

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW
PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

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Fall 2019
See Appendix A for class meeting days,
times, and rooms
LAW-7110-601, 602, and 603

Course Information and Syllabus

Professional Identity (PI) is a different kind of course. And I hope it's a welcome break from the rest of your 1L year, which will involve lots of reading, learning of legal rules, and practicing legal analysis. You'll be expected to read in PI, of course. But you'll also be asked to engage in reflection about yourself, your goals, and how to best go about achieving them. You'll also learn more about the profession that you're preparing to enter. PI is a chance to focus on your own professional development. Especially because this course is unlike your other 1L classes, I hope you'll read this syllabus carefully.

Course Description: In PI, our goal is to help you create the foundation for a successful, fulfilling, and impactful career in law. We will study how law is practiced today – the settings in which lawyers work and the types of law they practice, as well as the competencies that lawyers need to be successful. At the same time, you'll think about your own goals, priorities, and strengths, as well as what new competencies you need to develop in law school. We'll put all of that together as we then focus on how to most effectively present yourself to legal employers through your professional resume, cover letter, and interview. Along the way, we'll complement our coverage in PI with regular opportunities to engage with attorneys and judges through activities with the Tarrant County Bar Association and the Dallas Bar Association.

This sounds like an unusual law school class. Can you explain more about why we're taking it? You're right. It's not a class that's offered (much less required) at most law schools. But we think it's very important. Experts who have studied the role of lawyers in society, as well as the needs of clients, have identified three main components of an effective legal education: (1) legal doctrine and legal analysis; (2) legal skills; and (3) professional identity.

Component (1) takes up the majority of your time in law school, as you learn the law in many broad and narrow areas, and at the same time hone the skills of critical thinking and analysis. You will learn aspects of Component (2) in classes like legal writing, law clinics, externships, and practicums. At most law schools, Component (3), professional identity, has been largely ignored. Students have been taught the rules of professional conduct (which are important minimum ethical standards), but little or no emphasis has been given to the formation of students' professional identities. This course explicitly

addresses Component (3) and lays the foundation for further development of your professional identity in later law school experiences.

What does “professional identity” even mean? You already have an identity entering law school. What is it? What defines you? What do you value? Do your actions reflect those values? What are you known for? You bring that identity into your legal training. And hopefully the professional identity that you begin to form *starting right now* is consistent with who you are as a person. That sounds simple and obvious, but it’s actually very difficult to achieve, as we’ll discuss.

Your professional identity will define how you interact with everyone else in your role as a lawyer, including your clients, supervisors, and colleagues, as well as judges, opposing counsel, those who need legal services but cannot afford them, and the general public. How will you relate to peers, supervisors, and subordinates? How will you lead? How will you serve? Because your legal training starts *now*, your professional identity is also defined by how you interact with your classmates, law school faculty and staff, and the outside community.

You know my main goal is to get a job, right? That’s our goal, too. As a school, we spend enormous time and energy helping you achieve that goal. And everything we do in PI will help you succeed with that goal. But PI is also focused on the bigger picture: not just your first job, but your career arc as a lawyer. We’ll help you begin to think about the longer-term perspective while we’re giving you skills that will assist with the “get a job” goal.

I see in some of the course materials that “wellness” is a topic we’ll be covering. How is that relevant to my professional identity? I’ll be very honest with you: the practice of law, while also extremely fulfilling and rewarding, can be very stressful. That’s probably not a surprise to you. National studies, including one from the American Bar Association in 2019, have shown that practicing lawyers are more prone to anxiety, depression, and substance abuse, among other challenges, than other professions. And it begins in law school. For various reasons – some of which we will explicitly address in PI – many students begin to feel high levels of stress and anxiety in law school.

I strongly believe that understanding the causes of that stress and implementing healthy ways to deal with them are critical to your professional identity. Again, my (primary) focus is not on your first job; it’s on your long-term career. By the way, I can’t just tell you what to do in this area. Like most of the topics we’ll discuss in PI, you’ll need to honestly reflect on your own goals and priorities relating to your personal life, including family and friends, as we work through this subject matter.

How will this course be structured? You’ll have six hours of classroom time in PI this semester. Although it’s subject to change, we’ll be spending those hours in the following way (the class schedule is listed below in Appendix A):

- Class 1: Lawyer Competencies (lecture and section-wide discussion): If you want legal employers to notice you, shouldn't you know what they're looking for? Unfortunately, most law students never consider this question, and employers' responses will surprise most of you. We'll learn the competencies that legal employers value when they hire and promote junior attorneys. And those competencies will form the foundation of our discussions and activities throughout the rest of this course. We will also talk about how this course ties into other academic and extra-curricular opportunities in law school.
- Class 2: Law Practice Today and in the Future (lecture and section-wide discussion): We'll study what lawyers actually do on a day-to-day basis. Most of you probably don't know what a regulatory lawyer does, for example, as compared to a transactional lawyer. We'll talk about some basic distinctions among different kinds of lawyers, as well as the vast differences in work environment for lawyers. We will also talk about how the practice of law is changing in critical ways, and what those changes suggest about the job market of the future. All of this is intended to help you assess what kind of lawyer you'd like to be and in what setting you'd like to practice.
- Class 3: Ethical Scenarios #1 (small TA group): You will face moral or ethical challenges in the practice of law. And for many of those challenges, there may not be a "right" answer or outcome. But ideally, you'll navigate those challenges in an effective manner consistent with your personal and professional values. Thinking about these kinds of challenges in law school can help you prepare for the practice of law and, at the same time, further develop your individual professional identity. In this class, your PI TA will lead you through consideration and discussion of a series of ethical scenarios.
- Class 4: Practical Lawyering Competencies: Intercultural Competence and Emotional Intelligence (lecture and section-wide discussion): This class will be the first of two this semester in which we drill down into specific competencies that are important to a successful, rewarding, and impactful career in law. In this class we'll talk, specifically, about intercultural competence and emotional intelligence, and how a basic understanding of both can be important to your professional identity.
- Class 5: Ethical Scenarios #2 (small TA group): This will be your second of two classes highlighting ethical problems that arise in the practice of law.
- Class 6: Practical Lawyering Competencies: Leadership and Wellness (lecture and section-wide discussion): In our final class this semester, we will look at two additional lawyering competencies: leadership and wellness. We will also preview our spring coverage in PI.

You mentioned TAs. Who are our TAs for this course, and are they the same as our Academic Support TAs? Yes, each of you has been assigned to a TA for PI, and no, they are not the same as your Academic Support TAs. Your PI TA, who is an upper-level student, is a valuable resource who will serve a number of functions. Specifically, your PI TA will:

- hold weekly office hours to answer any questions you have about the class;
- grade your written work in this class based on rubrics I have created and distributed to everyone;
- facilitate your two small-group classes on ethical scenarios; and
- be a general resource to help you ease into law school and then navigate through your first year.

I am thrilled with our slate of TAs this year. They were selected from a large number of applicants, and they have personally experienced the value of the information we're covering in PI. I strongly encourage you to rely on them – seek them out, ask them questions, get their input as you work through this year. They are serving as TAs because they want to help you, and we hope you engage with them.

Developing a professional identity just in a classroom environment seems challenging. Are there ways for me to engage with lawyers and judges during this process? Yes! We have worked hard over the years to build a strong relationship with the local bar, and you need to know that North Texas lawyers want to help you transition into the practice of law. There will be lots more to say about this, but here are some highlights:

- Each of you is required to become a member of the Tarrant County Bar Association (TCBA) and the Dallas Bar Association – and membership is free! Through these memberships, you'll gain access to countless networking activities and training opportunities.
- You'll be invited to several "non-networking" breakfasts at the TCBA where you'll get to sit with practicing attorneys and just get to know each other. They'll be happy to talk about their work, your schooling, or anything else you're interested in.
- You'll be invited to various TCBA networking events throughout the year where the local bar will be told to expect you. That way, you can be sure that the room will be filled with friendly lawyers who want to help demystify the lawyering world.
- On a trial (ha ha) basis, we are setting up voluntary court visitations if there is sufficient student demand. During these visitations, small groups of students would meet a judge in his or her courtroom, visit the judge's chambers, and learn the basics of courtroom etiquette and decorum.
- Finally, we are working to set up "shadowing" opportunities, through which students would have a chance to tag along with a lawyer for a few hours to watch how law is practiced.

I cannot say enough about how valuable these experiences are. Building relationships with lawyers and judges is easy (even though it may seem daunting now) and will 100% be good for your careers. I promise. I have many stories, some of which I'll tell you, of law students who got job offers because of networking experiences even though their grades didn't necessarily "qualify them" to work at those employers. We believe networking is so important that there is a networking requirement in PI both semesters. **See PI Fall Checklist, available on eCampus, for the networking requirement, as well as Appendix D for more networking information.**

Are there formal course objectives for PI? Yes. Through this course you will:

1. Explore your professional identity as a lawyer in training.
2. Understand the competencies that legal employers value when making hiring decisions.
3. In light of those competencies, reflect on your own areas of strength and weakness.
4. Develop and implement strategies to acquire the competencies you identify as being important to your job search.
5. Develop practices and disciplines necessary for self-directed professional learning.
6. Develop a sense of personal responsibility in connection with your professional development.

I have real world experience / I know what kind of law I want to practice / I already know everything we're going to cover in this class. If you have extensive work experience before law school, you're starting with an advantage. But you haven't worked as a lawyer before. And regardless of your skills, you can get better at the things we'll talk about. We all can. And if you're in the very, very small percentage of students who think they know what kind of lawyer they want to be when they graduate, I have two brief reactions. First, keep an open mind. Many people change their goals in law school as they gain experience. And second, very few lawyers retire in the job they begin out of law school. Your interests, as well as the market, may drive a change in job (or career). The skills we learn and practice can be helpful long-term, regardless of your current perspective or situation.

How will you determine my grade in PI? Here is the formal grading policy for the course: JD students will follow the grading scale and grading policies outlined in Academic Standards 8.1-8.54, which may be found in the [Student Handbook](#). LL.M. and M.Jur. students will follow the grading scale and grading policies for graduate students set forth in University Student Rule 10 at <http://student-rules.tamu.edu> (rule 10).

Now, here's more information: This is a one-credit, two-semester class that is graded pass/fail. If you pass both semesters, your transcript will show .50 credit hours for PI in the fall and in the spring. With reasonable effort and diligence, each of you should pass this class.

Over the course of the semester, you'll be asked to complete various small written assignments. Some will be personal reflections, and others will be responses to specific

questions that will help you more effectively engage with legal employers. You'll also be asked to turn in a legal resume and cover letter. **All of the assignment due dates are listed in Appendix C.** Your written assignments will be due electronically to your TA by the listed deadlines.

Timeliness is one of the most important professional competencies for attorneys. Failing to turn in a brief on time may doom your client (and result in professional sanctions against you). If you are unable to meet a scheduled deadline because of a true emergency, you must contact me in advance of the deadline. Excuses about technical difficulties, including email problems, will not be accepted. Assignments are turned in on time if they are received on time.

What are the class attendance policies for PI? J.D. students are required to adhere to the law school's attendance policy as outlined in the Student Handbook. LL.M. and M.Jur. students are required to adhere to the attendance policies and makeup policies for graduate students set forth in University Student Rule 7 at <http://student-rules.tamu.edu> (rule 7).

This class meets six times this semester. Under the school's rules, you are allowed one absence in PI this semester. If you are absent more than one time this semester, you will be academically withdrawn under the school's academic standards.

If you miss Class 1, 2, 4, or 6 (one of the lecture classes), you must watch a recording of that class and write a 1-page summary of the class's content. Those summaries are due to your TA by 5:00 pm one week following your absence. **See Appendix C for a table of what you must do to pass this course.**

If you miss Class 3 or 5 (a small-group TA session), you must meet with your TA about the class's coverage and write a 1-page response analyzing an ethical scenario provided by your TA. Your response is due to your TA by 5:00 pm on the Friday following your absence. **See Appendix C for a table of what you must do to pass this course.**

Are there any prerequisites for this class? No.

What are the required materials for this class? We have one required book: *Roadmap – The Law Student's Guide to Meaningful Employment* by Neil W. Hamilton (2d ed., 2018 American Bar Association). Additional course readings and videos will continue to be posted on our eCampus page. Beyond *Roadmap*, you will not be required to purchase any other materials for this course in the fall.

If I want to ask questions or talk with you, what should I do? My office hours are Wednesdays and Fridays from 3:30 to 5:30 pm and by appointment. My office is Room 203B. My email is ashort@law.tamu.edu. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions about the course or law school, in general.

In past years, students who really engage with our class materials can find themselves with a lot of questions about their own goals and, sometimes, their identities. Along with your TAs, I'm very happy to serve as a sounding board as you work through these kinds of issues and to answer any questions that you may have.

May I use a laptop in class? To better foster an atmosphere of self-reflection, laptops may not be used in any PI class. Because you probably won't need to take many notes, you should be able to manage with pen and paper. I will let you know if this policy changes.

What is our disability policy? The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Assistant Dean of Students, Rosalind Jeffers. Due to the law school's policy of testing anonymity, J. D. students should not discuss their disabilities with professors. For assistance, students should consult with Dean Jeffers. For additional information visit <http://law.tamu.edu/current-students/student-affairs/exam-accommodation>.

Do we have a policy related to academic integrity? Yes. *An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.* For additional information, please visit: <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu> and the law school [Student Handbook](#).

How many credit hours will I receive for this class? ABA accreditation standards include a formula for calculating the amount of work that constitutes a credit hour. According to ABA Standard 301(b)(1), a "credit hour" is an amount of work that reasonably approximates: (1) not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work per week for fifteen weeks, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time." This is a 1-credit hour class. Applying the ABA standard to the number of credits offered for this class, you are expected to spend, on average, a **minimum of 360 minutes of in-class time and 840 minutes of out-of-class time during the semester on course-related work.** For more information, see <https://law.tamu.edu/docs/default-source/registrar-documents/credit-hour-policy.pdf>.

Anything else you want me to know about this course? Yes. In order to learn, we must be open to the views of people different than ourselves. In this course, please honor the uniqueness of your fellow classmates and appreciate the opportunity we have to learn from one another. Also, please keep confidential all issues of a personal or professional nature that are discussed in class.

Appendix A: Class Meetings and Due Dates

CLASS #1: INTRODUCTION TO PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND LAWYER COMPETENCIES		
<u>Lecture</u> (attend your section only)		
Section 1	Friday, September 6 from 11:00 am to Noon	Room 204
Section 2	Wednesday, September 4 from 10:50 am to 11:50 am	Room 204
Section 3	Wednesday, September 4 from 8:30 am to 9:30 am	Room 204
<u>Class #1 Written Assignment</u>		
Due to your TA by Saturday, September 14 at 5:00 by email.		

CLASS #2: LAW PRACTICE TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE		
<u>Lecture</u> (attend your section only)		
Section 1	Friday, September 27 from 11:00 am to Noon	Room 204
Section 2	Wednesday, September 25 from 10:50 am to 11:50 am	Room 204
Section 3	Wednesday, September 25 from 8:30 am to 9:30 am	Room 204
<u>Class #2 Written Assignment</u>		
Due to your TA by Saturday, October 5 at 5:00 pm by email.		

CLASS #3: ETHICAL SCENARIOS I		
<u>T.A. Groups</u> (all T.A. groups for the specific sections will meet on the days and times below)		
Section 1	Friday, October 4 from 10:20 am to 11:20 am	201, 202, 204
Section 2	Friday, October 4 from 10:20 am to 11:20 am	207, 212, 216
Section 3	Monday, September 30 from Noon to 1:00 pm	202, 204, 212, 216
<u>Class #3 Written Assignment</u>		
Due to your TA by Monday, October 21 at 5:00 pm by email. (resume and cover letter)		

CLASS #4: CRITICAL LAWYERING COMPETENCIES: INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE		
<u>Lecture</u> (attend your section only)		
Section 1	Friday, October 11 from 11:00 am to Noon	Room 204
Section 2	Wednesday, October 9 from 10:50 am to 11:50 am	Room 204
Section 3	Wednesday, October 9 from 8:30 am to 9:30 am	Room 204
<u>Class #4 Written Assignment</u>		
No writing assignment due for Class #4 – work on your LARW memo!		

CLASS #5: ETHICAL SCENARIOS II		
<u>T.A. Groups</u> (all T.A. groups for the specific sections will meet on the days and times below)		
Section 1	Friday, October 25 from 10:20 am to 11:20 am	201, 202, 204
Section 2	Friday, October 25 from 10:20 am to 11:20 am	207, 212, 216
Section 3	Monday, October 21 from Noon to 1:00 pm	202, 204, 212, 216
<u>Class #5 Written Assignment</u>		
Due to your TA by Tuesday, November 5 at 5:00 pm by email.		

CLASS #6: CRITICAL LAWYERING COMPETENCIES: LEADERSHIP AND WELLNESS		
<u>Lecture</u> (attend your section only)		
Section 1	Friday, November 1 from 11:00 am to Noon	Room 204
Section 2	Wednesday, October 30 from 10:50 am to 11:50 am	Room 204
Section 3	Wednesday, October 30 from 8:30 am to 9:30 am	Room 204
<u>Class #6 Written Assignment</u>		
Due to your TA by Tuesday, November 12 at 5:00 pm by email.		

Appendix B: Class Readings

CLASS #1: INTRODUCTION TO PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND LAWYER COMPETENCIES	
Readings for Class #1	Questions to Consider
<p>1. <i>Roadmap</i>, pp. 1-35.</p> <p>2. <i>Foundations for Practice: The Whole Lawyer and the Character Quotient</i>, published by the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System, July 26, 2016.</p> <p>3. Scott Fruehwald, <i>Why Professional Identity Training Is So Important</i>, LEGAL SKILLS PROF BLOG, July 18, 2017.</p>	<p><u>Reading 1</u></p> <p>Assuming you have a job when you graduate from law school, how do you think you will get it? Who will be competing against you? How will you distinguish yourself?</p> <p>After reviewing the timeline for roadmap steps (pp. 39-47), what surprises you?</p> <p><u>Reading 2</u></p> <p>The report describes the “current dichotomous debate” over law school as being one of “trade school” versus “intellectual endeavor.” (p. 2) What does this mean? What is the alternative perspective that emerges from the report?</p> <p>Using the report’s findings, describe in your own words what employers are looking for in applicants for entry-level positions and what they expect their lawyers to demonstrate and be skilled at over time.</p> <p>Of the “foundations” that scored high as being necessary in the short term, which ones surprised you initially? After reflecting on them, can you imagine why they might have scored high?</p> <p>Comparing “characteristics,” “competencies,” and “skills,” which category was most likely to be considered necessary in the short term? Which was least likely? Why?</p> <p><u>Reading 3</u></p> <p>Given what you know about the coverage and structure of this course, how might it play a role in more effectively preparing you for a successful and satisfying career in the legal profession?</p>

CLASS #2: LAW PRACTICE TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE

Readings for Large Group and TA Sessions	Questions to Consider
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <i>Law Firm Practice Area Summary</i> (on eCampus)2. Mark A. Cohen, How Will Legal Education and Training Keep Pace With Change, Forbes.3. Reid Trautz, If Times They Are a-Changing, Why Not Lawyers Too, Law Practice Today.4. <i>Roadmap</i>, pp. 37-60.	<p><u>Reading 1</u> What practice areas are you interested in and why?</p> <p>What surprises you in any of the practice area descriptions?</p> <p>Based on the specific practice areas that you're interested in, what kinds of conclusions can you draw about the type of practice you want to pursue? For example, do you think a practice based in litigation, transactions, or regulatory work would be most enjoyable for you – and why? Do you have any background or experience in the areas you've identified? What is drawing you to those practice areas?</p> <p><u>Reading 2</u> If it's true that the number of "legal jobs" will decline in the future because of various reasons, what impact should that have on your career planning?</p> <p>What skills or competencies might be important as you prepare for the future?</p> <p>How might you go about developing those specific competencies in law school (and how can you prove your acquisition of them)?</p> <p><u>Reading 3</u> Are law firms best positioned to adjust in advance to changing demands from clients and the business community? If not, why not? Why is this relevant to your professional development planning in law school?</p> <p><u>Reading 4</u> What questions do you have about how to use your time in law school to develop necessary lawyering competencies?</p>

CLASS #3: ETHICAL SCENARIOS I

Readings for Class	Questions to Consider
None :)	

**Class #4: Critical Lawyering Competencies:
Intercultural Competence & Emotional Intelligence**

Readings for Class	Questions to Consider
<p>Cultural Competency Training: Preparing Law Students for Practice in Our Multicultural World</p> <p>How Emotional Intelligence Makes You a Better Lawyer</p>	<p><u>Reading 1</u></p> <p>What is your cultural identity? How do those characteristics affect the lens through which you see the world?</p> <p>Think about the kind of law you'd like to practice. Can you imagine what kinds of cultural filters your clients might have? Can you imagine what kinds of challenges you might need to navigate because of the different cultural filters you and your clients could have?</p> <p>What are some ways in which a lawyer's failure to account for cultural differences affect the delivery of legal services?</p> <p><u>Reading 2</u></p> <p>What is emotional intelligence, and why is it important for lawyers?</p> <p>Why do you think some lawyers don't exhibit emotional intelligence?</p> <p>Think of a time when you used emotional intelligence to</p>

	<p>achieve a better personal, educational, or professional outcome.</p> <p>Conversely, think of a time when you could have used emotional intelligence more effectively. What did you learn from that experience?</p>
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Class #5: Ethical Scenarios #2	
Readings for Class	Questions to Consider
None	

Class #6: Wellbeing Check-In + Critical Lawyering Competencies: Leadership & Wellness	
Readings for Class	Questions to Consider
<p>Leadership Literacies for Lawyers</p> <p>The Essence of Leadership for Lawyers</p> <p>Introduction to the Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change, from the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being</p>	<p>Reading 1</p> <p>What kinds of leadership roles do lawyers find themselves in?</p> <p>Why does society seem to rely on lawyers when looking for leadership?</p> <p>What are some core leadership competencies that are useful for lawyers?</p>

Reading 2

What is the difference between wellbeing and happiness?

What are the components of wellbeing? Assess your own life in each of these areas.

What specific challenges does the practice of law create to the maintenance of wellbeing?

What are some tools you can implement in your life to better achieve overall wellbeing? What are the costs of doing so?

Appendix C: Assignments

This course is graded pass/fail. I expect that everyone in the class will work hard and receive a passing grade. However, I also don't want there to be any confusion about standards or what is expected. Accordingly, below is a listing of what you need to do to pass. If you don't do these things ON TIME, you may not pass this class. These standards are different than what you may see in your other courses, so please read them carefully. If you have any questions, please let me know as soon as possible.

1. Regularly attend and participate in class. Students are expected to complete all of the readings before each class and actively participate in each small group session. Your TAs will communicate with you if there are any concerns in this area.

2. Turn in each written assignment (you will get the topics later) to your TA by **5:00 pm** on the following deadlines:

- Assignment 1 due **September 14**
- Assignment 2 due **October 5**
- Assignment 3 due **October 21**
- Assignment 4 due **NONE**
- Assignment 5 due **November 5**
- Assignment 6 due **November 12**

In addition to being on time, your submissions should reflect a reasonable, good-faith effort. If you turn in a reflection on-time, but it does not reflect a reasonable, good-faith effort, you will be required to re-do the assignment and be given a new deadline. Failure to meet the revised deadline with a reasonable, good-faith effort may result in a failing grade for the course.

3. Attend class. If you miss Class 1, 2, 4, or 6 (one of the lecture classes), you must watch a recording of that class and write a 1-page summary of the class's content. Those summaries are due to your TA by 5:00 pm one week following your absence. If you miss Class 3 or 5 (a small-group TA session), you must meet with your TA about the class's coverage and write a 1-page response analyzing an ethical scenario provided by your TA. Your response is due to your TA by 5:00 pm on the Friday following your absence.

4. Take the LawFit assessment, which will be made available to you through our Office of Career Services (OCS). Review your personalized LawFit report.

5. Attend the three required 1L workshops presented by the OCS this semester: **September 11** (OCS Orientation), **October 3** (Resume and Cover Letter Workshop), and **October 23** (1L Job Search Workshop), and **November 4** (Interviewing for Success). All four sessions will be **from noon to 1:00 pm in the Lecture Hall**. If you miss any of these sessions, you must watch the video and have your understanding of the material approved by the OCS no later than one week after the session you miss.

6. Complete the PI Fall Checklist, available on eCampus, and turn it in to your TA by **5:00 pm on November 25th**.

Appendix D: Networking Requirement

For the Fall 2019 semester, all Professional Identity students are required to attend at least **one** networking event (it's a PI Checklist requirement). This document is intended to give you more information about the networking requirement and the general concept of networking.

In its simplest form, networking is just relationship-building. And it can occur in countless formats, including formal "networking" receptions, continuing legal education (CLE) training luncheons, cocktail hours hosted by bar groups, parties and receptions held by legal interest groups, and law firm events that are open to law students. I also consider a lunch, dinner, or coffee that you set up with an attorney or two to qualify, as long as your goal is to learn more about what the attorney does or ask questions about your interests in the practice of law. (Networking also technically encompasses chatting with someone in line at the grocery store, for example, finding out you're both lawyers, and exchanging contact information – but that won't count for our class purposes.)

Because an important goal of this PI requirement is to get you physically out of the law school to mingle with the practicing bar, events that are hosted or held at the law school do not count for this requirement. Those kinds of events can be very education and valuable, and I encourage you to explore those events as part of your overall growth in law school, however. The "non-networking breakfast" we sponsored at the TCBA earlier this semester doesn't count, either. Pretty much everything else is available to you.

Where can you find out what networking activities exist? You have to dig around. You have to be self-directed and pro-active. One reason we required your (free) membership in the Dallas and Tarrant County Bar Associations was to open up all of their networking activities to you. If you're not getting regular emails from those bars, check their websites. Both big bars have regular social activities, and they also host various CLEs related to specific practice areas. In addition, they have more infrequent galas or larger parties that would be great networking events.

Beyond the big county bars, there is a "younger" bar in both Dallas and Tarrant Counties. The [Tarrant County Young Lawyers Association](#), for example, is geared to brand new and newish lawyers, and they have social and networking events, as well. Dallas has a [similar group](#).

And there are quite a few practice-related bar organizations. For example, there's a [Tarrant County Probate Bar Association](#). You can also get practice-related exposure through a section of either the Dallas or Tarrant County Bar Association. Tarrant's sections are [here](#). Dallas's sections and committees are [here](#). **Be creative**. Maybe you're interested in a particular section, but that section doesn't have any social activities listed on their website. But they probably have a contact person for the section listed. Email him or her, introduce yourself, and say you'd like to meet some attorneys in that area and ask if the contact person can make any recommendations. I'm pretty positive you'd

get an excited response that would be helpful. Attorneys are busy, and they're almost certainly having more networking-type activities than they have listed on any website. So reach out.

Just getting out there and meeting some attorneys is beneficial. But I encourage you to network in a more directed way given what you might be interested in. Is there a practice area you want to explore? If so, look for a bar section in that area. Did you meet a lawyer or judge at the "non-networking breakfast" we had earlier in the year? If so and if you liked her or him, follow up and offer to take the attorney to coffee.

A large number of PI students have told me about interesting and exciting networking activities they've discovered. I've been impressed with the creativity that students have shown. But it takes work, and you can't be passive. Nobody (except for me, every now and then when I get a direct request to share an opportunity with you) will be hand-delivering a networking invitation to you. And if reaching out seems daunting, remember that most lawyers enjoy meeting law students, and they love to share their perspectives with you.

And by the way, networking is valuable for lots of reasons that we'll talk about later. Among its values is connecting you with employers. I've already heard of a job interview that flowed directly from a 1L student's networking experience this semester.

If you're terrified of networking (or maybe just unsure of yourself), there is a lot of advice online. See [here](#) from the ABA. Maybe you don't like big crowds? There's networking advice for [introverts](#) online, too. We'll also cover networking in more detail in the Spring.

Finally, I want your networking to be valuable to you, given your specific goals. So maybe the timing of the course requirement doesn't make sense for you. Just let me know, and we can work something out. What am I talking about? Your PI Checklist is due the last day of the fall semester (meaning you must have completed your networking activity before then). But maybe your home is Corpus Christi, and you're going back there over the winter break. Maybe you know a few lawyers you'd like to connect with in Corpus in December. That's perfectly fine. Meet with me this semester to talk about your situation, we'll come up with a plan for you to get the networking activity done over break, and it will count for the fall.

If you have any questions about opportunities to network, please talk to your TA. I'm also available for any questions, too. Good luck!