

# THE SPECIALIST

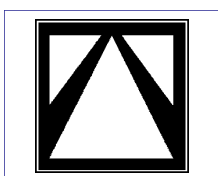
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Download the logo for use on your business cards, letterhead or corporate web site:

[www.nclawsspecialists.gov/mediakits.asp](http://www.nclawsspecialists.gov/mediakits.asp)

Both high resolution (for publishing) and low resolution (for website work) are available.



## Optimizing Your Web Site - by Beth McIntire, MCSE, State Bar IT Manager

Want to increase your firm's business while raising awareness of the State Bar's Legal Specialization program? Take these steps to help drive traffic to your firm's web site and, at the same time, increase visitors to the legal specialization program's site.

First, make sure the State Bar has your web site address. If you haven't already registered for access to the member area of the Bar's web site, start by logging on to register at: [www.ncbar.gov](http://www.ncbar.gov) and clicking on Member Login at the top right corner. After you complete the simple online registration form, your password will be sent to the email address you provided. Then, you can update your profile online anytime, and this information is automatically updated in the specialization directory.

Use your member ID and password to login and update your profile information in the directory to include your firm's web address. Having your web address linked in the specialization directory online can help your site appear higher in web searches, especially on Google, bringing more potential clients to your site.

You can also help raise awareness of the State Bar's legal specialization program by linking to us from your firm's web site. Links to our site cause our website to appear higher in web searches. When potential clients look for an attorney online and find the legal specialization site, they are more likely to find *you*! They also see that you're part of a relatively small group of attorneys who have enhanced their knowledge and credentials through this program. Linking to our site is easy – simply have your web site administrator copy the following HTML code onto your firm's Internet home page or as part of your online biography, and you're all set.

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<b><i>Board Certified by the North Carolina
State Bar's <a href="http://
www.nclawsspecialists.gov">Board of Legal Specialization</a></i></b>
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The importance of high search engine rankings to a company's business has spawned a whole industry dedicated to [search engine optimization](#), or SEO for short. Besides pursuing links to your site from other sites, another way to "optimize" your

web site for search engines is to consider what words people might use when searching for a firm like yours, and use those words liberally in your Web pages. For example, if you want people to find you when they type in the words "Wilmington bankruptcy attorney," be sure to make those words part of your web pages. You'll want to use these *key words* generously, but not so much that your text doesn't flow normally. If SEO interests you, you may want to check out some of the many books and web sites devoted to the topic.

## Program Announcements

**Annual Luncheon for Certified Specialists**—Mark your calendars now for the luncheon that recognizes the newly certified specialists and honors the recipients of the specialization program awards. (Read more about how to nominate a specialist for an award on page 4) The luncheon will be held on:

Friday, March 14, 2008  
Washington Duke Inn and Golf Club  
Durham, NC  
Networking reception 11:45 am  
Lunch 12:00 pm.

Please join us for this opportunity to celebrate specialization and mingle with other specialists from across the state. RSVP to Joyce Lindsay at 919-828-4620 or email her at [jlindsay@ncbar.gov](mailto:jlindsay@ncbar.gov).

**Directory Information**—The 2008 Directory of Legal Specialists will be published soon and in the same format. However, we are planning to make changes in future editions. We would like to replace the addresses and post office box listings with website addresses whenever possible or firm names and phone numbers if no website address is available. This change will help us keep up with the ever-increasing technology demands on both lawyers and clients. The directory will also encourage prospective clients to visit the main website, so please either update your profile or email [dmullen@ncbar.gov](mailto:dmullen@ncbar.gov) with the URL for your website.

**Annual Fee Change**—The Board of Legal Specialization is seeking authorization from the State Bar Council to increase the annual fee that specialists pay to \$100. The additional program income would be used to work with experts in the field of evaluation and testing to assist our volunteer committees with writing valid and reliable examinations. Specialists will be notified of any increase in March.

# A NATIONAL LOOK AT SPECIALTY CERTIFICATION

## The North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization

Dallas C. Clark Jr.  
(Chair), Greenville

Carl W. Davis Jr.  
Raleigh

Terri L. Gardner  
Raleigh

Dr. D. Allen Hayes  
Raleigh

Steven L. Jordan  
Raleigh

J. Matthew Martin  
Asheville

Edward P.  
Tewkesbury  
Greensboro

Michael E.  
Weddington, Raleigh

Jeri L. Whitfield  
Greensboro

The North Carolina State Bar specialization program is among the most established and well respected certification programs in the country. Each year the American Bar Association hosts a Certification Roundtable so that both the state sponsored programs and the national accrediting agencies can learn from each other about the challenges and issues that we face. This year the Roundtable will be held in New Orleans, LA, and will focus on application procedures, peer review issues and the future of specialty certification around the globe. Speakers from as far away as Scotland and Canada will be featured.

The extent to which specialty certification is allowed or encouraged, varies widely from State to State. All of the states that offer programs similar to the NC program are listed below.

### State Sponsored Certification Plans

(Generally state bar associations offering certification of specialists directly in various fields of law to lawyers licensed in their state.)

- [State Bar of Arizona Legal Specialization and MCLE](#)
- [State Bar of California Office of Certification](#)
- [Florida Board of Legal Specialization and Education Certification Program](#)
- [Louisiana Board of Legal Specialization](#)
- [Minnesota State Bar Association](#)
- [New Jersey Board of Attorney Certification](#)
- [New Mexico Board of Legal Specialization](#)
- [Ohio State Bar Association](#)
- [South Carolina Supreme Court Commission on CLE and Specialization](#)
- [Tennessee Supreme Court Commission on CLE & Specialization](#)
- [Texas Board of Legal Specialization](#)

There are also quite a few national organizations that offer specialty certification. All of these programs are accredited by the American Bar Association and are also recognized by the North Carolina State Bar. We have a working agreement with the American Board of Certification to jointly certify specialists in both business and consumer bankruptcy law.

### Private Organizations with ABA-Accredited Certification Programs-

- [American Board of Certification](#)
- [American Board of Professional Liability Attorneys](#)
- [National Association of Counsel for Children](#)
- [National Association of Estate Planners & Councils Estate Law Specialist Board, Inc.](#)
- [National Board of Legal Specialty Certification \(formerly the National Board of Trial Advocacy\)](#)
- [National College for DUI Defense, Inc.](#)
- [National Elder Law Foundation](#)

For more information about any of these programs, including certification requirements and directories of certified specialists, please visit the ABA online at: <http://www.abanet.org/legalservices/specialization/home.html>

### Exam Questions Needed—

Have you had a recent case with an interesting fact pattern or one where an appellate court addressed a question of first impression?

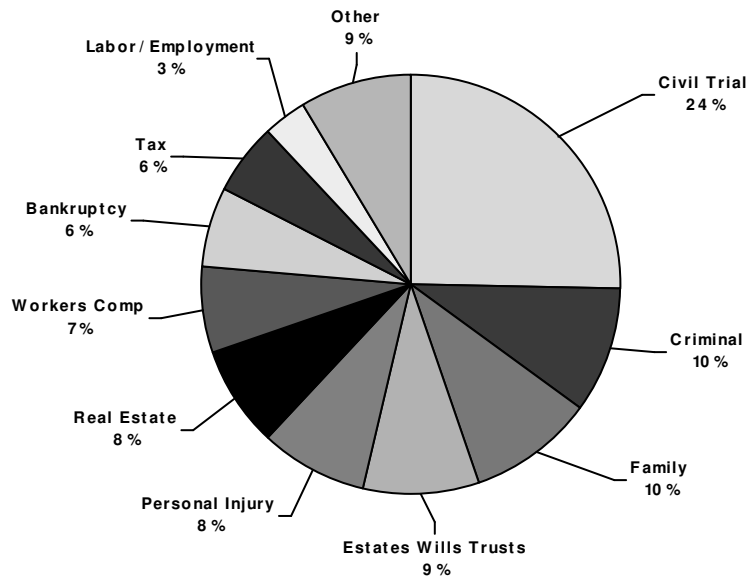
The State Bar specialty committees work very hard each spring to update the specialty examinations. They are always in need of new exam questions and would appreciate your input.

Please send any suggested exam questions or topics to the specialty committee chair (listed on the far right) or to the State Bar, attention [Denise Mullen at \[dmullen@ncbar.gov\]\(mailto:dmullen@ncbar.gov\)](#). Make sure to include the model answer or the rule/statute citation.



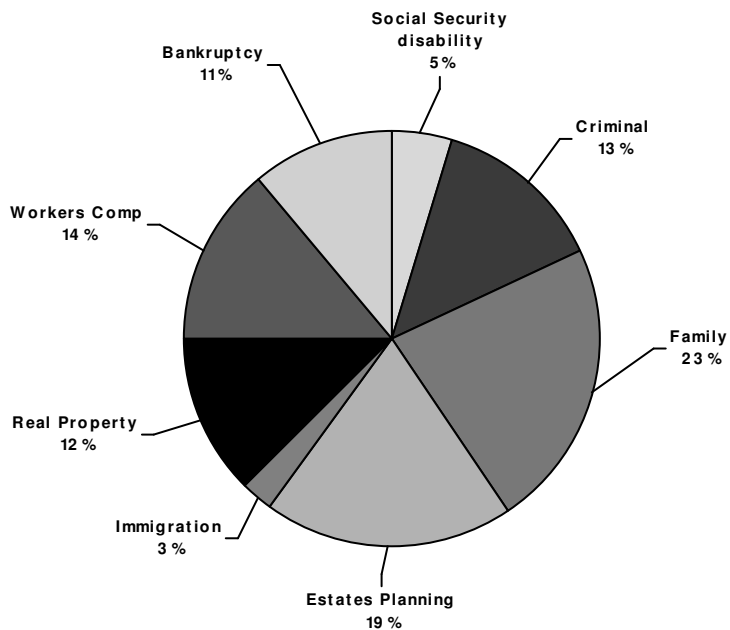
# How does North Carolina's specialization program compare to the national trends for legal specialists?

## National breakdown of specialization



("Other" includes labor/employment, civil appellate, elder law, natural resources, immigration, business and administrative.)

## North Carolina breakdown of specialization



### Committee Chairs

*James B. Angell—  
Bankruptcy  
Raleigh*

*Lisa S. Costner—  
Criminal  
Winston-Salem*

*Larry H. Rocamora—  
Estate Planning/Probate  
Durham*

*Jaye P. Meyer—  
Family  
Raleigh*

*Steven H. Garfinkel—  
Immigration  
Charlotte*

*William E. Manning—  
Real Property  
Kinston*

*Charles T. Hall— Social  
Security Disability  
Raleigh*

*J. Griffin Morgan—  
Workers' Compensation  
Winston-Salem*



**The North Carolina State Bar**

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*Specialization*  
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**We're on the Web**  
**nclawspecialists.gov**



**The North  
Carolina State Bar**

*REMEMBER - CLE  
CREDITS ARE  
EVALUATED EVERY  
FIVE YEARS FOR  
RE -  
CERTIFICATION.  
MAKE SURE YOU  
HAVE ENOUGH  
CREDITS TO  
QUALIFY. VISIT  
THE WEBSITE AT*

[nclawspecialists.gov](http://nclawspecialists.gov)

*TO VIEW THE  
REQUIREMENTS*

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**NOMINATE A SPECIALIST FOR THE ANNUAL  
AWARDS**

**The Howard L. Gum Service Award**

This award is given to a specialty committee member who consistently excels in completing committee tasks. The recipient is highly dedicated to legal specialization, donates his/her time to committee responsibilities, and responds to the needs of the staff and the board, in exemplary fashion.

**The Sara H. Davis Excellence Award**

Nominations for this award are accepted from North Carolina certified specialists. The award is presented to a certified specialist who exemplifies excellence in his/her daily work as a lawyer and serves as a model for other lawyers. Special consideration is given for a long and consistent record of handling challenging matters successfully, for sharing knowledge and experience with other lawyers, for earning the respect and admiration of all others with whom the lawyer comes into contact in his/her daily work, and for high ethical standards.

**The James E. Cross, Jr. Leadership Award**

Nominations for this award are accepted from members of the North Carolina State Bar who have worked closely with the nominee. The award is presented to a certified specialist who has taken an active leadership role in his/her practice area through presentations at CLE seminars, scholarly writings, participation in groundbreaking cases, or service to an established professional organization.

Nominations are due by February 15, 2008, forms are included in the newsletter and also available online at [www.nclawspecialists.gov](http://www.nclawspecialists.gov). Awards winners will be announced at the annual specialists luncheon on March 14, 2008 in Durham.