

Skills Assignments

(E-mail to listserv from Doris Hawks, Adjunct Professor)

As probably the newest adjunct teaching seminar in Elder Law Practice & Policy, I am at Santa Clara University in Silicon Valley...

Just as the class was about to start, and I was reviewing the curriculum with the dean, she asked if I thought this course would meet the ABA requirement for a "skills" class...I agreed to make that happen.

I am curious whether any of the rest of you might have tweaked this idea, and come up with "skills" assignments that allow your course(s) include this requirement. and, if so, what those assignments might be. I describe mine:

In my class, each student is doing her/his own advance directive, and is assigned to assist an elder they meet through the community, or a relative, to do the same. [Students are required to visit a snf, AL, CCRC with a mentor/guide or accompany a GCM on an in-home assessment....and could do an AHCD as part of that visit.] Each student will then prepare a cover letter and forward a copy of the directive to either an agent or the principal's physician, with comments about values and goals the principal has expressed.

In addition, they research one policy issue & present on same to the class. I have added requirement that they draft a letter to their own member of the House or Senate, or our state legislature, requesting consideration (or, if applicable, a particular vote) on the issue... Dean feels it is very important that they have experience communicating with non-lawyers.

Doris E. Hawks

Hawks & Comfort, LLP

Elder Law & Advocacy

851 Fremont Avenue, Suite 102

Los Altos, CA 94024

650-949-4117, extension 103

FAX: 650-949-4161

dhawks@elderlawadvocate.com