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Got a Low CLAT (UG or PG) Rank? Here is What To Do

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Hi,

I am getting a lot of calls (ok, some calls) from students who have not got great ranks in CLAT UG/PG asking for advice.

Here is some (not 'the' advice but some perspective):

First of all, while students at the top NLUs (NLSIU, NALSAR, NUJS, NLIU Bhopal, NLU Jodhpur, NLU Delhi, and GNLU Gandhinagar) have a great advantage especially at the start of their careers (initial 2-3 years), that 'gap' can be bridged.

The good old things apply: work hard in the five years of law school, do internships every vacation, work on your writing skills, and remember to have fun. With these alone, you will be on your way to a fulfilling career.

If making it to a good law firm is your goal, you can join a good lawyer's office or a small law firm for 1-3 years after graduating and make your way up.

Side note: The career journeys are supposed to be tough and confusing; so don't expect too many miracles. Do watch Simon Sinek's video on this.

Side note 2: Watch Baz Luhrmann's 'Wear Sunscreen' and cheer up.

Secondly, do NOT take a complete drop year. CLAT, unlike say JEE, does NOT require 10-14 hours of preparation every day. It requires 200-300 hours of preparation overall which can be easily managed along with college.

So take admission in the best possible college, and give CLAT again if you want.

Thirdly, here is how you can choose a college.

I'd strongly advise you to:

A. Join a college in either Delhi or Mumbai, or at least Bangalore or Pune.

B. Join a college in your home-city.

Point A is advisable because cities like studying in a college in a city like Delhi or Mumbai gives you the option to intern while the college is on (after college hours, and after lunch for an office). If you do one such internship every semester, the knowledge, skills, and contacts you build from this exercise are immense.

Also, in a city like Delhi or Mumbai, there's a lot happening: meet-ups, conferences, courses, etc. It allows you to explore a lot and that adds up to your personality.

Point B is advisable because you end up saving a lot of money (if that's a concern to you). If you save Rs. 1 lakh/year on just hostel and mess fee, you can use that Rs. 5 lakhs to do a lot of things. It could be doing some good courses, traveling far and wide, or whatever rocks your boat. If money is not a concern, choose point A.

So here is what you should do. Check out the NIRF rankings and India Today and Outlook rankings. These rankings are not accurate but will tell you which all are the decent colleges.

Make a list of colleges you can go for in Delhi, in Mumbai or in Bangalore or Pune. Go through the college's website. Even if you have a list of 10 colleges, it will take you 20 hours to research on all of them.

Do further research on them by checking Lawctopus (see what sort of events they've been holding and how regularly), LegallyIndia and Bar and Bench (for placement data or faculty interviews).

Look up their faculty/students on Linkedin or Facebook and chat with them.

After this bit of research, take admission in what you think works best for you.

Remember: the quality of faculty members in Indian law colleges is pathetic throughout (with the exception of JGLS and also to some degree NLUD).

Fourthly, I will not advise you to go to a lower ranked NLU. **Click here to know the reasons.**

Fifthly, for students desirous of doing an LLM, I suggest a different strategy.

If you are serious about your research, the most important factor is going to be your faculty (especially the one who'll guide your research). Another crucial factor is going to be the sort of

resources the colleges has for research (library, research databases, etc.).

You should ideally call up the colleges you are interested in and get them to make you speak with the faculty members who teach the LLM program and could be your dissertation guides. Ask the faculty members about the research facilities too.

Read more:

We have created a list of the best career advice articles we have published. Do go through them.

I wrote this book 'Law as a Career' after some sincere effort (conducted nearly 50 interviews for it). Do consider reading it.

If you have questions or suggestions, please do leave a comment below.