

# ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN CORPORATE PRACTICE

University of St. Thomas School of Law

Minneapolis, Minnesota

© Professors Neil Hamilton, Norm Linnell, and Tom Holloran

Syllabus – Fall 2015

## COURSE SCHEDULE

| <b><u>Week – Date</u></b> | <b><u>Topic</u></b>  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Week 1 – Sept. 2</b>   | <b>Overview of Personal Ethical Leadership and Organizational Ethical Culture</b>            |
|                           | Speakers: Professors Neil Hamilton, Norm Linnell, and Tom Holloran                           |
|                           | Discussion: Medtronic Mission  |
| <b>Week 2 – Sept. 9</b>   | <b>Personal and Organizational Conscience and Goal Sickness</b>                              |
|                           | Guest Speaker: Professor Kenneth Goodpaster  |
|                           | Discussion: Parable of the Sadhu and Medtronic in China                                      |
| <b>Week 3 – Sept. 16</b>  | <b>Self-Awareness and Team Dynamics</b>  |
|                           | Guest Speaker: Steve Tourek  |
|                           | Discussion: Team Charter Exercise and Team Organization                                      |
|                           | <i>Personal Credo Due</i>  |
| <b>Week 4 – Sept. 23</b>  | <b>Ethical Principles that Guide Organizations: Minnesota and Caux Roundtable Principles</b> |
|                           | Guest Speaker: Ron James   |
|                           | Discussion: Oath Exercise Presentations  |
|                           | <i>Oath Exercise Due</i>   |
| <b>Week 5 – Sept. 30</b>  | <b>Family-Owned Business Clients</b>   |
|                           | Guest Speaker: Pat Ryan  |
|                           | Case Study: Malt-O-Meal Case   |
|                           | <i>Journals for Weeks 1 – 4 Due</i>  |
| <b>Week 6 – Oct. 7</b>    | <b>Organizational Clients and the Crisis Management</b>                                      |
|                           | Guest Speakers: John Himle and Linda Thrasher  |
|                           | Discussion: Discussion: : Ikea Global Sourcing Challenge                                     |
| <b>Week 7 – Oct. 14</b>   | <b>Advising from Within the Legal Department</b>   |
|                           | Guest Speakers: Marschall Smith and Angela Lageson   |
|                           | Discussion: Foreign Corrupt Practices Act case study   |

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|--------------------------|---|
|                          | <i>Team Selections for Firm Mission/Vision Statement Due</i>  |
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|                          |   |
| <b>Week 8 – Oct. 21</b>  | <b>Challenges to the Law Firm Model</b>   |
|                          | Guest Speakers: Ann Burns and Tonia Teasley   |
|                          | Discussion: Law Firm Breakup Scenario   |
|                          |   |
| <b>Week 9 – Oct. 28</b>  | <b>Cultural Competency and Leading Against Bias and Stereotype</b>                                  |
|                          | Guest Speakers: Gaye Massey, Debbie Walker  |
|                          | Discussion: Case Study on Cultural Competencies   |
|                          | <i>Journals for Weeks 5 – 8 Due</i>   |
|                          |   |
| <b>Week 10 – Nov. 4</b>  | <b>Becoming a Trusted Advisor</b>   |
|                          | Guest Speakers: Gerald Fornwald, Sarah Gillaspey, and John Saunders                                 |
|                          | Discussion: Listening Exercise and Role Play  |
|                          |   |
| <b>Week 11 – Nov. 11</b> | <b>Servant Leadership as a Lawyer and CEO: Staying True to Both Personal and Corporate Missions</b> |
|                          | Guest Speaker: Dr. Julie Sullivan   |
|                          | Discussion: Firm Mission/Vision Statement Presentations   |
|                          | <i>Firm Mission/Vision Statement Due</i>  |
|                          |   |
| <b>Week 12 – Nov. 18</b> | <b>Vocation and Calling in Serving the Communities Around You</b>                                   |
|                          | Guest Speaker: Father Dan Griffith and Neil Hamilton  |
|                          | Discussion: Firm Mission/Vision Statement Presentations   |
|                          |   |
| <b>Thanksgiving</b>      | We will not have class on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.  |
|                          |   |
| <b>Week 13 – Dec. 2</b>  | <b>Conclusion</b>   |
|                          | Discussion: Concluding Reflection and Party   |
|                          | <i>Journals for Weeks 9 – 12 Due</i>  |
|                          | <i>Eulogy Due</i>   |

## I. COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

### A. Overview

Following its Mission Statement, our University, “inspired by Catholic intellectual tradition,” strives to “educate students to be **morally responsible leaders** who think critically, act wisely and work skillfully to advance the common good.” Our Law School’s Vision Statement calls us to support and encourage students’ integration of their faith and deepest ethical principles into their character and identity and to prepare them to be **accomplished servant leaders**.

In March, 2015, the faculty adopted learning outcomes listed below that define what the faculty thinks each student should learn during his or her UST Law education.

**Learning Outcome 1: Professional Formation and Ethical Responsibilities**

Graduates will demonstrate an understanding of their professional and ethical responsibilities in serving clients, the profession, and society. Whether working in law, business, government, or the non-profit sector, each graduate will be able to describe his or her evolving professional identity, which is grounded in a moral core, includes a commitment to self-directed professional learning, and reflects a concern for the disadvantaged and those who lack access to justice.

**Learning Outcome 2: Knowledge of Substantive and Procedural Law**

Graduates will identify and be able to explain basic concepts, underlying theories, policy implications, and rules of law both in the required curriculum and in their chosen fields of study.

**Learning Outcome 3: Legal Analysis, Reasoning, and Problem Solving**

Graduates will be able to analyze and assess strategies for solving a problem, including identifying legal and non-legal issues that may be important to clients and exercising good judgment in advising clients.

**Learning Outcome 4: Written and Oral Communication Skills**

Graduates will be able to communicate effectively and appropriately in written and oral formats with a variety of audiences and in a variety of contexts.

**Learning Outcome 5: Legal Research and Factual Investigation**

Graduates will be able to retrieve, analyze, and effectively use legal resources; to appreciate different types of resources and their appropriate use as references or authorities; to evaluate the relevance, reliability, currency, and varying strength of legal authorities; and to gather relevant non-legal information or collaborate with non-legal professionals to better understand how the law may apply to a particular situation and the real-world consequences in a given situation.

**Learning Outcome 6: Teamwork and Relationship Skills**

Graduates will demonstrate competence in initiating and sustaining professional relationships and working with others towards common goals. Graduates will also demonstrate competence in interacting effectively with people across cultural differences.

This ethical leadership course focuses on learning outcomes 1 and 6. The course emphasizes servant leadership as a model of how to achieve learning outcomes 1 and 6. The speakers throughout the semester are themselves role models of how to achieve these learning outcomes over a career.

Note that learning outcome 1 has several parts where the curriculum and culture are fostering each student's development toward:

- an understanding of the student's professional and ethical responsibilities in serving clients, the profession, and society;
- an evolving professional identity, which is grounded in a moral core;
- a commitment to self-directed professional learning; and
- a concern for the disadvantaged and those who lack access to justice.

Learning outcome 6 also has several parts where the curriculum and culture are fostering each student's development toward:

- the competency of initiating and sustaining professional relationships and working with others towards common goals; and
- a competency of interacting effectively with people across cultural differences.
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Conceptually the foundational basis for all of the competencies listed above for learning outcomes 1 and 6 is the student’s moral core that the student brought into law school and that the faculty as educators are trying to help the student to develop toward later developmental stages that learning outcome 1 calls “an evolving professional identity”.

What is a student’s “moral core”? Essentially, in faith language, this is how a person lives into “love God and love neighbor as yourself” in all the complexity of adult and professional life. In secular language, this is how a person understands and lives into her responsibilities to self and others. All the major faith traditions and nearly all the secular philosophies urge each person to grow toward responsibilities and service to others.

This course will help you understand that you have an existing narrative or story of your life with respect to your “moral core” of responsibility to self and others. The course will help you develop your existing moral core (the tradition you brought to law school on questions of responsibility to self and others) further in the context of:

- (1) the student’s “professional and ethical responsibilities in serving clients, the profession, and society”;
- (2) “a commitment to self-directed professional learning”<sup>1</sup>;
- (3) “a concern for the disadvantaged and those who lack access to justice”;
- (4) the competency of initiating and sustaining professional relationships; and
- (5) the competency of “interacting effectively with people across cultural differences.”

## **B. Servant Leadership**

As the readings for the first week make clear, several theories exist that expound on what it takes to lead effectively. Most contain a long list of traits, behaviors, skills, and virtues that contribute to an overall personality effective in leadership. Yet an overarching theme consistently emerges: leadership is learned and practiced over a lifetime—it’s developmental. In that light, this course is just one step in your development as a leader.

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<sup>1</sup> Malcolm Knowles defined self-directed learning as “a process by which individuals take the initiative, with or without the assistance of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying the human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes.” <sup>1</sup> MALCOLM KNOWLES, SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING: A GUIDE FOR LEARNERS AND TEACHERS 18 (1975).

Servant leadership is the theory that most informs the mission and vision of our University and Law School. In this three-credit course, we will help you move forward on the most critical foundational virtues and skills emphasized by this leadership theory:

1. Knowing yourself, your core ethical principles, and your calling, including internalizing the habit of actively seeking Feedback from others, engaging in moral Dialogue on the tough judgment calls, and Reflecting on that feedback and dialogue to grow as an ethical leader (the FDR habit);
2. Developing your client-focus, listening, counseling, teamwork, good judgment and creative problem solving, and persuasive communication skills to help others—especially your clients and professional colleagues—reach their potential; and
3. Applying the course materials, presentations, and discussions within organizational contexts (both for-profit and non-profit) to realize objectives 1 and 2 above.

We hope this is the enduring legacy of the course for you.

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## **II. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will help students explore their role as servant leaders and counselors both in practice and as members of an honored profession. Borrowing from a case study methodology common in business school models, students will discuss business cases, articles, and speakers' comments with a focus on listening, counseling, teamwork, and good judgment and problem-solving. The course will begin in weeks 1-3 by asking you to answer the questions: "Who am I and what is my purpose in the context of professional life?" and "What first principles of ethics are most important to me and how do they relate to my faith?" This will lay a foundation for each student's ethical leadership in approaching how he or she will solve problems in each area of the course.

The second segment of the course in weeks 4-8 will focus on organizational ethical culture and how it is formed and shaped.

The third segment in weeks 9-13 will focus on what it means to be a servant leader from your position within the organization.

The model for each of these general subject areas calls for the readings to help the students understand an overall analytical framework for ethical leadership in that subject area. Following this initial introduction to ethical leadership in each area of the course, guest lecturers will present a "real life" problem or case from their experience followed by group discussion and analysis of a case study. Written exercises and journals will ask each student to synthesize the assigned readings, guest presentations, class discussion, and the student's own experiences.

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### III. COURSE COMPONENTS

#### A. Class Meetings

Wednesdays, 6:00 – 8:55 p.m.  
6:00 – 7:30 p.m.: Guest Speaker  
7:30 – 7:45 p.m.: Break  
7:45 – 8:55 p.m.: Discussion

#### B. Readings

The course packet containing the weekly readings and discussion materials is available on Blackboard. Note that on occasion, the readings assigned may not always correspond to the topics speakers choose to address. We have selected the speakers for their wealth of experience and knowledge and as models of servant leadership. We give them general direction on the topic for the evening but encourage them to speak from the heart on topics they think are important for you. It is also safe to assume that most of the speakers will not be familiar with the reading materials for the course. Consequently, you should avoid asking the presenters pointed questions regarding the readings.

#### C. Guest Speakers/Discussions

|   |
|---|
| <b>Introduction/Who Are You?</b>  |
| Professors Neil Hamilton, Norm Linnell, and Tom Holloran,   |
| Professor Kenneth Goodpaster, Koch Chair in Business Ethics Emeritus, UST College of Business   |
| Steve Tourek, Senior VP and General Counsel, Marvin Windows   |
| <b>Organizational Ethical Cultures</b>  |
| Pat Ryan, CEO, Ryan Companies   |
| John Himle, CEO, Himle Rapp and Company   |
| Ron James, President & CEO, Center for Ethical Business Cultures  |
| Linda Thrasher, CEO, DigitalTown, Inc.  |
|   |
| Ann Burns, Partner, Gray, Plant & Mooty   |
| Tonia Teasley, VP of Cappella University, former Director of Education Training and Development, Thomson Reuters, former Managing Partner at Oppenheimer Wolff & Donnelly |
| Marschall Smith, former General Counsel, 3M, Brunswick, and ADM   |
| Angela Lageson, General Counsel and Senior Vice President, Pentair  |
| <b>Servant Leadership From Your Position in the Organization</b>  |
| John Saunders, General Counsel, Givens Enterprises  |
| Sarah Gillapsey, Ass't Att'y General, MN  |
| Gerry Fornwald, Partner, Winthrop and Weinstine   |
| Father Dan Griffith, Holloran Center Fellow   |
| Dr. Julie Sullivan, President, University of St Thomas  |
| Deborah Walker, Associate Attorney, Fredrikson and Byron  |

#### **D. Class Participation**

All class meetings in this course depend for their success on vigorous, candid, and reflective participation by all present. Because of the nature of the course material and the discussion-oriented classroom environment, it is imperative for all students to attend all class meetings. **Any student with more than one unexcused absence will be dismissed from the course and receive no credit.**

**Content.** Class participation should spring from the particular topic covered in the session, as delineated by its presenters and in the assigned readings.

**Purpose.** Class participation is important in this course because it is a highly effective means of exploring, individually and collectively, the thoughts of participants on the topics at hand. You are building on your existing narrative regarding your moral core and your experiences, perspectives and insights in living into your moral core to grow toward the learning outcomes of this course. Each of us has our own life experiences, perspectives and insights. By sharing them, we enrich not only others but ourselves as well. Empirical research indicates that an internalized capacity and habit of actively seeking feedback, reflecting on the feedback, and self-assessing strongly influence moral growth. These skills of moral reflection and dialogue are also important in our client relationships. As counselors, we help the client to think through the client's best interests in the situation. We can ask questions and tell stories of past experiences (including court decisions) to help the client understand the position of numerous stakeholders in every situation.

**Grading.** Class participation determines 30% of a student's final grade. Grades will be determined by the quality of a student's in-class questions and comments, especially with speakers, not their quantity or duration. Our past experience is that some students do not participate in class, and this becomes a major distinguishing element in the final grades for the course.

**Reluctance to Speak.** At times it is difficult to participate in class discussion. For a variety of reasons some people are reluctant to speak in group settings, particularly when the topic at hand is volatile or emotion-laden. However, a key component of this course is the cooperative exploration of thoughts relevant to the topics studied and presented to the group. If a student finds class participation difficult, the student must see the professor at the earliest possible date in the course to discuss how we can work together to make class participation possible.

**Assistance to the Speakers.** The speakers are busy and successful people who are volunteering their time to help us. Each member of the class has a personal responsibility to assist the speakers by responding to questions the speaker poses or by asking questions of the speaker. We cannot sit passively in this class.

**Turn off your cell phones and any other device that may disrupt the class. Please do not surf the internet or respond to your emails during class.**

### **E. One Written and Typed Question to be Handed in at the Beginning of Each Class**

For classes 2-11, each student will first reflect on the topic for the class, the assigned readings, and any additional reading or discussion with others the student has done on the topic and then frame one question that the student would the class or the speaker to discuss. Give a brief explanation how this question relates to the readings. The question and the explanation should be 100 words or less. The student does not have to ask the speaker the question (and remember that the speakers will not be able to respond to questions like “what did this author mean?”)

**Grading.** Each question will be graded on its ability to promote good discussion on the topic using a 0-2 scale where 0 = no credit, 1 = good, and 2 = excellent. In order to receive a “2”, a question must go beyond factual inquiry to ask for some level of reflection and synthesis on the part of the speaker. The total grade on the ten questions will be 10% of the student’s grade for the class.

### **F. Journals**

Students are required to keep a journal throughout the semester for periodic review. The journals are handed in batches on the three dates listed below.

**Content.** For each class, the student will be responsible for a journal entry that **analyzes** and **synthesizes** the assigned readings, speaker presentation, group discussions for that particular presentation and reading, and the student’s own thoughts and reflections on the issues raised. You do not need to cover every topic or issue; select one or two topics or issues most interesting to you. Be sure to use the readings in your journal entries; the most common element lacking from journals in the past has been the failure to synthesize the readings in some way.

In each journal, include at least one sentence on your self-assessment of how well you are achieving the assessment metric that you set out in your Personal Credo as discussed below.

There may be one or two classes where the readings are not relevant to the topic you want to focus on in your journal. In those situations, add a 200-word analysis of some aspect of the readings to your journal entry.

Note that the journal for week 10 must include some reflection on the Trusted Advisor reading.

**Purpose.** Journal entries are neither research assignments nor reports on what each speaker said. They are designed to help each student integrate assigned readings and class discussion on a topic with his or her own faith and ethics. The impact of the presentation, readings, and discussions on the student’s pre-class view of the topic is important. **The professors also need some reference to at least some of the readings for each class in the journals to ensure that you are doing the readings.**

**Grading.** Journal entries for each class meeting should not be less than 550 and not more than 600 words, typed and double spaced. They will comprise 30% of the student's final grade.  
**Indicate word count on the journals.**

**Even if you are absent for a class, you still must submit a journal for that class, but the journal will not include reflection on the speaker's remarks.**

**Journals are due at the beginning of class in Weeks 5, 9, and 13.**

### **G. Personal Credo**

**Purpose.** This exercise in self-reflection is designed to bring each participant to understand more clearly both (1) his or her life purpose and meaning in life and (2) his or her first ethical principles that guide her personal and professional life.

The purpose of the Credo is to help each person in this course to identify his or her first ethical principles as they relate to the practice of law (and how they relate to his or her faith if applicable), and how those principles can be lived in professional life.

**Content.** "Credo" comes from Indo-European words meaning "to place the heart" or "to what do you give your heart?" The personal credo should answer the questions "Who is this person who is soon to become a lawyer?" "To what does he or she give his or her heart?"

It is important to make the Credo into a living document. Include in the Credo at least one metric by which you can assess each week whether you living out your Credo. For example, if your life purpose is to help others to reach their potential, your metric for weekly assessment would be that that you must help at least one person each week in this way. For further guidance, see the Guidelines for Writing a Personal Credo at the end of this syllabus.

**Grading.** The personal credo should be no less than 900 words and not more than 1,500 words in length, typed and double spaced. It will be treated confidentially and graded pass/fail. Unsatisfactory work must be revised and resubmitted until it is acceptable to the professor. Indicate word count on the credo.

**The Personal Credo is due at the beginning of class in Week 3.**

### **H. Team Assignments**

The Oath Exercise and the Firm Mission/Vision Statement assignments will be team assignments. For the Oath Exercise assignment, we will randomly assign teams. Students can form teams of three or four for the Firm Mission/Vision Statement assignment. Team member names for the Firm Mission/Vision Statement must be submitted by the beginning of class in **Week 7.**

Please observe reasonable professional dress for these team presentations.

## 1. Oath Exercise

Each of you will take an oath in a year or two to become a member of the legal profession. This exercise asks each team to think about what it means to be a member of the legal profession and to draft an oath that reflects what the team thinks are the most important principles to be included in an oath guiding the new entrant to the profession.

**Content.** Please review the professional oaths included in the course packet. Each team should think about ethical leadership principles and business ethics principles in this context. This assignment has two parts:

First, write a one-page, typed and double spaced, “Oath for a Lawyer” that reflects your best thinking and shared beliefs as a group. You will turn that oath in at the beginning of class.

Second, prepare a **12-minute** presentation to be made in class. Engage the class in a discussion of some of the principles that the team choose or did not chose to include in the oath. Make certain to ask the class questions. Call on people if necessary. One issue to consider is whether a lawyer’s oath should include language to restrain self-interest to some degree to serve the profession’s public purposes. The Preamble to the Model Rules merely mentions “earning a satisfactory living” in paragraph 9.

**Purpose.** This exercise asks a team of students to synthesize and to prioritize the principles and ideals of the profession while considering ethical leadership and business ethics principles.

**Grading.** The Oath Exercise will be graded as a team and comprise 10% of the student’s final grade. Each group should identify a group leader for the project. The group leader must certify that each member contributed approximately equally to the final product. If the contribution of each is not approximately equal, the group leader should identify the contributions of each member of the group to the final product.

**The Oath Exercise is due during class in Week 4.**

## 2. Firm Mission/Vision Statement

As a way to synthesize themes of the course, students will prepare a Mission/Vision Statement that will provide an overarching vision for their hypothetical law firm. Students must include the **means by which their Mission/Vision Statement can be implemented in practice. How will you make it a living document? Include at least one metric that could be used monthly to assess whether the organization is living its mission.**

The team should then create a case problem for the class to discuss where the team will lead the class in applying the Mission/Vision statement to the case problem. Select a case problem that you believe will arise for either individual lawyers in your firm or for the firm as a whole.

**Content.** The Firm Mission/Vision is a concise statement of guiding principles to govern your hypothetical law firm. The Mission/Vision **must deal** with the issues of what is a satisfactory living for members of the firm and whether servant leadership plays a role in your firm? Include

the case to which you will apply your mission and vision, but the actual application of the mission and vision to the case will occur in your class with the other students. The document should be a one-page, typed and double spaced, statement with an attached summary document not exceeding 1,500 words outlining the reasons for including each item and your thoughts about implementation. Indicate word count on the summary document.

The presentation should not include a summary of the Mission/Vision Statement but rather should focus primarily on the case problem. We ask that the presentation include either a taped\* or live (in class) role play of the ethical dilemma presented in the case, followed by a discussion asking the class to apply the Mission/Vision statement to the case problem. Make certain to ask the class questions. Call on people if necessary. Students are responsible to ensure that the movie technology utilized is compatible with the classroom technology. The presentation should be 20-25 minutes.

**Purpose.** To have an impact on the profession, we must be able to shape the immediate environment in which we practice. This exercise will help to examine how we might influence the culture of our firm and how we would address a problem using the firm's Mission/Vision.

**Grading.** The Firm Mission/Vision Statement and presentation will be graded as a team and comprise 20% of the student's final grade. Each group should identify a group leader for the project. The group leader must certify that each member contributed approximately equally to the final product. If the contribution of each is not approximately equal, the group leader should identify the contributions of each member of the group to the final product.

\*For those teams that decide to present a taped version of their ethical dilemma, the following resources are available to aid in the production of their video:

*UST IRT Equipment Checkout:* Students may be granted access to video production equipment if a faculty or staff member is willing to reserve and take responsibility for the equipment (Please contact Prof. Hamilton for permission). Video equipment can be checked out for a maximum of 2 weeks. All items checked out on the Minneapolis Campus may be picked up and returned to the Scholars walk-up service counter in Opus Hall. Make all requests for checkout equipment at a minimum of 72 business hours before your intended use date. To make a request, visit <https://webapp.stthomas.edu/RFS/login.jsp>

*Free Online Movie Production Website:* <http://www.xtranormal.com>

(There are many other text to video options available online. Please make these videos as professional looking as possible.)

**The Firm Mission/Vision Statement is due at the beginning of class in Week 11, and the presentations are scheduled to occur during class in Weeks 11 and 12.**

## **I. Eulogy**

**Content.** First, reflect on the eulogies you have heard in your lifetime. Which ones had the most profound impact on you? Why? Then ask yourself, "What I most want people to remember about me is \_\_\_\_\_. " Or "At the end of my life, what I would like to know about myself is \_\_\_\_\_."

Or “if my life were a book, the theme of my book apparent to everyone is \_\_\_\_.” Next, does your eulogy reflect your credo? Is it clear to what you have given your heart in life?

If the eulogy exercise is too difficult for you, you can do this exercise by thinking about your life as a book, and you are writing chapters as you live your life. What is the theme of your book? What is the theme of the particular chapter you are living now? Write down the likely topics of the chapters you see ahead of you.

Also, meet with at least two people to discuss this assignment. One of them should be over 60 and retired. Ask them about their life in terms of how they would have answered the question above at your stage in life, and how they answer the question now at their stage of life. Have they changed their minds about what the “end” of their life should be? How do they describe “to what have I given my heart?” What is their legacy? What advice do they have about your legacy? You should include some reflection on what you find out from these interviews in your written eulogy.

**Purpose.** Stephen Covey, author of *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, advises each of us “to begin with the end in mind.” One method of doing so is to think through what you hope your eulogy might be. We hope you do not see this exercise as morbid. For a spiritual person, thinking about dying is simply thinking about what we must transcend with God’s help.

If you have not seen the movie *It’s a Wonderful Life* with Jimmy Stewart in recent years, you could take a look at that movie and discuss your reaction in the written assignment. Jimmy Stewart’s character in the movie changed his mind about what the “end” of his life was about.

**Grading.** The eulogy should be no less than 750 words and not more than 1,500 words in length, typed and double spaced. It will be treated confidentially and graded pass/fail. Unsatisfactory work must be revised and resubmitted until it is acceptable to the professors. Indicate word count on the eulogy.

**The Eulogy is due at the beginning of class in Week 13.**

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#### IV. GRADING

This course is different than any other in law school. Consequently, grades are determined based on a different set of expectations. We will not assess you based on your particular stage of ethical development. Instead, your willingness to engage in the process of feedback, dialogue, and reflection will determine the quality of your performance.

Grades will be weighted as follows:

|                               |           |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Class Participation:          | 30%       |
| One question (for 10 classes) | 10%       |
| Journals:                     | 30%       |
| Personal Credo:               | Pass/Fail |

Oath Exercise: 10%

Firm Mission/Vision Statement: 20%

Eulogy: Pass/Fail

**Note: no late papers accepted.**

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## **V. CONFIDENTIALITY**

In any discussion focusing on personal values, participants must share a high level of trust. Honest self-disclosure can make a speaker vulnerable to criticism from others, especially when comments are taken out of context and shared with persons not present at the discussion. Participants must respect each other and the presenters. Unless a participant expressly waives his or her right to confidentiality with respect to a particular comment, words spoken in this seminar must not leave the classroom.

A student or professor who learns of any breach should first discuss it with the student or professor involved. If that is not possible and the breach is serious enough, the suspected breach may be addressed in a journal entry or in a conference with the professor.

Maintaining confidentiality about classroom discussions is not to be viewed as a ban on discussing with non-participants the activities and themes of the course. That sort of discussion is encouraged as it helps participants gain perspective and can lead to healthy reconsideration of personal views. To avoid running afoul of the confidentiality constraints, participants should keep any outside discussion centered on ideas and activities experienced in the course, and they must avoid reference to particular individuals, firms, agencies, or other entities.

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## **VI. DISABILITY STATEMENT**

Qualified law students with documented disabilities who may need classroom and testing accommodations should make an appointment with the University of St. Thomas Disability Resources office on the St. Paul campus. Appointments can be made by calling 651-962-6315. If you have questions about how to set up an appointment, you may also contact Jill Akervik, the Law School Registrar, or Scott Swanson, the Director of Academic Achievement; they both assist the University in executing specific accommodations.

For further information, you can locate the Disability Resources office on the web at <http://www.stthomas.edu/enhancementprog/>.

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## **GUIDELINES FOR WRITING A PERSONAL CREDO**

There is no need for students to do background readings or research for this exercise. Instead, students should consider their own thoughts and feelings. The product of this exercise is a first draft that will be polished and refined over time.

## Strategies

Spend no more than four hours actually drafting your Credo. Before you begin, take time to reflect on its content. Ideas about your Credo may come to you at odd moments; write them down. Prepare a short outline of those ideas and any others that have come to you since you started thinking about this exercise, then start drafting.

Recognize that for many of us, writing and talking about issues of faith, morality and meaning can be awkward, intimidating and confusing experiences. Often one's ideas seem trite or pretentious. Sometimes they feel subliminal or incomplete, and the written or oral expression appears inadequate and unrefined. Those are very human, very understandable reactions; after all, it is often most difficult to express in writing or words the things that matter most to us.

Understand that, and then do your best to set aside those reactions and get on with your work. It helps to remember that the Credo is just for you. The only other people who will see it is the professor, and his only function is to help nurture the ideas you express.

## Suggestions

The central task of this Credo is for you to explore the question to what do you give your heart? What are both your life purpose and the principles that guide you to achieve it? One powerful way to approach this question of life purpose is to make a list of the circles of people around you for whom you would like to make a positive difference: family, friends, colleagues in the workplace, your work team, wider circles of professional colleagues, and wider communities. Where do you put your clients in terms of how close clients are to the inner circle of family and close friends? What positive difference do you hope to make for these circles of souls? Why?

Can you synthesize what you have thought about in the paragraph above into one or two sentences that state "For this, I have come"? Try reviewing this statement every morning for the rest of the semester.

Consider touching on one or more of the following topics in your Credo:

1. ***Your Faith and Moral Biography*** - Share something of your faith and moral biography. What persons, groups or events have been significant in shaping your faith and moral identity or character? What moral communities empower and sustain you?
2. ***Your Life Purpose or Calling*** – Ultimately the question of life purpose only can be answered from the inside out. However this is a life-long inquiry and earlier in life, the answer tends to be defined in "external" terms. For example, if you see one life purpose as achieving a particular career station in life like law partner, this is an external purpose. Some scholars argue that each of us must pass through a stage where external validation that we are good at something causes us to internalize a healthy sense of self-worth. So early in professional life, "external" validation is a critical step and an appropriate and necessary life purpose for that stage.

In your thinking about life purpose or calling, consider the following questions (these are suggestive only and need not be mentioned in your credo):

- a. What are your strongest beliefs or principles? Are there beliefs and principles that not only motivate you positively, but also in behalf of which you are willing to pay a substantial personal cost?
- b. What is your responsibility to others? Include all the circles of “neighbors” around you – family, friends, co-workers, professional colleagues, your church and school communities, etc.
- c. What are the most important qualities, skills, traits that you have to serve others?
- d. What are your passions?