**XI. PROFESSIONALISM**

The following quote is from a National Association for Law Placement publication: "Lawyers as a profession are held to the highest moral and ethical standards. Those standards take effect **as soon as you enter law school** and should influence your behavior both in the classroom and in daily life."

Professionalism encompasses a number of topics. More generally, it refers to regulating your behavior, to thinking beyond your own needs to the impact of your actions. Specifically, when we talk about professionalism, we are talking about things such as the reputation you build. As a soon-to-be member of a profession, you need to be conscious of the fact that your behavior as a law student can impact your professional reputation and your career options. It is important to remember that you, your classmates, and other students here at the law school will soon be practicing attorneys. You need to begin now to establish a reputation for honesty and integrity. How do you do that?

* Avoid gossiping.
* Be respectful of others ideas.
* Do not use profanity or make derogatory remarks.
* Keep promises and commitments.
* Guard confidentiality. (Don't discuss work in public places, such as on the subway or in

an elevator.)

* Exhibit good time management skills. (Realize that you will likely want to ask professors to give you a reference. If your conduct and product are not professional, they are unlikely to agree to do so.)

Professionalism is also very relevant to your job search.

* Do not misrepresent or falsify credentials. To do so is a violation of the Disciplinary

Code.

* Adhere to guidelines in accepting and declining offers. This relates to the need to

respond to and communicate with others. In the job search this applies to recruiters. This

same rule will apply to clients when you begin to practice.

Your Online Profile

Realize that employers regularly check online blogs and profiles on sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. As a professional, you should keep your online profile as neutral as possible and emphasize professional information. Use it as a marketing tool – a way to distribute your resume.

You may feel constrained by this advice, but realize that it can affect your employment – current and future. You could be fired or not hired because of the content of an online profile.