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Legal Ethics and Professionalism competition launched

Western Law is proud to announce a new advocacy competition in Legal Ethics and Professionalism. The competition, sponsored by Lenczner Slaght Royce Smith Griffin LLP, is open to first-year students and will take place on April 6, 2010.

Western Law Professor Stephen Pitel and Western Law alumnus Matthew Lerner '07, an associate with Lenczner Slaght, will serve as the competition's organizers. The firm will also provide lawyers to serve as judges for the preliminary and final rounds. Professor Randal Graham, who teaches legal ethics to Western Law's first-year class, will also serve as a judge.

In announcing its support for this initiative, Ronald Slaght, Managing Partner of Lenczner Slaght explained, "Our firm has taken a special interest in issues of legal ethics, civility and in fostering an understanding of how to manage the often competing duties owed to clients, the courts and opposing counsel. Grappling with these different interests at an early stage can lead only to a more collegial and professional bar."

"We are delighted that Lenczner Slaght has chosen to support this exciting project," said Professor Pitel. "It is unique to have a competition of this nature devoted to the subject of legal ethics, and it is a great fit with the other initiatives in the area underway at our law school. Collectively, the profession is placing an increased emphasis on legal ethics and, with the support of Lenczner Slaght, so are we."

The competition involves the appeal of a regulatory or judicial decision that raises novel issues of legal ethics. The purpose of the competition is to provide students with an opportunity to develop and hone their appellate advocacy skills while increasing students' knowledge of emerging issues in legal ethics and professionalism.

The final round will be held on Tuesday, April 6 at 5 p.m. in Western Law's Moot Court Room. A reception and dinner will follow for all competitors. The four finalists will be invited to spend a day at Lenczner Slaght this summer. Lenczner Slaght Royce Smith Griffin LLP is based in Toronto and has been recognized for many years as one of Canada's premier litigation practices.

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