

Leo Bearman Sr. American Inn of Court

Mentoring Program Overview

American Inns of Court Model Mentoring Program

The American Inns of Court has formulated a model mentoring program that can be adapted to meet the needs of particular Inns. For the 2015-2016 program year, the Leo Bearman, Sr. American Inn of Court will establish a mentoring program based on this model.

Purpose of the Mentoring Program

The purpose of American Inns of Court mentoring is to cultivate professional excellence in support of the American Inns of Court goal of fostering excellence in professionalism, ethics, civility, and legal skills. Inn mentoring will assist members in developing high standards of professionalism based upon internalized principles of appropriate behavior consistent with the legal professions' core values.

Principles of Inn Mentoring

In keeping with the Professional Creed's goals of upholding "the highest standards of excellence in professionalism, ethics, civility, and legal skills" and attaining "the highest level of knowledge and skills" in every members' practice area, the following will govern the Leo Bearman, Sr. American Inn of Court mentoring program:

- All Pupils and Associates in the Inn shall participate as protégés in the mentoring program; Emeritus members, Masters and Barristers are all eligible to participate as mentors, but, because of their experience, Emeritus members and Masters are especially encouraged to participate.
- Inn mentoring should primarily address the American Inns of Courts' focus on professionalism, ethics, civility, and legal skills.
- Inn mentoring should:
 - Develop an understanding of generally accepted professional values and standards of behavior and the importance of professionalism in the practice of law.
 - Build awareness of ethical obligations and of proper practices for avoiding mishandling of other's assets, conflicts of interest, neglect of matters, and civil liability problems.
 - Improve professional skills necessary for the effective practice of law at a high level of competence.
 - Develop an appreciation of the importance of supporting and improving the justice system, improving access to justice and the importance of active involvement in the profession and the community.

Operation of Mentoring Program

- *Mentoring Groups.* Mentoring will be conducted by Inn mentoring groups appointed by the mentoring committee. Each mentoring group will have a leader, appointed by the mentoring committee, who is responsible for the Inn mentoring group's activities for the program year.

- *Selection of Mentoring Group Members.* Inn mentoring groups, group leaders and protégés will be selected by the mentoring committee as promptly as possible after the start of the Inn's program year. In matching Inn mentoring groups and protégés, the mentoring committee should take into consideration areas of practice, common interest and other relevant factors which will facilitate a successful mentoring experience.
- *Size of Mentoring Group.* Inn mentoring groups should, in general, have four mentors and four protégés. Each mentor within a mentoring group shall be matched by the mentoring committee with a specific protégé.
- *Mentoring Cycle.* Each mentoring cycle lasts for the duration of one Inn program year.
- *Frequency of meetings.* Each protégé should have at least four to five contacts with mentors during the program year, either with the Inn mentoring group or in mentor-protégé pair meetings.
- *Length of meetings.* Normally, mentor-protégé meetings, whether in groups or with individual mentors and protégés, should last at least one hour.
- *Mentoring topics.* Inn mentoring groups and the mentoring committee will agree on the topic or topics to be covered in mentoring. All mentoring, to the extent reasonable, should address professionalism. Professionalism includes:
 - High competence in legal skills.
 - Adherence to ethical obligations
 - An appreciation of the importance of civility and professional demeanor in all dealings.
 - The importance of pro bono representation and access to justice issues.
 - The importance of participation in bar organizations at the local, state and national levels.
 - The transmission of professional values and standards to less experienced members of the legal profession.
 - Balancing self-interest with the interests of clients, the justice system and the public interest.

Format and Schedule for Inn Mentoring

- Session One Group Meeting with Mentors and Protégés: Substantive, in depth presentation (actual presentation or group discussion) by one or more members of Inn mentoring group to protégés.
- Session Two Individual Session: One on one meeting between individual mentors and protégés.
- Session Three Group Meeting: Group discussion following up on either or both of the first two sessions between mentoring group members and protégés.
- Session Four Individual Session: One on one meeting between individual mentors and protégés.
- Session Five Group Meeting: Closing group discussion between mentoring group and protégés to discuss any final issues.

Accountability & Evaluation

Each Inn mentoring group will provide two short progress reports, one midyear and one at the end of the program year, on the progress of the group's mentoring. Reports are the responsibility of the Inn mentoring group leader.

At the end of the year, the mentoring committee will conduct an evaluation of the Inn's mentoring program, seeking input from mentors and protégés and using information from group reports. The results of the evaluation should serve as a means for continually improving the Inn's mentoring program.