

## **LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center Principles of Civility**

A hallmark of an enlightened and effective system of justice is adherence to standards of professional responsibility and civility. Integrity and courtesy are indispensable to the practice of law. A central mission of LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center is to develop and maintain a challenging yet supportive academic and professional environment. While the study of law may engage language or subject matter that some consider impolite or even offensive, the Law Center is governed by the core values of professionalism, integrity, trust, civility, courtesy, mutual respect, cordiality, humility, and accountability.

Concerns about civility are at the forefront of contemporary discussions of professionalism not just in law schools, but in the legal profession at large. Civility is the recognition of a shared investment in and commitment to a mode of self-expression and human interaction. Civility is expressed by polite, courteous, and considerate speech or behavior appropriate to civil interactions. The presence of civility does not mean the absence of vigorous or impassioned disagreement. Civility does not seek to limit or chill the expression of dissent, strongly held convictions, or contrary positions. It is concerned with the character of speech and expression as opposed to its specific content. It does not strive for a culture of token respectability that requires policing or diminishing constitutional protections. A commitment to civility represents an appreciation of the ways in which the presentation of ideas can have an impact on how they are ultimately received, regardless of their merits. Civility is therefore indispensable for effective advocacy.

Members of the Law Center community conduct themselves in a manner that preserves not only their personal dignity and honor, but also that of the Law Center and the legal profession. Student members of the Law Center community should aspire to:

- Speak and write in a civil, professional, courteous, and respectful manner in communications.
- Treat all members of the Law Center community in a civil, professional, courteous, and respectful manner.
- Respect diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- Refrain from conduct that diminishes the dignity or decorum of the Law Center's communal spaces and overall environment.
- Strive to resolve disputes in a civil manner.

The Law Center Principles of Civility does not in any way supplant, displace, or diminish the reach of the Law Center's Code of Student Professional Responsibility ("Honor Code").