



Implementing Best Practices & Educating Lawyers: Teaching Skills and Professionalism Across the Curriculum

Workshop
7B

It's All About Becoming a Lawyer:
A First Class for Any Course

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Mary Lu Bilek, Associate Dean for Special Projects and Professor, graduated from Harvard Law School and practiced for five years before joining the faculty in 1985. She served as Interim Dean of the CUNY School of Law School during the 2005-06 academic year. Her broad experience in the classroom—teaching seven different required courses and lawyering seminars—and her role as Academic Dean for three different deans developed her expertise in curriculum development. Her commitment to CUNY Law's values led to her participation in efforts promoting student-centered instruction across the range of skills and values necessary for graduating excellent lawyers, promoting the social justice mission of the school, and insisting on access to legal education necessary to create a diverse profession. She implemented an innovative Pipeline to Justice Program at CUNY Law, and she coordinates the School's bar passage support program.

Professor Bilek served as Chair of the Committee on Legal Education and Admission to the Bar of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, authoring its reports on the bar exam and bridge-the-gap program. She regularly serves as an accreditation Site Visit Team member for the ABA. She is a 2007 Fellow of the National Institute for Teaching Ethics and Professionalism and a member of the Board of Directors of the National Center for Law and Economic Justice.

GOALS FOR
THE FIRST CLASS OF ANY COURSE

Bring the whole student into the classroom

Communicate that law school is preparation for the profession, not an academic enterprise

Connect professional aspirations with intrinsic values and cultural identity

Suggest that work should have meaning

Bring clients into the field of vision

Help students identify learning goals connected to practice aspirations

Encourage collaboration and peer learning

Develop students' investment in the legal profession by helping them identify a personal/professional role identity and a stake in their development