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The MacCrate Report: Ten Years Later -Symposium: Introductory Remarks

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Introductory Remarks

by Kevin J. Wilson*

The practice of law has seen dramatic changes over the past ten years. Some of those changes have corresponded with shifts in overall societal norms, others have been sparked by changing attitudes on how disputes should be resolved, and some can be attributed to advances in technology and how these advances have made the world a much smaller place in many ways. Ten years ago the American Bar Association Task Force on Law School and Professional Skills issued a report identifying professional skills and values that are crucial to the practice of law. This report, the MacCrate Report, led to the creation of clinical and skills programs in law schools throughout the nation. But, in light of the pervasive changes made in the practice of law in just ten years, it is important to evaluate that report and the application of its findings to today's legal education. As legal practice changes so do the tools new lawyers need to effectively join in that practice.

In this symposium we will look at whether the skills and values identified in the MacCrate Report are still relevant, if they have changed, and if there is a new set of skills and values that correspond to the changes that have taken place in the practice of law since the MacCrate Report. Four experts in the field of professional values and skills have submitted papers for this symposium. Following each presentation a commentator, each also accomplished in this area, will discuss the speaker's

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presentation. We believe that this issue will be used by practitioners and law schools across the country to develop new programs much in the same way the original report did. At least that is our hope.

The driving force behind this effort is Professor Gary Munneke. Professor Munneke served as the immediate past chair of ABA Law Practice Management Section after having served as the Chair of the section's publishing board. He also serves on the ABA Standing Committee on Publishing Oversight. Previously, he was President and Research Chair of the National Association for Law Placement. He's an honoree fellow of the College of Law Practice Management and the American Bar Foundation. At Pace, Professor Munneke teaches torts, professional responsibility and law office management. Professor Munneke is the author or editor of numerous books and articles in the area of law practice management, professional responsibility, legal careers and lawyer training.