

Professional Responsibility

Elon Law School
Fall 2020
Monday & Wednesday, 4:15–5:30 pm
Room 206

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Description

This course is intended to acquaint students with the organization and regulation of the legal profession, the nature of the attorney-client relationship, and the duties that attorneys owe to clients and others. Upon successfully completing the course, students should be familiar with the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct and other sources of law governing the legal profession, and be able to apply these rules to ethical issues that arise in legal practice. The course will also help prepare students for the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE), but will not cover all of the topics tested on that exam.

Course Material

Leah Christensen & Brooks Holland, Learning Professional Responsibility (2d ed., West Academic 2018) (“Casebook”)

ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct (2018) (Online at the [ABA website](#) and various print editions)

Suggested supplement (optional): Grace M. Giesel, Mastering Professional Responsibility (2d ed., Carolina Acad. Press 2015)

The course website, emfink.net/ProfessionalResponsibility, has links to legal authorities, subject outlines, and study aids.

Policies

Grading

Your grade will be based on in-class performance (10%), three mid-term quizzes (10% each) and a final examination (60%).

The midterm quizzes and final exam will consist of multiple choice questions, similar in format to the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE). You will take the quizzes online outside of class and they will be open book/notes. The final exam will be given during the exam period and will be closed book/notes; you will receive a copy of the ABA Model Rules for use during the exam.

The in-class performance component depends on your preparation before class, regular and prompt class attendance, and constructive engagement during class. Elon Law School’s standards and ABA guidance for awarding course credit assume at least two hours of out-of-class student work for each hour of classroom instruction.

Attendance

Elon Law School has adopted the following attendance policy for all courses:

The Law School administers a policy that a student maintain regular and punctual class attendance in all courses in which the student is registered, including externships, clinical courses, or simulation courses. Faculty members will give students written notice of their attendance policies before or during the first week of class. These policies may include, but are not limited to: treating late arrivals, early departures, and/or lack of preparation as absences; imposing grade or point reductions for absences, including assigning a failing grade or involuntarily withdrawing a student from the class; and any other policies that a professor deems appropriate to create a rigorous and professional classroom environment.

In case of illness or emergency, students may contact the Office of Student and Professional Life, which will then notify the student’s instructors. A student may notify the faculty member directly of a planned absence and should refer to individual faculty members regarding any policy that may apply. In the case of prolonged illness or incapacity, the student should contact the Office of Student and Professional Life.

Excessive absences (more than 2 classes) may result in a reduction of your grade.

Honor Code

The Law School honor code applies to all activities related to your law school study, including conduct during class and examinations.

Disability Accommodations

For disability accommodation requests, contact the Elon Law Registrar's Office.

Schedule & Assignments

Law as a Regulated Profession

August 31

Professional Gatekeeping & Regulation

- Casebook: Chapters 1-7
- ABA Model Rules: Preamble & Scope, 1.0, 5.1-5.7, 8.1-8.5

Maintaining an Ethical Law Practice

September 2 & 7

Advertising & Solicitation

- Casebook: Chapters 8-13
- ABA Model Rules: 7.1-7.6

September 9

The Attorney-Client Relationship

- Casebook: Chapters 15 & 16
- ABA Model Rules: 1.8(f), 1.13, 1.14, 1.16, 1.18, 4.2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3

September 14 & 16

Attorney Fees & Client Property

- Casebook: Chapters 17 & 18
- ABA Model Rules: 1.5, 1.8, 1.15
- Discussion Problem: Attorney Fees

September 21 & 23

Law Firms

- Casebook: Chapters 19-24
- ABA Model Rules:
- Discussion Problem: Law Firm Pro Bono Policy

Quiz: Maintaining an Ethical Law Practice (Due September 25)

Duties to Clients

September 28

Scope of Representation & Authority

- Casebook: Chapters 25 & 26
- ABA Model Rules:

September 30 & October 5

Competence, Diligence, & Communication

- Casebook: Chapters 27-31
- ABA Model Rules: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.13, 1.14, 1.16, 2.1

October 7, 12, & 14

Confidentiality & Privileges

- Casebook: Chapters 32, 33, 39
- ABA Model Rules: 1.6, 1.9(c), 1.13, 1.14, 1.18, 4.4(b)

October 19, 21, & 26

Conflicts of Interest

- Casebook: Chapters 34-38, 40
- ABA Model Rules: 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 1.12, 1.13, 1.18, 6.4, 6.5

October 28

Confidentiality & Conflicts Review

- Discussion Problem: Confidentiality
- Discussion Problem: Conflicts

Quiz: Duties to Clients (Due October 23)

Duties to Courts, Opposing Parties, & Others

November 2 & 4

Good Faith & Fairness Toward Opposing Parties

- Casebook: Chapters 43, 44, 46, 49
- ABA Model Rules: 3.1-3.9

November 9 & 11

Maintaining the Integrity of the Tribunal

- Casebook: Chapters 45, 47, 48, & 49
- ABA Model Rules: 1.2(d), 1.6, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4(b), 4.1, 8.4

November 16 & 18

Interactions with Persons Other Than Clients

- Casebook: Chapters 51-54
- ABA Model Rules: 1.6, 3.5, 4.1 4.2, 4.3

Quiz: Duties to Courts, Opposing Parties, & Others (Due November 20)