

## COURSE SYLLABUS - PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Professor Dru Stevenson

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The American Bar Association Model Rules and Texas Rules of Professional Responsibility form the framework for study of ethical topics relating to an attorney's relation to the courts and to clients, such as the rights and responsibilities of an attorney, conflict of interest, confidential communications, disciplinary proceedings, and other ethical issues. **COURSE OBJECTIVES:** 1) Students learn the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct, the ABA Model Code of Judicial Conduct, and selected sections of the Texas Rules. 2) Students effectively prepare to pass the MPRE on the first try. 3) Students expand their ability to engage in nuanced ethical reasoning, deliberation, and debate. 4) Students acquire useful information about the consequences of violating the rules that regulate the legal industry, such as discipline by the licensing authority or malpractice liability.

**To achieve these objectives,** we will study the relevant rules and standards, will practice numerous MPRE-like questions, will have a final exam very similar to the MPRE, and will learn the procedures for disbarment, discipline, and malpractice liability. Class sessions also include extended ethical deliberation and debate.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:** *PROBLEMS IN LEGAL ETHICS* (10th ed West Publ 2012), by Mortimer D. Schwartz, Richard C. Wydick, Rex R. Perschbacher, Debra Lyn Bassett (ISBN-13: 9780314280497)

**AND EXAM PRO ON PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY** (West Publ 2011), by Leslie W. Abramson (ISBN-13: 9780314264756) (the practice tests in this book are VERY representative of the final exam).

**RECOMMENDED:** *Professional Responsibility - Sum & Substance* (Audio CD) by John S. Dzienkowski (ISBN-10: 0314152865)

**Weekly READINGS** (read approximately one chapter per week):

1. Chapter 1 – Introductory Materials, *Rico v. Mitsubishi Motors*
2. Chapter 2 – Sources and Application of Rules (Admission, Membership, Discipline)
3. Chapter 3 – Rules for Beginning & Ending the Lawyer-Client Relationship
4. Chapter 4 – Rules for Advertising & Solicitation
5. Chapter 5 – Rules for Attorney Fees and Fiduciary Duties
6. Chapter 6 – Rules for Competence, Diligence, and Unauthorized Practice
7. Chapter 7 – Rules for Confidential Information
8. Chapter 8 – Rules for Mandatory Candor
9. Chapter 9 – Rules for Fairness
10. Chapter 10 – Rules against Bias
11. Chapter 11 – Rules for Conflicts of Interest
12. Chapter 12 – More Rules about Conflicts of Interest
13. Chapter 13 – Rules for Law Firms
14. Chapter 14 – Rules for Judges
15. Special lectures about disciplinary proceedings, malpractice insurance, moral philosophy, etc.