



The Elwood L. Thomas American Inn of Court

Program Structure and Development

PURPOSE OF PUPILLAGE TEAMS AND PROGRAMS

The objectives of The Elwood L. Thomas American Inn of Court are as follows:

- To establish a society of judges, lawyers, legal educators, law students and others, to promote excellence in legal advocacy in accordance with the Professional Creed of the American Inns of Court;
- To foster greater understanding of and appreciation for the adversary system of dispute resolution in American law, with particular emphasis on ethics, civility, professionalism and legal skills;
- To provide significant educational experiences that will improve and enhance the abilities of lawyers as counselors and advocates and of judges as adjudicators and judicial administrators;
- To promote interaction and collegiality among all legal professionals in order to minimize misapprehensions, misconceptions and failures of communication that obstruct the effective practice of law;

- To facilitate the development of law students, recent law school graduates, and less experienced lawyers as skilled participants in the American court system;
- To preserve and transmit ethical values from one generation of legal professionals to the next; and
- To build upon the genius and strengths of the common law and the English Inns of Court and to renew and inspire joy and zest in legal advocacy as a service worthy of constant effort and learning.

With these objectives in mind, a primary purpose of the Pupillage Teams is mentoring. Pupillage Team Leaders, Masters, and Barristers should use the process as an opportunity to mentor Associates and Pupils while providing them with an opportunity to participate in the program.

STRUCTURE

The Elwood L. Thomas American Inn of Court is divided into five Pupillage Teams. Each of our Pupillage Teams is tasked with presenting at one of our five regular monthly meetings during the Inn Term. Additionally, each Pupillage Team is encouraged to have at least one social or other group event per year outside of the regular monthly meetings, scheduled at the convenience of the individual Pupillage Team's members.

Regular monthly meetings typically begin in September and end in February or March.

The Inn year officially kicks off with an opening reception and dinner in August at the Reynold's Alumni Center. All Inn members attend the opening reception and dinner.

Immediately before the opening reception, all new members attend a new member orientation that covers the history of the American Inns of Court and the history and structure of the Elwood L. Thomas American Inn of Court. New member orientation concludes shortly before the opening reception begins.

The Program Committee and Executive Committee collaborate to plan the content of any program at the opening reception and dinner.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The Program Committee oversees and assigns general program topics to the Pupillage Teams and is responsible for submitting programs for Continuing Legal Education credit.

The officers appoint committee members and chairs of the committees, who shall serve two year terms, or as otherwise directed by the Executive Committee, and may succeed themselves only once.

The Program Committee may create ad hoc sub-committees, as appropriate.

PUPILLAGE TEAM COMPOSITION

All active Inn members are assigned to a Pupillage Team by the Membership Committee. Each Pupillage Team shall be chaired by one or more Masters appointed by the Executive Committee. The Masters and Pupillage Teams shall be reassigned every year or as otherwise directed by the Executive Committee.

Our Pupillage Teams are comprised of members from each of our membership levels:

- Masters of the Bench — consisting of lawyers, judges and law professors with at least 10 years of experience;
- Barristers — consisting of lawyers, judges and law professors with five or more years of experience; and
- Associates — consisting of lawyers with less than five years of experience.
- Pupils — consisting of law students in their third year of law school.

PROGRAM CONTENT AND FORMAT

The Program Committee provides general guidance on the presentations so the Team Leaders and members know their responsibilities and deadlines. Our Pupillage Teams discuss and decide on the specific presentation type and topics and are encouraged to seek feedback from our Program Committee and President.

Meetings should be designed to assist members in better discharging their duties to clients and society. The main themes and subject matter of regular meetings shall be practical legal skills, with emphasis on ethics, civility, professionalism and excellence in the practice of the profession. Programs should present, demonstrate, teach, and explain the principles, skills, techniques, and relationships involved in the courtroom and in activities preliminary to courtroom appearances in informative and interactive ways.

Presentations should involve critique and questions from the membership and a variety of formats.

Pupillage Teams are discouraged from using a lecture based presentation for the entirety of their program, though lectures by team members or guests may be incorporated into a broader program format that includes alternative presentation methods. Teams may wish to consider using table groupings as part of the presentation in which roles are assigned by tables or in which there is time and space for discussion at each table. If a Pupillage Team can create an experiential or participatory exercise—all the better. Skits, interactive PowerPoints, and games are also options to consider.

Programs are evaluated and rated by Inn members as part of CLE accreditation.

END-OF-YEAR BANQUET AND AWARDS CEREMONY

Our End-of-Year Banquet is held in April at the Reynold's Alumni Center. It is intended to be a celebration of our Inn's achievements and often includes an inspirational or thought-provoking program by a high profile speaker or guest. Our members are encouraged to bring their spouse, significant other, or other guest and introduce them to the membership, relax, and enjoy the camaraderie of our Inn.