

Symposium: Teaching Values in Law School

Preface

ONE OF THE FIRST and most important projects of the Center for Applied Legal Ethics at the University of San Francisco School of Law (“U.S.F.”) is this Symposium issue of the University of San Francisco Law Review. The Center was created in the spring of 2000 in large part, according to its mission statement, to “create a forum for dialogue about teaching and applying legal ethics.” We intend that this Symposium on teaching values in law school will be a major step in furthering that dialogue.

Among the stated goals of the Center are “addressing the realities of practicing law ethically,” and “exploring how law schools can and should shape student values.” At U.S.F., we enjoy the luxury of teaching ethics in three unit limited-enrollment seminars. As Professor Josh Davis notes in his introduction, this enables our ethics faculty to use exercises and role plays that replicate the practice of law. This not only gives students the opportunity to examine their ethics and morals in a real-world context but, as Professor Davis notes, provides our professors with “real opportunities for teaching about values.”

Teaching values—indeed, even talking or writing about teaching values—can be a daunting task. Fortunately, the four major contributors to this Symposium, Chris Eisgruber, Josh Rosenberg, Paul Tremblay, and Brad Wendel, are more than up to the challenge. Each has a wealth of experience examining the values and morality of our lawyers and legal system. Each has his own perspective, whether rooted in constitutional law, interpersonal dynamics, professional responsibility, or ethics in clinical and legal services settings. We offer our sincere thanks to each for a thoughtful contribution to this Symposium, and for the time and effort taken to produce such excellent work.

My colleague Josh Davis’s deep seated interest in the question of values inspired this Symposium issue. Without his leadership, vision, and effort, this volume would not exist. For our Center, this Symposium helps mark the beginnings of the dialogue we intend to foster. We envision the dialogue as a continuing one. At the Center’s website,

www.usfca.edu/legalethics, we have created a threaded discussion called "Open Dialogue." Anyone wishing to contribute views on teaching values in law school, or on any other subject relating to legal ethics, values, and morals, is invited to come to this discussion forum and express those views. We will be there to respond. Links to the articles in this issue will be found on the Center's website.

Our website will be enriched by your exploration and participation. We hope this Symposium stimulates the discussion of these important issues.

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