

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, approximately sixteen thousand new admittees to the Virginia bar have taken the course, now comprising more than half of the lawyers in active practice in Virginia.

The Standing Committee on Professionalism has three areas of responsibility:

- The selection of faculty members for nomination to the Chief Justice of the Virginia Supreme Court
- The review oversight of the curriculum for the course
- In cooperation with VSB staff, the administration of the course itself

Faculty for the Professionalism Course comprises seventy-five judges and lawyers, each serving a three-year term. The faculty is chosen to achieve diversity of geography, practice area and legal experience, with an emphasis on excellence and professionalism, as well as an ability to communicate. Approximately twenty-five faculty members are chosen for nomination each year. Once the faculty members are nominated by the standing committee, they are invited by the Chief Justice, upon his approval, 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.

Each course is offered seven times during each academic year; twice in Northern Virginia, twice in Richmond and once in Roanoke, Portsmouth and Charlottesville. The number of students varies from approximately one hundred to more than three hundred at each meeting of the course. The course meets from 8:30 A.M. until 5 P.M.

In addition to the regularly scheduled meetings of the course, two sessions will be held this academic year to accommodate the large number of new admittees joining the bar pursuant to the new Corporate Counsel Rule. These courses will handle the one-time increase in the annual number of admittees. The committee anticipates that in future years the seven-course schedule will be adequate to serve all new members.

A welcome in the morning from the VSB president 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 Virginia Chief Justice Harry L. Carrico and the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr., also includes comments and thoughts on professionalism from justices, judges and lawyers from around the commonwealth.

The curriculum of the course is reviewed annually to assure the currency of the ethical rules articulated therein. The standing committee is in the process of revising the real-life situations that are discussed in both the general workshop sessions and the specialty workshop sessions before and after lunch.

David Roop is chair of the committee and moderator of the course for 2004–2005. Judge Jeri Sommers is vice chair and Judge J. Martin Bass continues as vice chair in charge of the law school program.

