

**UNIVERSITY OF LA VERNE COLLEGE OF LAW
PROFESSIONALISM & ETHICS**

SYLLABUS

**Professor Charles Doskow
Assistant Professor Timothy McFarlin
Ms. Robin Apodaca, Director, Career Development & Externships**

**Spring 2019
1 Credit**

Lawyers have their duties as citizens, but they also have special duties as lawyers. Their obligations go far deeper than earning a living as specialists in corporation or tax law. They have a continuing responsibility to uphold the fundamental principles of justice from which the law cannot depart.

– Robert Kennedy

There is a vague popular belief that lawyers are necessarily dishonest. I say vague, because when we consider to what extent confidence and honors are reposed in and conferred upon lawyers by the people, it appears improbable that their impression of dishonesty is very distinct and vivid. Yet the impression is common, almost universal. Let no [person] choosing the law for a calling for a moment yield to the popular belief—resolve to be honest at all events; and if in your own judgment you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer.

– Abraham Lincoln

Sometimes, idealistic people are put off the whole business of networking as something tainted by flattery and the pursuit of selfish advantage. But virtue in obscurity is rewarded only in Heaven. To succeed in this world you have to be known to people.

– Sonia Sotomayor

Class Time and Place

Full-Time Day: Tuesdays, 9 – 10 am, Room 206

Part-Time Evening: Wednesdays, 8:45 – 9:45 pm, Room 204

Office Hours

Office hours will be posted on TWEN or announced in class.

Course Description and Objectives

This course will introduce several essential traits of a lawyer:

- (1) thinking and acting ethically,
- (2) conducting oneself professionally, and
- (3) interacting effectively with people of different cultures and backgrounds.

The course will also provide basic information essential to obtaining gainful employment as a lawyer. Finally, the course will help students understand how they, as lawyers, can make a positive difference in any field.

Basis of Grade

Attendance and submission of all assignments will satisfy the one-credit course requirement.

This will include **an end-of-semester assignment** in which students will watch several films involving issues of ethics, culture, and the law and will write a short paper exploring how the films addressed those issues. This assignment will be posted on and submitted via TWEN.

Required and Suggested Materials

There is no casebook. Materials and assignments will be posted on TWEN.

Course-Specific Learning Outcomes

- Understand ethics as a philosophical concept and as a guide to personal conduct.
- Understand professionalism, as an objective and a guide to conduct.
- Understand cultural competency, becoming better equipped to interact effectively with people of different cultures and backgrounds.
- Become better prepared to work an internship or other law-related summer experience with more confidence and less stress.
- Gain a broader understanding of the career paths available to lawyers.
- Become better equipped to craft a professional brand as a lawyer.
- Gain an introductory understanding of conflict management techniques.

Disability Accommodations Statement

Students with disabilities should refer to the policies described at the University of La Verne Disabled Student Services Handbook [as of September 13, 2017 located at <https://sites.laverne.edu/disabled-student-services/disabled-student-services-handbook/>, which can be found on the website of the University of La Verne Disabled Student Services website (<https://laverne.edu/dss/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/01/University-of-La-Verne-DSS-Handbook.pdf>) or at their office. Temporary accommodations are offered on a case by case basis. All required documentation must be submitted by the student before any formal accommodations and should be made directly to the Director of Student Affairs.

Any student eligible for and requesting academic accommodations due to a documented disability (or a suspected disability) is asked to contact the College of Law Director of Student Affairs and Americans with Disability Act Compliance Officer, Akita Mungaray by email at amungaray@laverne.edu or by phone at (909) 460-2017. Her office is located on the first floor of the College of Law, Office # 107. You can also contact Cynthia Denne at the University of La Verne Disabled Student Services office at (909) 448-4441. The office is located at the La Verne campus Health Center. In order to be considered for accommodations, disabilities must be documented and the proper medical evaluations must be submitted. The office is here to help you succeed in law school. Visit it online at <https://laverne.edu/dss/>.

Academic Integrity Policy

First and foremost, you are expected to follow the policies of the College of Law, including the [Student Handbook](#), just as lawyers are subject to the rules of professional responsibility. But note that integrity goes beyond ethical behavior. It includes characteristics such as preparedness, diligence, thoroughness, respectfulness, courtesy, and compassion. These are things that are integral to the study of law and that will be woven throughout what we work on in this class.

While all aspects of these policies apply to all of your work at the College of Law, some are particularly relevant to your work in this course:

Plagiarism

You are responsible for reviewing and abiding by the plagiarism policy contained in the [MAPP](#) for all assignments submitted in this course.

Law school graduates found guilty of plagiarism have been denied admission to the bar (i.e., they'll never get to practice law) based on an adverse moral character determination.

Students suspected of plagiarism will be reported to the school administration for disciplinary action, with possible penalties ranging from receiving a zero on the offending assignment to being expelled from law school.

Collaboration (what is and what isn't allowed)

Students should complete each assignment alone unless expressly directed otherwise. Except as specifically directed, students must not: (1) disclose any part of their work to anyone but their professor before submitting it; (2) review, comment on, or contribute to the writing of another student; or (3) have anyone else review, comment on, or contribute to their work.

Course-Specific Policies

Attendance: Students are required to attend all classes. Absences in excess of two will result in the student being automatically dropped. More than five minutes late for class and not being prepared for class will be counted as an absence.

Participation: Students must understand that their individual participation for each class is essential to quality discussion of the subject matter. There should be a level of engagement creating an environment in which the entire class is involved. Students must be prepared in order to fully follow and participate in class discussion.

TWEN: Sign up for TWEN immediately. All assignments will be posted on TWEN. Written assignments must be submitted through TWEN.

Assignments: These will be posted on TWEN or announced in class weekly. The first week's assignment will be posted on TWEN in Course Materials. A semester assignment will also be posted on TWEN during the first week of class.

Written Assignments: Must be typed, double-spaced, contain one-inch margins and be in Times New Roman or Courier New 12- point font. All pages must be numbered with the student's name at the top right margin of the first page, which should include the student's name, title of the course, and date. Assignments more than forty-eight hours late will be rejected.

Class Session Topics

The central topics of the individual class sessions are expected to include:

- Ethics: Introduction, Problems, and Discussion
- The Lawyer's Role in Society

- Connecting with and Advocating for Clients with Disabilities
- Free Speech on Campus
- Networking and Creating Your Personal Brand
- Building a Law Practice
- Conflict Management
- The Practicing Lawyer's Perspective on Professionalism
- Peer Perspectives on Professionalism
- Ethics in Law School

Appendix of Mission, Values and Learning Outcomes

University of La Verne Mission and Values

It is the mission of the University of La Verne to provide opportunities for students to achieve their educational goals and become contributing citizens to the global community.

The University of La Verne shares four core values that promote a positive and rewarding life for its students through fostering a genuine appreciation and respect for:

1. **Values Orientation.** The University affirms a philosophy of life that actively supports peace with justice, the health of the planet and its people. Therefore, in light of this affirmation, it encourages students to become reflective about personal, professional, and societal values. It also encourages values-based ethical behavior.
2. **Community and Diversity.** The University promotes the goal of community within a context of diversity. Therefore, it encourages students to understand and appreciate the diversity of cultures that exists locally, nationally, and internationally. It also seeks to promote appreciation and preservation of biodiversity by helping students understand the impact/dependence of human beings on their environment.
3. **Lifelong Learning.** The University commits itself to promoting education that facilitates lifelong learning. Therefore, it teaches students how to learn, to think critically, to do constructive research, and to access and integrate information in order to prepare them for continued personal and career growth.
4. **Community Service.** The University believes that personal service is a primary goal of the educated person. Therefore, it encourages students to experience the responsibilities and rewards of serving the human and ecological community.

University of La Verne College of Law Vision, Mission, and Values

VISION

La Verne Law is an incubator for innovation in legal education, thought, and advocacy for individuals passionate about serving their communities and promoting access and justice.

MISSION

The mission of La Verne Law is to guide our students in the discovery of law and self as they prepare for the practice of law or other professional careers. Our faculty of scholars and teachers is committed to creating an innovative, collaborative learning environment designed to develop the knowledge and skills relevant to achieving individual and professional success.

Our mission encompasses educating, as well as enhancing the professional lives of, the members of the local, regional, national, and international communities we encounter – students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, members of the bench and bar, and others who pursue social justice.

Our mission is grounded in the core values of the University of La Verne – life-long learning, ethical reasoning and decision-making, diversity & inclusivity, and community & civic engagement.

Difference-making is our legacy.

CORE VALUES

University Values: As a College within the University of La Verne we adopt and endorse the University core values of Lifelong Learning, Diversity and Inclusivity, Community Engagement, and Ethical Reasoning.

College of Law Core Principles and Values: As an institution dedicated to teaching and training the next generation of lawyers and leaders, we operate institutionally and individually on the principles of professionalism, innovation, ethics, student centeredness and community enhancement. In our actions and interactions, we are and seek to be affirming, respectful, humble, accountable, committed, inclusive, empathetic, responsive, passionate, and positive.

University of La Verne College of Law Program Objectives

- A. Upon completion of the program of legal education, students will possess the skills and knowledge to enable them to pass any bar examination of their choosing.
- B. Upon completion of the program of legal education, students will possess those skills to participate as respected members of the legal profession.
- C. Upon completion of the program of legal education, students will model ethical, responsible, and professional behavior.
- D. Upon completion of the program of legal education, students will embrace cultural differences and civic and community engagement.

American Bar Association Standard 302: LEARNING OUTCOMES

A law school shall establish learning outcomes that shall, at a minimum, include competency in the following:

- (a) Knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law;
- (b) Legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem-solving, and written and oral communication in the legal context;
- (c) Exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system; and
- (d) Other professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession.

In compliance with ABA Standard 302, the University of La Verne College of Law has established the following:

University of La Verne College of Law Program Learning Outcomes

1. Students shall demonstrate knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law.
2. Students shall demonstrate competence in legal analysis and reasoning.
3. Students shall demonstrate competence in conducting legal research.
4. Students shall demonstrate competence in problem-solving.
5. Students shall demonstrate competence in written and oral communication.
6. Students shall be able and motivated to exercise proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients, the legal system, and the wider community.
7. Students shall demonstrate competent litigation skills.
8. Students shall demonstrate competent transactional skills.
9. Students shall apply cultural competency while exercising their legal skills.
10. Students shall demonstrate competence in answering bar-style multiple-choice, essay and performance test questions.