

ESSAYS

FAITH-BASED LAW SCHOOLS AND AN APPRENTICESHIP IN PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

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I. INTRODUCTION: LAW SCHOOL AS AN APPRENTICESHIP IN PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

THESE are exciting days for legal education. Thoughtful self-evaluation as well as influential reports such as the 2007 Carnegie Foundation Report, *Educating Lawyers*, have set off (or, more accurately, fanned the flames of) major changes in the way law schools educate our students.¹ Particularly in developing lawyering skills, law schools are implementing exciting and meaningful curricular changes. Quickly, law schools are moving to fulfill Carnegie's vision that law schools should provide an "apprenticeship of practice."² If only my own law school had looked like this 25 years ago!

An apprenticeship in legal skills was just one part of Carnegie's diagnosis of what is most needed for effective training of lawyers.³ Carnegie presented another recommendation that is just as crucial: Law schools must provide an apprenticeship in professional identity. To Carnegie, this means training students both in professional ethics and in professionalism, what it called "the wider matters of morality and character."⁴ While a fundamental part of Carnegie's overall diagnosis, this recommendation has been much less discussed than the recommendation regarding an apprenticeship of skills.⁵ Numerous conferences have been held and journals filled with exhortations to expand and improve

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1. WILLIAM M. SULLIVAN ET AL., *EDUCATING LAWYERS: PREPARATION FOR THE PROFESSION OF LAW* (2007).

2. *Id.* at 87.

3. *Id.*

4. *Id.* at 129.

5. *But see* Amy Timmer & John Berry, *The ABA's Excellent and Inevitable Journey to Incorporating Professionalism in Law School Accreditation Standards*, 20 *PROF. LAW 1* (2010); Karen Rothenberg, *Recalibrating the Moral Compass: Expanding "Thinking Like a Lawyer" into "Thinking Like a Leader,"* 40 *U. TOL. L. REV.* 411 (2009); Stephen Gerst & Gerald Hess, *Professional Skills and Values in Legal Education: The GPS Model*, 43 *VAL. U. L. REV.* 513 (2008).

training in lawyering skills.⁶ I participated in such a conference sponsored by the State Bar of Virginia at its annual meeting in June 2010. “The Paper Chase of the 21st Century—A Town Hall Meeting,” brought law school deans, judges, and practitioners from all around the Commonwealth of Virginia to discuss the necessity of and plans for providing better skills training in Virginia’s law schools.

Carnegie’s recommendation of an apprenticeship in professional identity is worth the same level of attention and energy as its recommendation regarding professional skills. Such an apprenticeship would address two serious challenges the legal profession currently faces: (1) The distrust and skepticism with which the American public often views lawyers; and (2) the widespread discontent and disillusionment experienced by lawyers about their roles.

Regarding the first challenge, Dean Karen Rothenberg did an excellent job in this journal last year in summarizing what she described as the “tenuous” relationship between lawyers and the public.⁸ She cited numerous polls and surveys reflecting that the American public frequently distrusts lawyers’ honesty, integrity, and commitment to seeking justice.⁹ Polling conducted since that article’s publication continues to bear this out. For example, Gallup surveyed the American public in November 2009, asking it to rate the honesty and ethical standards of people in various occupations.¹⁰ Those surveyed were asked to rank honesty and ethics as very high/high, average, or low/very low.¹¹ The results provided both good news and bad news for lawyers. The “good” news is that—perhaps reflecting recent events—business executives, Senators, members of Congress, stock brokers, and HMO managers now fall between lawyers and car salespeople (who form the lowest ranked group).¹² The bad news is that only 13% of the responders rated lawyers as either high or very high in honesty and ethical standards.¹³

6. See, e.g., James Backman, *Externships and New Lawyer Mentoring: The Practicing Lawyer’s Role in Educating New Lawyers*, 24 *BYU J. PUB. L.* 65 (2009); Leah M. Christensen, *The Power of Skills: An Empirical Study of Lawyering Skills Grades as the Strongest Predictor of Law School Success (or in Other Words, It’s Time for Legal Education to Get Serious About Integrating Skills Training Throughout the Law School Curriculum if We Care About How Our Students Learn)*, 83 *ST. JOHN’S L. REV.* 795 (2009); Kris Franklin, *Sin City: Teaching “Thinking Like a Lawyer” in Simulation-Based Clinical Courses*, 53 *N.Y.L. SCH. L. REV.* 861 (2009); Lisa A. Kloppenberg, *Educating Problem Solving Lawyers for Our Profession and Communities*, 61 *RUTGERS L. REV.* 1099 (2009).

7. See *ED Section Town Hall Meeting: The Paper Chase of the 21st Century—A Town Hall Meeting*, VA. ST. B., <http://www.vsb.org/special-events/annual-meeting/index.php/special-events/townhall/> (last updated Apr. 29, 2010).

8. Rothenberg, *supra* note 5, at 411.

9. *Id.* at 411-12.

10. Lydia Saad, *Honesty and Ethics Poll Finds Congress’ Image Tarnished*, GALLUP (Dec. 9, 2009), available at <http://www.gallup.com/poll/124625/Honesty-Ethics-Poll-Finds-Congress-Image-Tarnished.aspx>.

11. *Id.*

12. *Id.*

13. *Id.*

Public distrust of lawyers is not our only problem. Surveys reveal that lawyers often experience high levels of discontent with their work. Between 25% and 40% of lawyers are dissatisfied with their jobs or fail to gain personal satisfaction from those jobs.¹⁴ Professor Susan Daicoff reports: “Some polls even indicate that almost half of practicing attorneys would not choose again to be a lawyer or would change jobs if they had a reasonable alternative.”¹⁵

This dissatisfaction shows itself in other pernicious ways. Professors Todd David Peterson and Elizabeth Waters Peterson report that lawyers suffer from the highest rate of depression of all professionals in the United States.¹⁶ For example, “[lawyers] are 3.6 times more likely to suffer from major depressive disorder than the rest of the employed population.”¹⁷ Lawyers are also more likely to develop “heart disease, alcoholism and drug use than the general population.”¹⁸

As legal educators, we can and must prepare our students to face these joint challenges of distrust and disillusionment. Having charged our students exceptionally high tuitions—and seen many accumulate exceptionally high debt loads—we owe it to them to send them into this profession with a clear sense of their purpose and role. We must prepare them for a fulfilling career, having equipped them in both ethics and professionalism. It is time for a comprehensive and intensive focus on professional identity. In Carnegie’s words, it is time law schools provide an apprenticeship in professional identity.¹⁹

This short essay discusses professional identity in two ways. First, it addresses Carnegie’s diagnosis of law schools’ failure to effectively train students in professional identity and why that failure matters. Second, it describes how faith-based law schools are uniquely poised to provide a professional identity apprenticeship. In particular, it discusses how Regent University School of Law is accomplishing exactly what Carnegie proposed.

II. THE NEED FOR AN APPRENTICESHIP IN PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

A. Carnegie’s Diagnosis

Carnegie notes that professional identity “draws to the foreground the purposes of the profession and the formation of the identity of lawyers guided by

14. Michael Serota, *Commentary: Educate Law Students About Job Satisfaction*, NAT’L L.J., July 22, 2010, available at <http://www.law.com/jsp/nlj/PubArticleNLJ.jsp?id=1202463773573&slreturn=1&hbxlogin=1>; Susan Daicoff, *Asking Leopards to Change Their Spots: Should Lawyers Change? A Critique of Solutions to Problems with Professionalism by Reference to Empirically-Driven Attorney Personality Attributes*, 11 GEO. J. LEGAL ETHICS 547, 554 (1998).

15. Daicoff, *supra* note 14, at 554.

16. Todd David Peterson & Elizabeth Waters Peterson, *Stemming the Tide of Law Student Depression: What Law Schools Need to Learn from the Science of Positive Psychology*, 9 YALE J. HEALTH POL’Y L. & ETHICS 357, 358 (2009).

17. *Id.*

18. *Id.*

19. SULLIVAN ET AL., *supra* note 1, at 87.

those purposes.”²⁰ As noted above, Carnegie urges that an apprenticeship in professional identity should address both professional ethics and professionalism, “the wider matters of morality and character.”²¹

The Report correctly diagnoses that while all law schools teach and emphasize ethics, they place much less emphasis on professionalism. Why? First, ethics training is required by the American Bar Association and the state bars that admit new lawyers.²² American Bar Association accreditation standards require all students to take a course in Professional Responsibility class.²³ Graduates seeking bar admission are tested on their ethical knowledge in most states through the Multi-State Professional Responsibility Exam (“MPRE”).²⁴ By contrast, courses on professionalism are not required; professionalism is not tested.

A second cause for the relative lack of emphasis on professionalism is that many schools assume that training in professional ethics is enough, that such a course covers professionalism too. As Carnegie describes, this assumption is often wrong.²⁵ Most ethics courses do not deal with questions of right or wrong. Instead, they deal with what is sanctionable or not sanctionable.²⁶

According to Carnegie, a third cause for the relative lack of emphasis on professionalism training is that in many schools, moral discussions are considered out of bounds. Carnegie relates that some law professors have assumed it is impossible to influence the moral development of their students because moral formation takes place at an earlier stage of life.²⁷ More often, law professors have implicitly concluded that morality and issues of right or wrong are irrelevant to the legal issues they are discussing with their students. According to Carnegie, in most law schools “the apprenticeship of professionalism and purpose is subordinated to the cognitive, academic apprenticeship.”²⁸ For example, “[i]n their all-consuming first year, students are told repeatedly to focus on the procedural and formal aspects of legal reasoning, its ‘hard’ edge, with the ‘soft’ sides of law, especially moral concerns or compassion for clients and concerns for substantive justice, either tacitly or explicitly pushed to the sidelines.”²⁹ Simply put, concerns about fairness or other moral issues are “not relevant.”³⁰

20. *Id.* at 14.

21. *Id.* at 129.

22. See, e.g., *Bar Admissions Basic Overview*, ABA.ORG, http://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_education/resources/bar_admissions/basic_overview.html (last visited Mar. 8, 2011).

23. ABA-LSAC OFFICIAL GUIDE TO ABA-APPROVED SCHOOLS: 2011 EDITION 19-21 (2010), available at http://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_education/resources/standards.html.

24. See *Bar Admissions Basic Overview*, *supra* note 22.

25. SULLIVAN ET AL., *supra* note 1, at 14.

26. *Id.* at 148.

27. *Id.* at 134. The Carnegie Report disputes this conclusion, however. It reports that studies have shown that even professional students may gain greater sophistication in moral judgments if the subject is taught and emphasized. *Id.*

28. *Id.* at 133.

29. *Id.* at 141.

30. *Id.* at 144.

B. The Results of a Lack of Training in Professional Identity

Carnegie concludes that the impact of a lack of focus on and effective training in professionalism and professional identity has been serious indeed. It describes a “crisis of professionalism” that shows itself in many ways:

a decline of civility and an increase in adversarialism, a decline in the role of the counselor and in lawyers’ competence, including ethical competence, and a new sense of the law as a business, subject to greater economic pressures and answerable only to the bottom line. Others note a loss of calling and sense of purpose among lawyers.³¹

Professors Natt Gantt and Michael Schutt have explored this loss of calling and sense of purpose as well. They both argue that a root problem is that many lawyers lead fragmented, compartmentalized lives.³² They lack integrity, which to Gantt and Schutt means more than simply honesty or truthfulness.³³ Like a stable, well-designed building, Schutt argues, “a person of integrity is whole, complete, and sound.”³⁴ He or she leads a life of consistency in his or her thoughts, words, and actions.³⁵

Why do lawyers often lead fragmented or compartmentalized lives? Some struggle with their professional role, wrongly assuming that they perhaps must take on the role of “hired gun” or do whatever is necessary to assert their client’s legal position, even if it means pushing convictions or moral beliefs held in private or family life to the side. Gantt relates that “surveys of ethical decisionmaking in legal practice confirm that many attorneys acknowledge they adjust or overlook their personal moral judgment when representing clients.”³⁶ The result is a lawyer who is one person in private and family life and another person in his or her professional life.

This experience of disintegration may in some part explain the joint problems of distrust and disillusionment in the legal profession. The public may perceive that lawyers push moral and ethical conviction to the side in the course of their professional duties. More than this, it may well explain part of lawyer disillusionment and dissatisfaction. Individuals do not function well in a compartmentalized life. All of us desire wholeness and integration—a unity of thoughts, beliefs, words, and actions.

Lawyers living a fragmented or compartmentalized life react to it in different ways. Some leave the profession. They may conclude that it is an oxymoron to be a person of faith, for example, and a lawyer.³⁷ Others embrace

31. *Id.* at 136-37.

32. Larry O. Natt Gantt, II, *Integration as Integrity: Postmodernism, Psychology, and Religion on the Role of Moral Counseling in the Attorney-Client Relationship*, 16 REGENT U. L. REV. 233, 247 (2003); MICHAEL P. SCHUTT, REDEEMING LAW 79, 91-92 (2007).

33. *See generally* Gantt, *supra* note 32; SCHUTT, *supra* note 32.

34. SCHUTT, *supra* note 32, at 92.

35. *Id.*

36. Gantt, *supra* note 32, at 233.

37. SCHUTT *supra* note 32, at 16.

the compartmentalization. They conclude that some actions they might find distasteful are simply necessary in the system in which they operate and that they must put aside their personal convictions and values and adopt the convictions and values of that system. In reporting on a survey of young lawyers, Gantt notes that most of the respondents “resolved ethical dilemmas simply by retreating into their role as advocates in which they concentrated on the legal issues and ignored the social consequences of their lawyering. Although one respondent admitted he personally disliked representing some of his clients, he said, ‘I just close my eyes and do it.’”³⁸

A third approach for lawyers who struggle with a compartmentalized life might be to give up on finding meaning or fulfillment in their jobs and seek them outside the law instead. They might conclude, for example, that being a lawyer is merely a job to be done like any other, but that it may give opportunity to do good in other parts of life. So, for example, the legal profession might provide a platform to speak to issues of importance in other forums, or it might provide wealth that can be funneled into projects that benefit society.³⁹

For those of us who teach and lead in law schools, it is disheartening to see graduates who view their lives and their professions in this way. We know that law is a noble profession and that our students and graduates can do great good for their clients and society without compromising their values and moral convictions. It is essential, as Carnegie urges, that we train students in a professional identity that recovers this vision of what the profession is and can be. By doing so, we will better serve society, and we will send out a generation of lawyers who embrace their roles and find fulfillment.

III. THE VITAL ROLE OF FAITH-BASED LAW SCHOOLS IN THE APPRENTICESHIP OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Faith-based law schools are well-positioned to provide the professional identity training that Carnegie finds generally lacking in legal education today. The final section of this essay briefly describes why this is so and then more specifically discusses how Regent University School of Law is providing that training now.

A. *Opportunities for Faith-Based Schools to Provide Apprenticeship in Professional Identity*

Faith-based schools are uniquely positioned to explore issues of professional identity with students and to train them in professionalism. For example, faith-based schools are dedicated to preparing students for professional roles that include service to others through pro bono and other activities that care for the poor and underprivileged. More than this, at faith-based schools, one of the key obstacles to effective professionalism training is removed. Issues of character,

38. Gantt, *supra* note 32, at 234.

39. Schutt calls these coping mechanisms the “platform theory” and “finance theory” respectively. SCHUTT, *supra* note 32, at 63-64.

morality, and purpose are neither sidelined nor out of bounds. Instead, exploring such issues is often central to the school's mission.⁴⁰ And these issues are core to a lawyer's identity in the profession.

While all law schools can explore issues of character, morality, and purpose, faith-based schools are positioned to do so in a particularly deep and meaningful way. For example, faith-based schools are able to explore such issues in community. While not everyone who attends a faith-based school is committed to the particular faith tradition of the school, many students are. And professors have the freedom to explore issues of character, morality, and purpose openly and robustly. A Jewish proverb says "iron sharpens iron."⁴¹ Students at these schools are not limited to simply engaging in personal reflection, but may also interact with others who share their core commitments, values, and faith. They can do so in conjunction with well-developed bodies of thought. In a faith-based school, they are likely to confront and interact with moral and ethical systems that are centuries old, such as the rabbinic tradition, natural law, Catholic social teaching, or scripture. By reflecting on professional identity in community and by grappling with traditions and systems of thought that are centuries old, students are likely to be challenged in a deeper and more thoughtful way.

Finally, in a faith-based environment, matters of character, morality, and purpose may be explored in more than simply a theoretical or academic way. Faith-based schools can discuss character and role within an environment of prayer, inspiration, and even empowerment. For example, in my Christian tradition, we believe that God through His Holy Spirit is able to empower believers to put their desires and will into action to love and serve others.

B. Professional Identity Apprenticeship at Regent University School of Law

Regent University School of Law has an ambitious mission. We seek to educate and train students to become excellent lawyers within the standards of the legal profession, but we also embrace the mission of "nurtur[ing] and encourag[ing]" our students "to pursue true justice" through professional legal service.⁴² We believe it is not enough to simply send out more lawyers. Our society needs men and women who are called to something higher, something greater. We desire to train counselors at law who will serve their clients and their communities effectively and for great good. We believe law is a calling, and we exist to equip men and women who choose to respond to that call.

We are convinced it is important to start equipping them from the very start of our students' time with us. Like all schools, we filled our orientation week

40. See, e.g., *Academic Overview*, REGENT UNIV. SCH. OF LAW, <http://www.regent.edu/acad/schlaw/academics/home.cfm> (last visited Apr. 18, 2011); *Why Choose UST Law?*, UNIV. OF ST. THOMAS SCH. OF LAW, <http://www.stthomas.edu/law/whychoose/distinctive/default.html> (last visited Apr. 18, 2011); *Mission Statement*, PEPPERDINE UNIV. SCH. OF LAW, <http://law.pepperdine.edu/about/mission> (last visited Apr. 18, 2011).

41. *Proverbs* 27:17 (New International Version).

42. REGENT UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL 2 (2010), available at http://www.regent.edu/acad/schlaw/student_life/docs/ppmanual.pdf.

with instruction on briefing cases, outlining courses, and taking exams. Orientation week ended, however, in a completely different way. We put aside the books on Friday and headed out to ten locations around Hampton Roads and Eastern Virginia to serve the community around us. One hundred twenty-eight students, faculty, and staff members sorted clothes and cleared brush at Union Mission, worked with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to protect and restore oyster beds, and assisted Habitat for Humanity's efforts to provide homes for the needy. We offered over 600 hours of valuable service to friends and neighbors in our community. The day was really good for us too. Students grew to know each other and began to build friendships in a way that they would not have just sitting in a classroom. And the day emphasized to all of us—up front and at the beginning of the year—what our ultimate mission is: to train a generation of lawyers who are servants.

Orientation also included a professionalism ceremony. Chief Justice Leroy Hassell of the Virginia Supreme Court addressed students regarding the profession they seek to enter and the vital need for integrity, civility, and professionalism in that profession. Students then stood and affirmed that they would devote themselves “to righteousness, integrity, servant-leadership, and to the public good, striving to put others ahead of [themselves], and that [they would] conduct [themselves] with dignity, civility, and professionalism.”⁴³ The ceremony closed as students signed their names to a registry of students who have entered the Regent community and dedicated themselves to these ideals.

The emphasis on service continues throughout our students' time at Regent. Through our legal clinic, students are able to provide hands-on legal assistance to the poor and less fortunate in our community. One of the most active student groups on our campus is PILAR, the Public Interest Law Advocates at Regent. These students engage in numerous service projects in the community and raise funds for summer public interest internships. Students serve Thanksgiving dinner to the homeless and collect thousands of pounds of food each year for the local food bank. As a result of the ongoing emphasis on service, between 5% and 10% of our graduating class takes employment in public interest jobs.

Training students to be servants is critical to our mission, but it is not all we do in our professional identity apprenticeship. We sometimes describe our program as a “J.D. plus.” Students receive thorough academic training in the substance of the law as well as legal analysis, writing, and other skills. They learn the law in a deep and rigorous way. But training in legal doctrine and skill is not enough. We are committed to the proposition that there are fundamental principles of justice that should affect the way we practice law and the law itself. We believe character matters. We talk openly about how an attorney can display integrity, honor, courage, and even humility. We seek to engage our students in an ongoing apprenticeship in their professional role and identity.

Those commitments and beliefs significantly affect the classroom. Professional Responsibility class, for example, looks different at Regent than it does at most schools. As Carnegie noted, Professional Responsibility class most

43. Larry O. Natt Gantt, II, Assoc. Dean, Regent Univ. Sch. of Law, Remarks on Professional Affirmation (Aug. 19, 2010) (on file with author).

often deals with the bare minimums of lawyer performance; rarely does it explore higher ideals of character, morality, and purpose. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why traditional Professional Responsibility courses are often unpopular. Like all Professional Responsibility courses, Regent's focuses on the rules of professional ethics and what every lawyer needs to know to comply with those rules. But it goes further. The course devotes time to discussing broader aspirations and how a lawyer ought to practice law to fulfill the noble calling of the profession. It encourages students that they need not abandon their moral convictions and that in fact the rules of professional responsibility permit them, when rendering advice, to "refer not only to the law but to other considerations such as moral, economic, social and political factors, that may be relevant to the client's situation."⁴⁴ In addition to a final exam, all students draft a reflection paper at the end of the course setting forth their personal philosophy of lawyering. Our hope is that students will take time in this class—and while in law school generally—to make a decision about the kind of lawyer they are going to be.

This sort of discussion and reflection is not confined to Professional Responsibility. It takes place in every class. In Civil Procedure, for example, when learning the federal rules regarding discovery, students are not simply taught what a deposition is and what sanctions can be imposed for failure to respond to a set of interrogatories. Obviously, those things are vital; the rules are taught first and foremost. But Regent professors also take the time to explore with students the challenges that litigators face when conducting discovery. Again, we are seeking to create an apprenticeship. As former litigators themselves, Regent professors present students with realistic scenarios and ethical dilemmas from their own practices, in addition to those that can arise in the course of a litigator's practice. They then explore with the students how best to address those scenarios and dilemmas. Indeed, Regent professor Ben Madison just published an innovative text to facilitate that kind of exploration. In *Civil Procedure for All States*, Madison thoroughly integrates skills and professionalism exercises throughout more traditional case and statutory materials.⁴⁵

Our desire is that the three or four years students spend with us are an apprenticeship that prepares them for the practice of law in every way. Yes, they will learn to think and write like a lawyer. But they will also learn to respond as a lawyer with high ideals ought to when confronted with difficult cases and ethical challenges. We believe that our students will be much better equipped to face the challenges of practice (like the temptation to hide or shade the truth during discovery) if they have thought through some of those challenges and

44. MODEL RULES OF PROF'L CONDUCT R. 2.1. As Gantt points out, the ABA's *Lawyer's Manual on Professional Conduct* states that a lawyer's recommendations "arguably *should* go beyond advising the client about that which is merely legally permissible and ought to incorporate moral and ethical considerations as well." Gantt, *supra* note 32, at 235.

45. BENJAMIN V. MADISON, III, *CIVIL PROCEDURE FOR ALL STATES: A CONTEXT AND PRACTICE CASEBOOK* (2010).

made a commitment about the kind of practice they want to have before they are in the heat of battle.

Another important course for Regent students is Christian Foundations of Law. Christian Foundations is a first year, required course that stands in the place of such courses at other schools as Elements of the Law or The Legal Profession. In Christian Foundations, students step back from the legal rules they are learning in Property, Contracts, or Torts and explore broader matters. What is law? What is its purpose? What is its proper role in society? Students are exposed to the dominant legal philosophies that have shaped our legal system for the last millennium, from natural law theory to law and economics to critical race theory. By considering readings from Thomas Aquinas, William Blackstone, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and Richard Posner, students are exposed to different views of law and its purpose. Students consider whether there is an objective moral order that has anything to say about how one practices law or about the content of the law itself. The students are exposed to many writers who view law as a noble and high calling with a critical place in the life of any community.

The apprenticeship in professional identity continues outside of the classroom as well. Once a year we gather the entire community together, students and faculty, for an off-campus retreat. During the course of one morning and a community lunch, we explore together what it means to be a person of faith who practices law as a high calling. How is it possible to live an integrated and purposeful life in the legal profession where one is the same person on the weekend with family, friends, and in worship as in the law office on Monday or the courtroom on Tuesday? How can a lawyer really live out his or her moral convictions when faced with the challenges that come in any law practice? We try to explore questions like this in a meaningful way by having speakers, often alumni, who openly and transparently share their experiences in legal practice. Again, the desire is to have students think through the kind of person they will be and the kind of practice they will have before they enter the field of battle. Students regularly report that these days help re-center them and bring back the sense of vision and calling that first brought them to law school. I think we have all seen how the law school experience can take young, idealistic people and make them critical and, at times, jaded. Critical thinking, of course, is vital. But we have done great harm if we have removed from our students the sense of vision and calling that first brought them to law school. We find that our student-faculty retreat restores both.

Finally, we try to do all of these things in an environment that encourages and nurtures our students' faith. We have devotional opportunities and weekly chapel. Students and faculty regularly pray for one another and encourage one another. We believe strongly that it is important not simply to come to certain beliefs and commitments about how to practice law, but that it is also important to seek God's empowerment to live out those convictions and beliefs.

The legal profession is a noble profession. Its calling is a high one. Opportunities to serve abound. As lawyers, we often deal with people at their lowest points of life. We are given a tremendous opportunity to speak into their lives at those moments and to help them in tangible ways. It is this view of the profession and the lawyer's role that our students must not lose. They should

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leave the doors of our law schools with the same sense of vision and calling that first brought them to law school. Whether at Regent or any school in the country, it is vital that we embrace Carnegie's challenge to see law school as an apprenticeship in professional identity.