

Robert A. Jenkins

Professor Jenkins was among the first faculty hired when Campbell Law School was started.

He was a graduate of the University of Michigan and the University of Michigan Law School. He practiced law in Detroit Michigan for over 20 years primarily doing Admiralty law. (With the Great Lakes there was an abundance of litigation in that legal area in Michigan).

In 1977 he was hired by founding Dean Leary Davis to develop an innovative required Advocacy Program for the new law school. He devoted most of his first year studying the programs at the few law schools in the country that had extensive trial and appellate advocacy programs (just a handful of schools at that time had extensive programs that included trial advocacy and even fewer that required it). He traveled to Baylor Law School in Texas and to California to Golden Gate Law School (which incorporated video into their practical program).

The initial required Trial & Appellate Advocacy program designed by Professor Jenkins was more extensive than any program in the country. [See below for a description of the original program that was required at Campbell Law School for over a decade]

Professor Jenkins initially taught not only in all 3 semesters of the required 8 credit hours of Trial & Appellate Advocacy but also taught all of the law students Evidence (the school was located in Buies Creek during his entire tenure and a law class was generally less than 100 students which were usually taught in 2 sections back to back)

In his free time he would offer Admiralty Law as an elective!

He also started coaching the first Trial Teams (in the National Trial Competition) with the Charter Class of 1979.

When I started teaching with Professor Jenkins in the fall of 1982 he served as the law school's Acting Dean while Dean Davis was on Sabbatical at Columbia Law School. He still continued his teaching duties that academic year!. He enlisted some law alumni to assist us in the Performance sections (one of which was Elaine Marshall who at the time was a former student of his and practiced in nearby Lillington, NC. You may know her as the current Secretary of State for North Carolina.)

After serving as Acting Dean Professor Jenkins resumed his "normal" teaching duties. Since he no longer had the administrative duties of Dean he added teaching of the first semester of Civil Procedure to all of the first year law students as well as Evidence and Trial & Appellate Advocacy!

Professor Jenkins was active with the Christian Legal Society while he taught at Campbell.

Professor Jenkins retired from Campbell in 1999 and moved to Peachtree City Georgia to be near his grandchildren. He soon decided to get back into law teaching as an adjunct and drove

to Montgomery Alabama and taught a law class for 5 years at what was then Jones Law School which is now Faulkner University Law School.

Professor Jenkins died in 2007.

His portrait used to hang in the Kivett Courtroom when the law school was in Buies Creek and was moved into what is now the Britt Courtroom. When this courtroom was named after Judge Britt the portrait was moved to a Jury Room. If the law school still has trial & appellate plaques on the walls you will find his name on several of those where he served as a coach.

I taught alongside of Professor Jenkins beginning in 1982 and was not only a colleague but a student in that I learned a great deal of litigation skills while team teaching with him. I wanted to honor him for all of his many contributions to Campbell Law School and thought the best way to do this was to begin endowing a scholarship in the 1980s (since his real love was students). Once there were sufficient funds in the scholarship it was renamed the Robert A Jenkins Scholarship it has been providing monies to law students for several decades.

The original Required Trial & Appellate Advocacy at Campbell Law School:

Students took a required 1 hour Intro to Trial Advocacy class in the 2nd semester of their 2L year (consisted of lectures and performance classes for a half semester). Completion of this program allowed the Dean to certify these students for North Carolina's (and other states') Practice Act. [There were limited formal opportunities at that time compared to what is currently available for law students to practice in a courtroom or advocacy venue].

The 3rd year required program was both semesters. The first semester every student participated in the Performance classes much as today except every performance was video taped and reviewed at the end of every class. At this time there was only one courtroom with 2 professors observing and providing some immediate critique before the video was shown to the entire section at the end of the class. Most classes lasted the entire 4 hours!! The course concluded with the students conducting a criminal jury trial with an outside attorney serving as the trial judge.

In addition all the students were provided a civil case file that they prepared pleadings, discovery and pretrial motions and pretrial order. In the second semester of the 3rd year these case files were tried to a jury in what was informally known as the Long Trials as each trial lasted 5-7 hours which were videotaped (which served as the trial transcript). These cases were then appealed with the students preparing Appellate Briefs and orally arguing the appeal.

These cases had a sitting judge preside. These judges were a mixture of NC District Court Judges, NC Superior Court Judges and an occasional Federal Magistrate or Federal District Court Judge (Judges Britt & Dupree for whom 2 of the current courtrooms are named would occasionally serve as the trial judge for these cases. One year we had a Federal District Court Judge from Richmond Virginia preside over a case. His bailiff flew him down in his private plane to the Buies Creek Airport!)

The law school was awarded the Gumpert Award in 1986 by the American College of Trial Lawyers for the top Advocacy program in the country [this award has since changed the types of programs it recognizes] There was a nice plaque awarded by the ACTL which used to hang on the wall in the law school honoring the law school for this accomplishment.

Olivia Weeks, Johnny Chriscoe, Jon Powell and Richard Bowser were all students of Professor Jenkins.

Thomas P. Anderson

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