of the course: writing a letter to myself. I feel like that will be a great gift to myself after finals. The gratitude list was amazing! It made me realize that not only the good things in life are the things to be grateful for. The bad things help just as much, if not more. and then there's all of the little things that I am going to keep trying to incorporate into my life - shaking it off, meditation, deep breathing. Those are all super helpful. My one criticism is the "family." I understand the point of it, but it was really the only thing I didn't always enjoy. I wanted this to be a calm, stress free environment, and I felt like that added a bit of pressure that wasn't necessary. But, other than that, I loved it!

YES/MAYBE (Alexis Bartholomew) abartholomew17@swlaw.edu

Having a space to come to helped me be accountable to myself about my own groundedness, self-care and mindfulness. I didn't have good self-care skills and often saw self-care as self-indulgent, privileged B.S. but this program helped me figure out the ways I was using that as an excuse to self-sabotage, not fulfill my needs and be shitty to myself.

I have a better understanding of what it means to do self care (vs. just self-indulging) and I am really grateful because I probably wouldn't have been able to survive law school without learning how to care for myself.

I also appreciate the values reflected in the program. It is nice to be in a space that says "people matter, not just \$." That has been really nice because all the folks I have are up in Seattle and law school in general seems \$ oriented. Thank you!

YES/YES (Rose Harriot) Eharriot17@swlaw.edu

Peak Performance was a safe space for me during the semester. The Wednesday afternoon time slot was rejuvenating for me because it helped me re-energize and reset for the remainder of the week.

My only critique of the course would be the "magic bullet" impression that many students were left with in the beginning of the semester (i.e. "In this course we will teach you how to achieve xyz") Instead, I think of this course as gaining (or adding) perspective & introducing ideas you may not have encountered before now. I guess my point is . . . the course isn't as goal oriented as other courses and instead, is very focused on the present moment.

Thank you for all the time and mindfulness techniques we worked on over the past few months.

YES/YES (Aerica Siegel) asiegel17@swlaw.edu

I thought this program was amazing/life changing. I am very interested in mindfulness, spirituality, and positive psychology, so I was interested in reinforcing these things I love to learn about that are very important to me. Little did I know, I not only reinforced many things but I learned TONS of new things! I'm so grateful for that so thank you for sharing your wisdom. Every week I left the room feeling energized, relaxed and with a new perspective that you built on each week. I love how you incorporate the community vibe too and cultivate such a welcoming positive environment. I'm struggling to think of any constructive feedback because I loved my experience. Even though I had to miss a couple weeks for events, I always felt welcomed back and kept in the loop. All I would say is in the beginning, don't ever feel you have to prove your wisdom is worth hearing with stats/science, etc., because the people you attract to this program are most likely already open to learning, rather than skeptics in need of persuasion. Your program is so awesome. It shows people it's worth it and doesn't need to tell or convince of that. I can only think of positive things to say - the most important things in life are what you teach and so many people go through life never hearing them so I think everything about this course is invaluable and just want to say Thank You!!

YES/YES (Lauren Reinas) LREINAS17@swlaw.edu/LaurenReinas@gmail.com

Honestly, I'm so grateful to have had the opportunity to be in this course. There were some meetings where it didn't even matter what we were talking about. I was so in my head about school. However, I know it would have been extremely worse not doing the breathing exercises, doing our framing strategies, or learning about gratitude and compassion. I think my favorite lesson was our compassion/self compassion lesson because there are so many moments that you want to beat yourself up in this process and it paralyzes you completely. I'm a major believer of spirituality and I'm sure for those students who are not, this class is especially helpful to them, whether they know it or not. And, although I do like to meditate, I feel like learning extra exercises, even just to listen and take extra time in the things I do, like eating, helped me along the course of the semester (although I definitely think you should change the mindful eating to Snickers bars next time). Don't change anything too much! Thank you both so much!!

YES/YES (Kelsey Finn) kfinn17@swlaw.edu

I loved this program. I thought it was really valuable! Alright, honestly, I had office hours scheduled at the same times as this class and either left early and/or came late. I wish I could have been here for more of the class. It was a break from studying and a chance to center myself. It was the one good thing apart from law school, that I got to accomplish each week.

I remember talking to Professor Green the first day of class just to tell him how much of an impact the course started to have on me. I can't really put it into words, and that's my misfortune, but I have a better mental state than when I first started classes.

So . . . Ya . . . I guess - Thanks . . .

I'm kidding. You guys were fun and super enlightening!

YES/YES (Cristina Lopez) clopez17@swlaw.edu

The program was excellent - I made the right decision joining. First, to address Professor Simon and Professor Green. Professor Simon, you speak with such conviction and emotion. Every time you speak, I either get the goose bumps, want to burst into tears, but mostly, just want to hear more. Professor Green, your energy is contagious -- I want to be like that. In my life, especially. These past few months - starting Law School, going through some health issues - I tend to be negative and overthink. This program has really allowed me to self-reflect. I remind myself to smile more and I just feel like I've been a more loving person: with my family, my friends, or even strangers. I remember that I should not be feeding the "Bad Wolf" which I often tend to do. I remember who I am, even though I thought I lost myself for awhile. I still have a long way to go, but this was the right start. I'm more open to different things now and plan to incorporate you in my life.

Some suggestions: Meeting outside or sitting on the grass sometimes. Also, I wish I got to learn more about my peers and hear their stories. I think that ??? puts things into perspective.

YES/DEFINITELY YES! (Levon Derkalovsdian) Levon.Derkalovsdian@gmail.com

I had a great experience at Peak Performance. I truly believe I learned life long skills that I hope to take with me and utilize. I believe the Professors are amazing and that they made the class interesting. I do, however, see room for improvement in the program. An area of improvement is to facilitate more group work and less lecturing. I would have enjoyed either working more with my family or individual work, such as doing a worksheet or solving a problem, than having to listen to another hour long lecture. I believe the facilitators would be more productive if they took less space in the room and really allowed the students to engage with each other and learn from each other.

YES/YES (No Name)

I truly loved this program and value every lesson that made an impact in my day-to-day. Before this course, I was going through some tough shit, and although the "shit" didn't subside, the course helped me deal with it in a productive and positive way. Learning how to motivate yourself and look at things optimistically is a skill I believe everyone should learn how to utilize. It is a skill that is innate but hard to hone in on. I believe Peak Performance not only helped with the "honing-in" process, but more importantly, showing me that it is present in everything I do. The mindfulness skills also helped me understand courses + my readings in a way where I now read with a purpose. Not to say I didn't do this before, but now, I am cognitively aware of this. I truly wish the best for Prof. Simon + Prof. Green and that the program continues. It would be unfair to incoming students to not allow them the opportunity to realize all the potential they have.

The one difficulty I'd say would be with the timing of the course. Although this is something purely administrative, other courses tend to overlap with the program. I wish there was a way I could make up some of the courses. Thank you anyways and I wish and pray for the best for you two and the Program.

YES/YES (Andrew Kazmer "KAZ") akazmer1@yahoo.com

I learned some interesting strategies and techniques. I had not previously considered, if nothing else, coming to Peak every (or most every) week. It was a nice escape and a chance to unwind and see/reconnect with people who I otherwise would likely not see, and meet people who I would likely not have met. Professors Green and Simon are clearly passionate about this endeavor and their passion is infectious. Even if I did, I would not implement the practices in Peak on my own, coming back to listen to them was just great.

YES/YES (Lauren Landau) llandau17@swlaw.edu

Initially I thought this class was just another example of psychology giving people excuses for their own shortcomings. I have a huge problem with the study of psychology and human behavior giving people reasons to feel ok for their shortcomings. Well, anyway, I was completely wrong. This class didn't give me excuses for all the things I did which were "negative" behaviors. It put me in touch with why I behaved that way in the first place. I don't consider myself a hippy or some extremely liberal person so admitting I was in the class because of the fact that People who took Peak Performance often achieved cali awards. My feelings have changed since the first week. This class for me isn't about who "Hossein" is - an achiever. This class has forced me to examine my identity and awareness of self and realize that being a holistic, well rounded person is the mindfulness I want to practice. I'm grateful for the honesty this class has brought to my life. I'm glad I didn't allow my face value judgments to stop me from what has been a very fulfilling experience. I am becoming a better person but there is still a ways to go. Thank you for showing us we are always moving and we can only hope to push it forward.

YES/YES (Hossein Eshaghi) heshagie@yahoo.com

I think that the program helped me throughout the semester. I really took away lots of great advice; guidance that truly made the difference in my life. I knew I had really received the overall message of the program during our last group meditation. I felt this meditation, I felt my wholeness and my peace. I can't really explain it but I just really felt the course come together on a spiritual level in that moment. Thank you!

Overall, I felt like the course was well planned out and flowed nicely together. I think all the lessons had their merit and served their purpose. I would like to suggest snacks, I think it will bring about a positive conversation. I'd also suggest trying the "families" thing again; it was a good concept maybe just execute it differently.

YES/YES (Ashley Haughton) AshleydHaughton@gmail.com

I'm really grateful to have had the Peak Performance experience starting out in law school. What really moved me was Professor Simon's openness and vulnerability in sharing with us her struggles and how she overcame them. I'm 34 years old and an evening student, but I made it a priority to leave work early each Wednesday because I didn't want to miss these sessions. My only regret looking back is that I wish I had not missed two of the sessions, because there were so many weeks where the topic resonated with me, or helped or gave me perspective for what I was struggling with. Starting law school was really tough for me because I was forced to face a lot of my bad habits and attitudes that weren't beneficial - I'm a terrible procrastinator and I have difficulty finding and sustaining motivation. A lot of times I think I just avoid things that are painful or difficult, seeking out comfort instead. This program, along with the Academic Skills Lab, has really helped to change my perspective and start to implement better habits. I no longer assume that learning is difficult, but try to approach law school as mental play. I'm still on my way with my path of personal improvement, but Peak Performance has given me a solid foundation for success, self-care, identity, and perspective. Thank you for everything!!

YES/YES (Roy Lenn) roylenn@gmail.com/rlenn17@swlaw.edu

I found this class to be interesting and my evaluation of it as a whole was interesting as well. You cannot be told what this class "is" because it becomes something different for everyone. Your self-honesty, emotional activity and willingness/discipline to implement the practices and discussion will determine whether this is an eye-opening experience or just another weekly obligation. To be honest, I attended Peak classes that I didn't find engaging. However, there are many reasons why. It could be my mood that day or the subject matter was more difficult for me to buy into. Yet, there were classes that really made me think and evaluate changes to make in my life. Most of the value I took from the class was in just listening to Professor Simon and Green. There are definitely practices and processes that I will take as I go forward. I feel like my time was well spent.

MAYBE/MAYBE (No name or email)

I am extremely thankful for this class. I truly believe this class was one of my best experiences so far. I always share about this class when my friends or family members ask me about how school is going.

It has been great to find time out of my week and meditate and listen to other students experience similar struggles. In our regular classes, people can be very cocky and not admit to their insecurities or lack of understanding, but here, people let go of their egos.

Professor Simon and Professor Green are very positive and encouraging and I benefit tremendously from their knowledge and energy.

I really loved all of the tools and tricks you shared with us, like the power poses and shaking bad energy off, etc. I have taught those same strategies to my loved ones. However, I think we really need to work on building confidence and community with each other. I didn't feel ready to share until much, much later. I don't think the family really helped. Maybe we need an activity that makes us feel a little more vulnerable. Thank you.

YES/YES (No name or email)

This program is amazing! Every lecture has a purpose. I did not attend every lecture because assignments due or because I forgot it was Wednesday. I honestly believe Peak would be better on a Thursday afternoon**.

HELL YES/**SEE ABOVE (No name or email)

I loved this program! Change nothing. You two are such amazing people. I used the lessons you taught us in times of stress and depression. Change nothing. God bless both of you.

YES/YES (Alex Keledjian) akeledjian17@swlaw.edu

I am beyond excited about having taken the Peak Performance program this semester! At first, I'll admit, I was a bit skeptical, but every time I went to a session, I felt so much better once I came out. Peak really was able to help me feel more calm and more positive about everything. I am actually a returning student to law school as well. I was first here, at Southwestern, in the Fall of 2014 but after doing so poorly my first and second semester, I was academically dismissed. It truly was "soul crushing" and identity crushing to know that this might be the end of my dream. But, I was able to pull myself back together and make it my goal to come back. And three years later, after a lot of hard work, there I am. I felt I was really able to relate to Professor Simon's story on a deeper level. Coming to these mindfulness classes have really allowed me to have a very different mindset coming back this second time around. Some of my favorite moments in the class have been when a lot of stories, allegories, quotes, or life analogies were given out. "Which wolf wins? The one you feed" "The carrot went in tough but came out soft; the egg went in soft but came out firm but the coffee changed the water itself." I also loved that day we had the arts and crafts session at the end that said "so what else did you think was impossible?" The last session was also fantastic! I absolutely loved the little video at the end about love at 85. It would be great to have that link. The "Will it Matter" poem was fantastic too. Thank you so much for putting this Program together. I hope this Program stays successful and continues on for many years to come. Thank you Prof. Green and Simon for a fantastic class!

YES/YES (Marcie Gonzalez) marcie.lucero.gonzalez@gmail.com

I think this program has the potential to be really beneficial but it is definitely not for everyone. Your enthusiasm is pleasant to experience, especially since everything is so stressful, but the class being as long as it was, usually added to my stress because I wanted to attend but felt like I should be doing other things 30 minutes in.

MAYBE/MAYBE (No name or email)

I LOVED Peak Performance! When I heard that the course was offered during orientation, I was so excited to be part of the course. Although I was not able to attend every session, I thoroughly benefit from the lesson/practice of the class. Through Peak Performance, I have learned the way to control my emotions and my stress. Every week, I looked forward to Wednesday's class because I always managed to walk out of the class feeling relaxed and calm. I have been able to meditate before exams to stay calm because I learned this skill from class. This course was truly a rewarding experience that I am saddened to think that I cannot be a part of it next year. If I had to make any criticism of the course, I wish there were more links or resources available on TWEN so I could access the links/resources on my own time. However, the skills from class have been crucial. School has been stressful. The skills from class, including meditating, have helped me remain calm. By remaining calm, I have been able to focus. And by focusing, I have been able to retain information. I would highly recommend the course.

YES/YES (Jonathan Jung) jjung17@swlaw.edu

First, I want to commend both of you, Professor Simon & Professor Green. for making this course a possibility. I truly believe that the skills you taught me about stress management, breathing, meditation, etc., got me through Fall semester. There were times I had to really talk sense to myself in order to calm down that I wouldn't have been able to do without your help.

Second, although not everything in the course will stick with me, I think that going to this class on a weekly basis served a very useful purpose. In fact, actually attending your course was the most therapeutic part of your teaching.

Finally, some critiques that I would give is to emphasize more stress management tools if you can. Also, I personally thought "family groups" were just plain ineffective - I liked hearing more about what you were teaching. Thanks so much!!

YES/MAYBE (My only concern is that taking your course would interfere with bar prep courses) (Jack Seltzer) jseltzer17@swlaw.edu

Brevity is something I'm working very hard on. I would be overjoyed to expand on anything I write here, in conversation, should you desire.

I feel beyond blessed to have experienced this program this semester. I am so grateful that I happened to come along this year, at this time, to intersect with you, Prof. Simon and Prof. Green, as I imagine the jury is out on whether you'll be here next year, as I foresee and expect you to take this 'medicine' global (to other schools, corps, Oprah/Allen/Colbert/write a book/make an on-line video course, etc., so I feel very lucky.

It was hard some days to get here. . . but I always left better than when I entered and grateful I came.

I honor and appreciate your wisdom, creativity, technique(s) and vulnerability. It is refreshing to have this in a law school environment and felt a bit like home, as this world is very different from the music and yoga communities that have been my family's cornerstone.

I know you reserve a lot of the hands on for mindfulness Monday, but my one piece of constructive, I wouldn't even call it criticism, is perhaps 5-10% less talking and 10-15% more meditations and exercises. Anyway, I thank you whole heart(edly) and soul. You both inspire me so deeply; I thank you for your light and honor and grace.

HIGHLY RESOUNDINGLY

YES/YES (Adam Stern) adam@adamstern.us

**STUDENT
EVALUATIONS**

**SPRING 2018
PROGRAM**



SPRING 2018
PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

-1-

This class has been invaluable and essential for my success as a law student and in my personal life. Each session really built upon the next and I felt that I am more knowledgeable all around. There are no gaps in my understanding because each concept was thoroughly explained and either put into practice or given ways to practice outside of class. Professors Simon and Green have a enthusiastic and engaging energy that really powers the class. The concepts learned should be shared with everyone and would be beneficial to so many students. I would love to have more opportunities to meet with both professors outside of class, as office hours were limited this semester. The program really allowed me to conned with my peers in deeper ways and I enjoyed all the differing perspectives that made it great.

YES/YES (Melanie Rodriguez) Mrodriguez16@swlaw.edu

The program was very beneficial for the promulgation of my personal and professional growth. It is surprising how a lecture or an activity done in peak performance had the power to change my perspective on a current situation, whether it was dealing with stress, self-care, or interpersonal conflicts.

Self-growth and self-mastery is like energy, there can never be an end. There will always be so much to learn and improve on as humans. Therefore, it is essential to take care of ourselves internally (mentally), specially as law students, and I believe this program provides self-care skills that can make traversing the legal field a lot easier.

Prof. Simon and Prof. Green are incredibly intelligent and wise and delivered the material with grace. I am thankful for the experience and I look forward to apply what I have learned here in my journey with taking the BAR and after law school.

YES/YES (Jessica Soriano) jsoriano17@swlaw.edu

Peak Performance has been a vital lifeline that I needed during my 1L year. I have learned valuable techniques to deal with stress, anxiety, fear, and doubt while I have been in law school. Peak Performance is a truly beneficial program by bringing awareness to how I treat myself because it has reminded me to evaluate situations, process what is going on or how I am feeling, and determine a solution to my situation. For me, Peak Performance has been a life changing experience that I believe has positively affected my perspective on everything.

YES/YES (Jonathan Jung) jjung17@swlaw.edu

Spring Peak Performance was excellent and enjoyed it more than the fall. I liked how intimate the group was and I felt that everyone here took it seriously. I enjoyed sharing a space with people who were in different programs (1L's, 2L's, 3L's, and Scale students) because it added even more perspective and made us feel like there is a light at the end of the tunnel. I thought the snacks were so helpful in the middle of our busy weeks and I found comfort coming to class. I looked forward to this class every single week because I knew my feelings and insecurities would be validated. I really enjoyed my introduction to meditation last semester and I wish we would have done a few more intensive meditation sessions in class and not just the grounding exercises. I want to thank you for not pressuring us to speak up and just accepted it at times. Thank you for respecting our energies. I have approached this semester very differently and have felt less stressed overall. I have learned many new skills and tools to approach stressful and draining situations. Thank you.

YES/YES Anonymous

This program has made my law school experience everything I never thought it would be (in the best way possible). Thanks to the multitude of law school horror stories I heard from those around me, I came to Southwestern expecting the worst, and bracing myself for a year of stress and unhappiness. Through the Peak Performance Program I truly received the opposite experience. I have learned more about myself in the last two semesters than I have in my entire life, and I have learned valuable ways to manage my stress and anxiety and maximize my academic ability. The teachings from this class extended far beyond the classroom, though. The biggest takeaways I am cherishing from these last two semesters are the ability to forgive myself, the ability to be patient with my flaws, the ability to love myself and others despite the stress and the negative emotions that life often throws at us, and the ability to push myself beyond what I ever thought was possible. This class has been a true safe space where I have connected with my classmates in meaningful ways. Law school is no longer the monster that others described it as being. I am so very thankful to Professors Simon and Green for the heart and dedication that they put into this program. It is valuable beyond measure.

YES/YES (Nadia A.) naboujawdah17@swlaw.edu

This program is incredibly helpful, fun, and necessary for any law student trying to maximize their well-being through the incredibly stressful pursuit of a law degree. Professors Simon and Green have such an immense body of knowledge and are extremely effective in their communication of this knowledge to their students. They are such phenomenal motivators, motivating students not only to put in the work necessary to succeed in law school, but also to put in the equally-valuable work into becoming the best versions of ourselves that we can be. Professors Simon and Green are undoubtedly the most valuable resources this school has to offer. I attribute the vast majority of my successes in law school, and more importantly my rebounds from my failures, to these professors and this program.

YES/YES (Michael Daurio) mdaurio16@swlaw.edu

I joined the Peak Performance program because I am someone who used to always allow stress to overtake my life to the point where it would paralyze me. I knew coming into law school that I would be bombarded with stress, and I knew that I needed to find a way to deal with it so that it didn't affect me so negatively. I can honestly say that I really think Peak Performance helped me with how I cope with stress. There have been very few times, if any at all, where I have been paralyzed by stress during my 1L year as I have been in the past, and I think that is a direct result from attending this program. Am I perfect? No. Do I still get stressed? Of course. But I don't let it dictate my life like I used to. I have learned how to calm myself in ways that allow me to push through the stress and get work done.

YES/MAYBE (Alexis Bartholomew) Abartholomew17@swlaw.edu

Thank you so much for offering this program. I was able to use this hour weekly as a time to recharge and recollect my mental tools for academic and emotional success. I learned tools that I will use throughout my life such as shifting perspectives and viewing things from the perspective of a growth mindset. Peak Performance is the only class where we are considered humans with human (emotional) needs. The issues of attention and maximum performance that are addressed here enable us to be better people and students. The minimum time commitment necessary for this class is definitely outweighed by the immense physiological benefits.

The personal phone calls with Professor Simon are also very beneficial because it gives me an opportunity to speak about my personal challenges and get very productive and constructive feedback. Having a (wise and knowledgeable) neutral third party as a source of emotional and academic guidance is priceless. Thank you for everything!

I also think the timing and the structure of the class are very effective. Particularly switching off professors is effective because the different personalities and topic preferences are met.

Thank you infinitely!

YES/YES (Jasmine Rachel Kiaei) jasminekiaei@gmail.com

I really appreciate Peak Performance. It was the one space in law school where I felt I could be my authentic self and where I truly felt supported not only as a student, but as a whole being. The skills I learned in Peak Performance are skills that will serve me well beyond my IL year and law school, these are skills that will transcend my professional career and support me throughout my life. Law school is very difficult and for a lot of students, myself included, it is the most challenging task we've ever faced. As law student we are faced with scary moments, moments that will make you feel inadequate, weak, and less than good enough. Profs. Simon and Green equip us with the tools to combat these feelings, but more importantly they empower us as capable, worthy individuals who are more than our class ranks and exam scores. It may sound like all the feels but you don't realize how efficient and motivated you become when you honestly believe you can do anything. Beyond the actual course and curriculum, Prof. Green and Prof. Simon really care about us, they take time out of their busy schedules to meet with anyone who needs them. They are genuine, precious, light-filled people who I am eternally grateful for. Thank you for this opportunity!

YES/YES (Ashley H.) ashleyd.haughton@gmail.com

My initial experience involved approaching this class with skepticism, as I have not participated before in any kind of program like this relating to mindfulness and how that relates to academic/professional development. However, having the science behind each session be explained to me before activities and exercises, and after participating in this program for the last 2 semesters, it has helped me to deal with stress and other things in my life in order to maximize my potential. The greatest lesson I took away was in realizing what is truly important in my life and what deserves my time, energy, and attention, as well as recognizing that short-term problems are minor obstacles and will soon be in the past.

On a less academic note, I really looked forward to spending time with Professor Simon and Professor Green every week. It was a great break from class and studying, while still being productive and working towards my goals and how to optimize my mental space and energy to achieve those things. I enjoyed listening to Prof. Simon and Green speak as they both obviously care very much about these topics and us as students. I also appreciated contributions from other students in the class, and felt comfortable enough to share my own thoughts and opinions when I chose to do so. Thank you Professor Simon and Green!

YES/YES (Melissa Zigrang) mzigrang17@swlaw.edu

Peak Performance has been incredibly beneficial to me as a law student and beyond. I've learned how to use setbacks as stepping stones. Practicing law (and going to law school) can be alienating in that it is a very adversarial field, but I never once felt judgment or negativity in this class. If anything, it reinforced the community experience.

Learning mindfulness techniques makes the travel easier. It's also just practical. Five stars, would definitely recommend.

YES/YES (Lucy Hernandez) lhernandez17@swlaw.edu

I am glad I joined the Peak Performance Program this semester because the program truly helped me to improve my mental health and my well-being. Even when I had a hard week at school, I was always looking forward to attend the session on Wednesday because during the session I could share my problems with other students, get their feedback and learn the solution. By attending the program, I have learned how to deal with stress and anxiety. For example, I started to meditate a few times a week whenever I am stressed out. I have notice that I feel more calm after doing the meditation. I also started to take more breaks when I am studying. During these 10-20 minutes' breaks, I do not use social media but go for a walk or relax on the sun instead. I have noticed that I feel more energetic and overall more focused after taking my breaks and not using social media. I regret that I did not join the program last year because I truly believe that the program could have helped me to perform better in my first year of law school. Thank you Professor Simon and Professor Green for giving me the opportunity to be a part of this amazing program.

YES/YES (Aneta Wasilewska) wasilewska85@gmail.com

This program has been very beneficial to my law school experience. Both Professor Simon and Professor Green are amazing facilitators of insightful dialogue between students who share an interest in tackling law school stress head-on and learning about useful methods for maintaining a positive mental attitude. Implementing the various Peak Performance techniques the professors have taught me has undoubtedly contributed to my success as a student and aspiring attorney. I highly recommend the Peak Performance Program to anyone willing to invest a bit of time in order to increase overall efficiency, productivity, and mindfulness.

YES/MAYBE (Joey Mendoza) Jjmendoza16@swlaw.edu

I truly appreciate and feel that the classes are helpful. However, I feel that the professors would be more effective if they took up less space in the room when they present and make it more group work based rather than lecture. Additionally, I feel that the professors do may interject too much of their personal lives and stories into the class although I feel this may be effective in some instances too much sharing makes students feel like the line between professors and students gets blurred. I did feel the content and classes were very helpful and the activities were great I simply wish there was more space for students to connect and discuss their own feelings and thoughts and truly form a greater sense of community.

YES/MAYBE Anonymous

I thoroughly made a connection to each topic we discussed. My work load increased tremendously as I am sure most students' did, so I could not attend as many sessions as I would have liked. However, peak performance gives me courage to take a break and try to re-energize myself between the time I study. Even when I missed a session, I made sure to do an hour of yoga or something to re-connect with myself outside of law school. My heart melted during our discussion of self judgment and judgment of others. It is definitely an issue for me in law school, and honestly makes me feel the most uncomfortable, more so than even the work. And I am working on it...Further, I appreciate that whenever I come to peak performance, no matter what kind of mood or emotional state I am in, I feel whole again after I leave. There were many times in 1L year that made me feel a little empty, and maybe it was from exhaustion, maybe it was a sign that I needed to re-light the fire from within...but I use our exercises to shape my perspective and stay positive, because sometimes a tweak of how we view the world is all it takes to get re-centered. People should go to peak performance! The people who do not are probably the ones that need it the most. Thank you both for taking time out of your busy lives to give students a moment to breath and give us the tools to be present, in tune with how we are feeling, and allow us to realize we are not alone on this journey. xo

YES/MAYBE (Kelsey Finn) kfinn17@swlaw.edu

The peak performance program has had such a positive impact on my life. I leave the room each week in a place of positive energy, awareness, and inner peace and empowerment. I really appreciate both of your dedication to this program and sharing all of this information and wisdom with us. It is invaluable and I'm so grateful to have been given this experience that so few have. Having such caring teachers share the information, rather than teaching it to yourself, allows it to sink in and click so much faster. In the sessions, I love the exercises where we have to turn to the partner and share a reflection because it allows us to practice what we've just learned and be open with another individual. I look forward to the safe space of our meetings and coming together with a community of individuals who share a love for self care and commitment to it. This program is equivalent to a holistic version of academic skills and it has made such a difference in my wellbeing, which has allowed me to thrive academically and in other areas of my life. I really enjoyed during sessions when we were given handouts so we could take home the information. Sometimes I'm so absorbed in listening to what is being taught that I don't take as much notes, so having a handout for sessions was helpful. It allowed me to be present in the moment but also have something to look back on to refresh myself on what I learned. This is the most valuable class I've taken at Southwestern because it helps me in all of my other classes and life. I've really been inspired by this course! I hope to continue taking Peak Performance next year and the following year if that option exists!

YES/YES (Lauren Reinas) Laurenreinas@gmail.com

SURVEY NUMBERS



SURVEY QUESTION RESPONSES

Q1: Would you recommend the Peak Performance Program to students for next year?

Fall 2016 YES: 57/59 (Maybe: 2, No: 0)
Spring 2017 YES: 13/13 (Maybe: 0, No: 0)

Fall 2017 YES: 35/37 (Maybe: 2, No: 0)
Spring 2018 YES: 17/17 (Maybe: 0, No: 0)

TOTALS (Q1)

122 students out of 126 would recommend the program to incoming 1Ls
(with 4 "Maybe" responses and zero saying "No")

Q2: If offered, would you take a Elective Course (P/NP or credit) that was a follow-up to (or a building upon) concepts taught this 1L program?

Fall 2016 45 Yes, 14 Maybe, 0 No
Spring 2017 11 Yes, 2 Maybe, 0 No

Fall 2017 30 Yes, 5 Maybe, 0 No
Spring 2018 13 Yes, 4 Maybe, 0 No

TOTALS (Q2)

99 students would enroll in an elective next year as 2Ls for credit
(with 25 "Maybe" responses and zero saying "No")

CONCLUSION

Concluding Comment

Based on the two years of running the program at Southwestern Law School and the widespread scientific evidence and principles that underlie the program, we now know that the *Mindfulness, Stress Management, and Peak Performance Program* provides profound benefits to law students.

The program is proven to assist law students in navigating law school with less stress and anxiety, greater mental and emotional wellbeing, improved joyfulness and fulfillment, and increased academic excellence. The program not only enhances the law school experience for students, but also lays the groundwork for them to have healthier, more meaningful, and more successful careers as lawyers.

Contact Information

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions about this report or our program.

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