

## **Negotiation Course Website Assignment**

For class on January 25, **bring a hard copy to class** of the document described below **AND also upload it to the assignment drop box on TWEN.**

Many lawyers in private practice have websites describing their firms and individual lawyers in their firms. They often have homepages expressing the general philosophy of the firm. **Your assignment is to review at least three websites of law offices and write a hypothetical homepage for a law office you would like to work in.** I encourage you to visit more than three websites to get a better understanding of legal practice in the real world.

If you think you might like to work in private practice, pick law firms doing the kind of work you are interested and in the same geographic area. For example, if you are interested in negotiating commercial deals and be based in the Kansas City area, look at websites of firms fitting that profile. Or maybe you want to work in a general litigation practice in Chicago or your hometown, etc. If you are interested in working for a government agency, prosecutor's office, the public defender, and some other kinds of practice, you may not find any webpages describing those offices. If you are in that situation, you might look at websites of private firms doing the same kind of work. For example, if you want to work as a prosecutor or public defender, look at websites of private criminal lawyers. If you want to work in government or non-profit agencies doing environmental protection, you might look at websites of law firms handling environmental matters. If you are not sure what kind of work you want to do or if you want to be in a general practice, pick an area you might be interested in – or you can pick several different areas. In some cases, you may not find much information on a homepage but you can find useful information in the biographical descriptions of individual lawyers.

These websites send important messages about the lawyers and firms to potential clients, counterpart lawyers (aka "opposing counsel"), and colleagues within a firm. As you read the websites, pay attention to the intended messages – and how you would react if you were a potential client or adversary.

There are two parts to this assignment.

**Part 1:** Briefly describe the kind of legal work you might want to do after you graduate, including the geographical area. If you have accepted a job offer, identify your employer and the kind of work you will do. If you will be a judicial clerk, write about the kind of practice you would like to do after you finish clerking. If you aren't sure what kind of work you want to do, indicate that.

List the law offices whose websites you visited, including their URLs. Summarize the messages that you think these law offices are trying to convey about their practice. This part should be about one double-spaced page.

**Part 2:** Write the language in a homepage or webpage biography describing the kind of legal practice you would like to provide and how you want others to perceive you. Although the examples described in the assigned reading in the text reflect an orientation toward cooperation and settlement, you are not required to have the same orientation. Develop language reflecting the kind of approach you really would want to use in practice.

Your webpage language should be the actual language you might include on your website. It should **not** be a memo to me telling me what you would write, what is important to you, etc.

**Focus on the content** of the website, not the graphics, features etc.

**Do not** provide much detail about the substance of the legal area (e.g., business, personal injury, family law) or your credentials and experience.

This part should be about one double-spaced page.

In class on January 25, pairs of students will read each others' assignment and then give each other feedback about their impressions of your website descriptions. Then we will discuss this together in class.

This assignment will not be graded.

If you have any questions, please let me know.