

Keeping Up To Data – December 2018

Welcome to our second “Keeping Up to Data” podcast for the 2018–19 admission cycle. I’m Josiah Evans at the Law School Admission Council.

Let’s start with some updates to my last podcast. First, LSAT administrations. We’ve now had four test administrations—June, July, September, and November. Looking at registrants (not final test takers) for those four administrations, compared to registrants for last year’s June, September, and December administrations, registrants were down about 5.4 percent. We don’t yet have the final test-taker numbers for this November’s administration, but looking at June, July, and September test takers, compared to last year’s June and September, we’ve seen a decrease of about 2.8 percent. First-time test takers, as opposed to repeaters, comprised 69% of this year’s June and July test administrations, but only 61% of the September administration. Remember that we still have January and March tests to finish up in the 2018-2019 testing year.

Next, let’s look at LSAC Forum attendance. All 10 of our 2018 forums have now taken place, with attendance numbers up at 3 forums, down at 6, and flat at 1. Overall, attendance by prospective JD students was down about 2.8%, with about 200 fewer individuals attending all of the forums combined. To put that in context, about 7,450 prospective JD students attended the 2017 forums, as compared to about 7,250 in 2018. On the LLM side, attendance was flat overall, with under 100 prospective LLMs at all forums combined.

We always have a lot of interest in applicant and application volumes, but it's still too early in the cycle to draw any significant conclusions from the data. Last year at this time, we had under a quarter of our eventual final counts. With those caveats, as of December 3, 2018, ABA *applications* are up less than 1% compared to last year at this time, and ABA *applicants* are up 6.2%. That's a big difference from the numbers I reported a month ago, and unfortunately, not in the preferred direction. This is a good example of how skewed the early volume numbers can be and it reinforces our reluctance to make predictions based on the early numbers. Canadian applications are down 6.3%, and applications to Canadian schools are down 4.4%. This is also a dramatic difference from the numbers a month ago, when it appeared that both applicants and applications to Canadian schools were down more than 20 percent.

I promised in my last podcast that I'd talk more about the other reports we have available. This week, I'll highlight two sets of reports I think you'll find useful. To get to the NSP reports, log in to ACES², go to **Reports**, then **All**, and in the Subject field, choose **NSP Stat**. These NSP Statistical reports enable you to compare your school's applicants who meet certain conditions to the national pool of applicants who meet those same conditions. You might be interested in seeing, for example, that there are 1,500 applicants from your state who have applied somewhere, but that only 200 of them applied to your school.

Another set of similar ACES² reports are labeled **NSP StatHist**. These reports enable you to compare two different years. One of these reports compares two different years of the national pool; the other shows you two different years of your own school's pool. Again, you can choose the conditions as you define them.

The best way to become familiar with these reports is to play with them yourself, so I encourage you to go into ACES² and do just that. If you have questions about these or any other reports, don't hesitate to contact your regional rep.

Remember that we update the volume data on our website every night. Go to www.LSAC.org, click on **Data and Research**, and then **Data Library** to link to the [Current Volume Summaries](#). The **Interactive Summary** will show you numerous data visualizations and drill-downs. If you're an LSAC member and you log in, remember we have many additional reports available to you.

Let us know whether you find these podcasts useful. We'd love to hear from you with questions or suggestions. Just write to podcast@LSAC.org. Until next time, this is Josiah Evans at LSAC.