

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONALISM

William E. Glover, Chair

The Virginia State Bar's mandatory course on professionalism has become the cornerstone for professionalism training of all newly-admitted Virginia lawyers. Since 1988, 16,000 new admittees to the Virginia State Bar have taken the course, now comprising more than half of the lawyers in active practice in Virginia.

- The Standing Committee on Professionalism:
- selects faculty members for nomination to the Chief Justice of the Virginia Supreme Court,
 - reviews the curriculum for the course, and
 - in cooperation with bar staff, administers the course.

Faculty for the professionalism course is comprised of 75 judges and lawyers, each serving a one-time, three-year term. The faculty is chosen to achieve diversity of geography, practice area and legal experience, with emphasis on a demonstrated commitment to excellence and professionalism, as well as an ability to communicate that commitment to others. Approximately 25 new faculty members are chosen for nomination each year. Once the standing committee nominates the faculty members, the Chief Justice, upon his approval, invites them to serve a three-year term.

After their invitation, new faculty members are invited to a faculty training seminar given in early-October in Richmond. At that seminar, the new faculty members and current faculty members are oriented to the theory of the curriculum, the mechanics of the course and its aspirational goals.

The course is offered seven times in each academic year; twice in Northern Virginia, twice in Richmond and once in Roanoke, Portsmouth and Charlottesville. The number of students varies from 100 to more than 300 at each meeting. The course meets from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m.

The course format has been modestly altered to promote a focus on practical aspects of professionalism, as well as the ethical foundations for professional behavior.

A welcome in the morning from the president of the Virginia State Bar begins the day, followed by a presentation of the new *Professionalism in Virginia* videotape. This videotape, which incorporates portions of the original videotape featuring former Chief Justice Harry L. Carrico and the late Justice Lewis F. Powell of the United States Supreme Court, also includes comments and thoughts on professionalism from justices, judges and practicing lawyers from around the commonwealth. The new video was completed and shown for the first time at the March 2003 meeting of the course after the retirement of Chief Justice Harry L. Carrico. That meeting of the course also featured Chief Justice Leroy R. Hassell, Sr., as the lunchtime speaker, marking the commitment of the Supreme Court to the ongoing importance of professionalism education in Virginia.

The curriculum of the course is reviewed annually to assure the currency of the ethical rules articulated therein. The standing committee is revising the real-life situations that are discussed in both the general workshop sessions and the specialty workshop sessions before and after lunch. The revised curriculum will be submitted to the whole committee for its review and approval in the spring and to the bar counsel for review at the beginning of the summer of 2004. The revised real-life situations will be put into use in the 2003–2004 academic year.

A vice chair position should ensure an orderly transition of leadership in the committee. Judge Martin Bass has agreed to succeed Judge Waugh Crigler as the chair of the law school program, and David Roop of Condo, Masterman, Kelly & Roop, P.C., will become chair of the Standing Committee on Professionalism in June 2004.

