

# PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY FORMATION FALL 2023 SYLLABUS

## Course Leadership Team

Kimberly Mills, Director and Lead Professor (Section 3) | [kmills2@luc.edu](mailto:kmills2@luc.edu)  
Imani Hollie, Associate Director | [ihollie@luc.edu](mailto:ihollie@luc.edu)

Jasmine Johnson, Lead Professor (Section 2) | [jjohnson87@luc.edu](mailto:jjohnson87@luc.edu)  
Julian Johnson, Lead Professor (Section 1) | [jjohnson65@luc.edu](mailto:jjohnson65@luc.edu)  
Jennifer Sabourin, Lead Professor (Section 4) | [jsabourin@luc.edu](mailto:jsabourin@luc.edu)

Crystal Omade, Lead Student Facilitator, 3L | [comade@luc.edu](mailto:comade@luc.edu)  
Stanley Ihejirika, Lead Student Facilitator, 2L | [sihejirika1@luc.edu](mailto:sihejirika1@luc.edu)

## Course Description

Professional identity formation focuses on what it means to be a lawyer and the special obligations lawyers have to their clients and society. The development of professional identity requires an intentional exploration of the values, guiding principles, and well-being practices considered foundational to successful legal practice. (reference ABA standard 303-5). The mission of Loyola School of Law to advance the Jesuit tradition of social justice and to prepare students to be accomplished and ethical leaders in the legal profession and the larger community led to the implementation of the Professional Identity Formation (PIF) course. PIF harmonizes the obligations and mission of the law school by prioritizing the importance of cross-cultural competency by introducing students to their responsibility for professional representation and their obligation to promote a justice system that provides equal access and eliminates bias, discrimination, and racism in the law. (reference ABA standard 303-6). The PIF course curriculum is revised each fall to maintain alignment with the school's mission objectives.

PIF provides students with an intentional space to engage in introspection into their own identities, values, and other formative influences and understand how those shape their perspective of themselves and of those who do not share their identities. Students begin to connect the dots between how their identities and experiences affect how they will present as members of the legal profession and how their own well-being is essential in becoming lawyers who are able to provide respectful and professional representation of clients.. Faculty and upper-class student facilitators guide 1L students by raising their awareness and understanding of their own biases, power, and privilege as well as the historical context and settings of the rule of law in this country and the disparate outcomes and inequities legal systems have perpetuated and protected. Students are encouraged to engage in respectful and restorative dialogue surrounding vulnerable issues related to intersectionality, systems, and oppression.

## Course Goals and Objectives

### GOALS

The purpose of the Professional Identity Formation course is to ensure that students:

1. Develop an understanding of how their own personal values, motivations, strengths and interests interact with the values of the legal profession.
2. Acquire foundational interpersonal lawyering skills that include heightened self-awareness and empathy.
3. Understand and analyze the professional obligations of lawyers to practice competently including the ability to think critically about the law and the legal system and its impact on individuals and communities based on identity.
4. Understand the historical and social context informing the laws, including but not limited to legal issues around race, gender, ability, sexuality, religion, immigration, and poverty.
5. Develop awareness, understanding, and tools to mitigate bias as a necessary tool in the professional representation of clients.
6. Understand their professional obligation to promote justice, equity, and inclusion.
7. Understand that maintaining their well-being is essential to effective lawyering.
8. Are introduced to reflective practice and understand the importance of a reflective practice in the development of their professional identity.

### OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Effectively transition into the new role of becoming a law student.
2. Demonstrate the skills required for culturally sensitive communication.
3. Describe the role of structural and systemic racism and its impact on the justice system.
4. Recognize and develop approaches to mitigate bias, social inequities, and systemic racism that undermine equity.
5. Reflect on their values, guiding principles, and well-being practices that lead to their personal and professional identity formation.

## Course Information

### Course Logistics

The classroom locations, syllabus, reflection prompts and assignments will be maintained on Sakai.

CLASS SECTION	MEETING DAY/TIME	DATES
Section 3	Mondays 5:30pm-7:00pm	8/21-9/25 (no class 9/4)
Section 1	Wednesdays 5:30pm-7:00pm	8/23-9/20
Section 2	Thursdays 5:30pm-7:00pm	8/24-9/21
Section 4	Every Other Sunday 2:15pm-3:45pm	8/27-10/22

### Engaged and Prepared Class Participation:

The course will follow a discussion format, with small group work and classroom activities. There is a strong emphasis on the open discussion and examination of ideas and the respectful exchange of viewpoints. Students are expected to attend class consistently, arrive on time, participate in discussions, and come prepared to discuss assigned materials and readings. Finally, you are responsible for completing all of the assigned readings, regardless of whether they are directly discussed in class.

### Grading:

This course will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Grading is based on the satisfactory and timely completion of all requirements, completion of all hours required for course credit, attendance at all class and individual meetings, and class participation. There is no final examination in this course. Failure to complete all reflection assignments can result in a failure to pass this course.

### Absence Policy:

Students who are ill or have other unforeseen circumstances should seek an excused absence from the instructor. The Law School's absence policy specifies that regular and punctual class attendance, as determined by the instructor and the Dean, is required in all courses. Excessive or tardy absences, even if all or some of them are considered excused, violate this requirement. Students who violate the absence policy are subject to various sanctions, including a grade reduction, withdrawal from the course, additional remedial work, withholding of the final exam or a final grade which results in the grade of WF (withdraw failing) or other appropriate sanctions at the discretion of the instructor or the Dean.

**Please notify both of your adjunct professors and your lead professor if you are unable to attend class and are seeking an excused absence.**

### Commitment to Antiracism:

The law is a reflection of our wider society, with all of its myriad of complexities and challenges. One cannot read, listen or watch any of the assigned materials without appreciating the broader context in which these issues arise, the people who are making the law and the people who are impacted by the law. This includes contemplating and confronting matters pertaining to race, gender, religion, culture, class, sexual orientation, etc. and should naturally raise questions about power, privilege and bias. This approach to understanding the concepts addressed in this course are consistent with Law School's Mission Statement:

*Loyola University Chicago School of Law is a student-focused law center inspired by the Jesuit tradition of academic excellence, intellectual openness, and service to others.*

### *OUR MISSION IS:*

*to educate students to be responsible and compassionate lawyers, judges, and law-related leaders in an increasingly diverse and interdependent world; to prepare graduates who will be ethical advocates for justice and equity, who will lead efforts to dismantle the legal, economic, political, and social structures that generate and sustain racism and all forms of oppression, and who will advance a rule of law that promotes social justice; and to contribute to a deeper*

*understanding of law, legal institutions, and systems of oppression through a commitment to transformation, intersectionality, and anti-subordination in our teaching, research, scholarship, and public service.*

As you engage in the course materials, we invite you to challenge yourself to think about different viewpoints and opinions. Using a lens of curiosity, allow yourself to explore the issues from a variety of vantages in order to become sensitized to the ways in which law impacts people differently based on their social location and the lens through which they see and experience the world.

Loyola's land acknowledgement can be found [here](#).

### Our Inclusive Classroom

Loyola University Chicago School of Law is a responsible and respectful, professional learning community. Students should be open to the ideas and viewpoints expressed by others in the class, and be willing to engage in a conversation that challenges those viewpoints and ideas without personal attacks or demeaning comments. Law school classroom discussions often involve difficult and controversial topics. In our learning community, students feel comfortable sharing their different perspectives and experiences with each other, knowing that their classmates will respect those perspectives and experiences. If you foresee a particular topic that we will be discussing is likely to retrigger in you a traumatic experience, please reach out to your adjunct professor(s), student facilitators, lead professor, associate director of PIF or the director of PIF so that we can discuss whether an excused absence from that particular class discussion would be appropriate.

### Pronouns:

Addressing one another at all times by using appropriate names and gender pronouns honors and affirms individuals of all gender identities and gender expressions. Misgendering and heteronormative language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. If you wish, please share your gender pronouns with us and the class when you introduce yourself; and/or on your name placard; and/or on your Zoom profile. If you do not wish to be called by the name that appears on the class roster or attendance sheet, please let us know. Our goal is to create an affirming environment for all students with regard to their names and gender pronouns.

### Diversity Statement

Our goal is that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. Our intention is to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

### Controversy and Respect:

This course covers a wide range of cultural issues, some of which may be controversial. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful to fellow students, professors, and guest speakers. If students anticipate ethical or religious objections to any of the material covered in this course, students should consult their adjunct or lead professors within the first week of the semester.

### Distractions:

**Cell phones/pagers/loud electronic devices must be turned off during class time unless needed for emergency purposes. If you need to keep your electronic device on, you must let your adjunct professor know.**

### Guidelines for Laptop Computers:

Course lecture materials will be available on Sakai, reducing the need for students to take copious notes on a laptop. Laptops **may not** be used during class discussions because it is a distraction to the other students in the class. Students are expected to refrain from playing computer games, checking Facebook, TickTock, Instagram, Twitter or email, or working on homework for other classes. All of these activities can impede the learning process. If you need to use a laptop as an accommodation, please email your lead professor to inform them.

### Privacy Statement:

Assuring privacy among faculty and students engaged in online and face-to-face instructional activities helps promote open and robust conversations and mitigates concerns that comments made within the context of the class will be shared beyond the classroom. As such, recordings of instructional activities occurring in online or face-to-face classes may be used solely for internal class purposes by the faculty member and students registered for the course, and only during the period in which the course is offered. Students will be informed of such recordings by a statement in the syllabus for the course in which they will be recorded. Instructors who wish to make subsequent use of recordings that include student activity may do so only with informed written consent of the students involved or if all student activity is removed from the recording. Recordings including student activity that have been initiated by the instructor may be retained by the instructor only for individual use.

### Academic Integrity and Code of Conduct:

Academic integrity is expected of every student in all academic work. You are held to the University's Code of Academic Integrity. All Loyola students are responsible for reading and following the Student Conduct Code, which can be found at [https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/law/fyi/pdfs/Code\\_of\\_Conduct.pdf](https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/law/fyi/pdfs/Code_of_Conduct.pdf) Students who violate University standards for academic integrity are subject to disciplinary sanctions.

### Supportive Services for Students:

During the semester, if you find that health problems, life stressors or emotional difficulties are interfering with your academic or personal success, and you are therefore finding it difficult to cope or to complete your academic work, please consider contacting the Wellness Center. Healthcare services, crisis intervention, time-limited individual counseling, and group therapies are free of charge and strictly confidential, having nothing to do with your educational records.

You can make an appointment online using the links provided at <https://luc.edu/wellness/about/hours/>. You may also call 773-508-2530 for counseling appointments or 773-508-8883 to speak with a nurse about medical concerns. More information is available at <http://www.luc.edu/wellness>. If your medical or mental health condition requires ongoing academic accommodations, please register with Student Accessibility Services [<https://www.luc.edu/sac/>].

#### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Loyola University provides reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC). Registration can be done [online](#). All information will remain confidential. For more information or further assistance, please call 773.508.3700 or email SAC@luc.edu.

Please note that in this class, software may be used to audio record class lectures in order to provide equal access to students with disabilities. Students approved for this accommodation use recordings for their personal study only and recordings may not be shared with other people or used in any way against the faculty member, other lecturers, or students whose classroom comments are recorded as part of the class activity. Recordings are deleted at the end of the semester.

#### Responsible Campus Partner:

As an instructor, I am considered a Responsible Campus Partner (“RCP”) under Loyola’s Comprehensive Policy and Equitable Resolution Procedures for Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, and Retaliation (located at [www.luc.edu/equity](http://www.luc.edu/equity)). While our goal is for you to be able to share information related to your life experiences through discussion and written work, we want to be transparent that as a RCP, we are required to report certain disclosures of sexual misconduct (such as sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner and/or domestic violence, intimate partner/domestic violence, and/or stalking) to the University’s Title IX Coordinator.

The purpose of these reporting requirements is for the University to inform students who have experienced sexual/gender-based violence of available resources and support. Such a report **will not generate a report to law enforcement** (no student will ever be forced to file a report with the police). Furthermore, the University’s resources and supports are available to all students even if a student chooses that they do not want any other action taken. Please note that in certain situations, based on the nature of the disclosure, the University may need to take additional action to ensure the safety of the University community. If you have any questions about this policy, you may contact the Office for Equity & Compliance at [equity@luc.edu](mailto:equity@luc.edu) or 773-508-7766.

**NOTE: Syllabus subject to change at the discretion of the Director and Associate Director**