American Bar Association
Law Student Division

Client Counseling Competition

HISTORY AND PURPOSE

The Client Counseling Competition was conceived and developed as a legal teaching technique by Professor Louis M. Brown of the University of Southern California Law Center. Originally called the Mock Law Office Competition, it began on an interscholastic level in 1969 with two schools competing and has been held each year since then. The American Bar Association Law Student Division has administered the competition since 1973. Each year, approximately 100 U.S. and Canadian schools participate in the competition.

The purpose of the competition is to promote greater knowledge and interest among law students in the preventive law and counseling functions of law practice and to encourage students to develop interviewing, planning, and analytical skills in the lawyer-client relationship in the law office.

The competition simulates a law office consultation in which law students, acting as attorneys, are presented with a client matter. They conduct an interview with a person playing the role of the client. This includes eliciting facts, advising about the relevant law, providing options for proceeding, and assisting the client to make an informed choice. Following the interview, the student attorneys consult each other regarding how the interview proceeded and their intended plan of action.

COMPETITIONS COMMITTEE

The Client Counseling Competition is directed by the American Bar Association Law Student Division Competitions Committee and its Client Counseling Competition Subcommittee, and is administered by the Division’s Chicago staff. The Competitions Committee, appointed by the Law Student Division Chair, is composed of law professors and practicing attorneys.

NATIONAL STUDENT DIRECTOR

Each year, the Law Student Division Chair appoints four law students to National Student Director positions, who assist with coordinating the following year’s regional and national competitions. The National Student Directors are responsible for keeping the Competitions Committee informed, through bi-monthly reports, as to the progress of the competitions. Beginning in 2008, the term of the National Student Directors will run from June 1 to May 31.