



# Civility in the Practice of Law

## A Certificate Program

### OVERVIEW

The vision of the American Inns of Court is a legal profession and judiciary dedicated to professionalism, ethics, civility, and excellence. To achieve this vision, the American Inns of Court aims to inspire the legal community to advance the rule of law by achieving the highest level of professionalism through example, education, and mentoring. While the concept of civility in the law is broad, this certificate course is designed to help attorneys focus on pragmatic ways to incorporate and apply civility to their practice of law.

During this experience, participants will:

- Learn about the role civility has played throughout history and its continued relevance.
- Explore the interconnectedness of law and civility.
- Review commonly accepted challenges in modern practice.
- Make connections between civility in the profession and lawyer well-being.
- Consider the value of putting civility at the heart of civics education.
- Investigate the relationship between civility and public confidence in the courts.
- Determine if mandating civility as a requirement for practicing law is a net positive.

The course provides an opportunity for engaging, personalized education.

- As a facilitated self-study program, there is some on-demand content, and facilitator-led or monitored interactions.
- The course is comprised of five modules, each lasting one week.
- Each module will have opportunities to contribute to various discussion threads.
  - Participants are expected to post one "original" comment and comment on at least two other participant posts.
- There are two required webinars:
  - **Wednesday, October 30<sup>th</sup> @ 1:00PM ET**
  - **Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup> @ 1:00PM ET**
- Additional materials and delivery methods may include:
  - Videos and other animated content
  - Articles and other publications
  - Assignments (that may be shared with and reviewed/critiqued by a facilitator and/or participants)
- Participants can earn up to 7 CLE credit hours in most jurisdictions.
- Upon completion of the course, participants will earn a "Civility in Practice" certificate from the American Inns of Court.

The course is designed to be completed in five weeks, with each successive module becoming available at the start of each week. Each module will contain on average one and one-half hours of required content, including discussion threads and assignments. Ideally, the entire course would be eligible for 7-10 hours of Continuing Legal Education credit. (CLE approval will be sought only for those jurisdictions in which participants are barred.) The course will be held twice a year accommodating approximately 20 participants per session. This low number encourages participant engagement and is a reasonable amount of work for a facilitator.



## **Civility in the Practice of Law: Preparatory Course Work**

- Course Syllabus
- Course Ground Rules & Expectations
- The American Inns of Court Professional Creed
- Personal Professional Creed Worksheet
- Discussion Thread (introductions)

## **Module 01: Traditions of Civility (Week of October 13)**

- Traditions of Civility (Presentation: 62 min)
- The History of the American Inns of Court (Presentation: 4 min)
- Civility and the Inns of Court: Research of History (reading)
- Professional Creed Worksheet (assignment)
- Discussion Thread

## **Module 02: Civics and Civility (Week of October 20)**

- Civility as a Legal and Life Skill (Presentation: 4 min)
- Civility & Civil Discourse: An Historical Perspective & Overview (Presentation: 12 min)
- Civility & Civil Discourse: How Do We Move Forward? (Presentation: 3 min)
- George Washington's Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior (discussion)
- Professional Creed Worksheet (assignment)
- Discussion Thread

## **Module 03: Civility and Lawyer Wellbeing (Week of October 27)**

- Connecting Civil Discourse and Wellness (reading)
- Lawyer Wellbeing and the Relation to Diminished Civility (Presentation: 30 min)
- National Conversation on Civility: Panel Discussion (Presentation: 40 min)
- Live chat/webinar with Judge Cheryl Ann Krause, U.S. Court of Appeals, Third Circuit
  - **Wednesday, October 30<sup>th</sup> @ 1:00PM ET**
- Professional Creed Worksheet (assignment)

## **Module 04: Public Confidence in the Courts (Week of November 3)**

- Public Confidence in the Courts (Presentation: 60 min)
- 2022 State of the State Courts Survey Results (reading)
- 2022 U.S. News & World Report: SCOTUS Facing Judgment (reading)
- Two Judges' Views on Public Engagement (reading)
- Professional Creed Worksheet (assignment)
- Discussion Thread

## **Module 05: Mandating Civility in the Practice of Law (Week of November 10)**

- Mandating Civility - Yes or No? (Presentation: 55 min)
- Grenardo Article: A Lesson in Civility (reading)
- Grenardo Article: Making Civility Mandatory: Moving from Aspired to Required (reading)
- One more article (reading)
- Live chat/webinar with Professor David Grenardo, University of St. Thomas School of Law
  - **Wednesday, November 13<sup>th</sup> @ 1:00PM ET**
- Professional Creed Worksheet