GERALD T. BENNETT INN OF COURT

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HISTORY OF OUR INN

The Gerald T. Bennett Innovation and Technology Cooperative Learning Inn of Court was founded in 2011. It is co-sponsored by the University of Florida Levin School of Law. Its' roots run deep to the Jacksonville/University of Florida (XIV) Inn of Court, later named the Chester Beddell Inn of Court, which was the first Inn of Court in Florida, and the 14th Inn nationwide. The Beddell Inn was established in 1985. Some of its' charter members were: Gerald T. Bennett, the Honorable Susan H. Black, Justice Major B. Harding, John DeVault III, and the list goes on.... The Beddell Inn was also co-sponsored by the University of Florida and the Jacksonville Bench and Bar. In the beginning, three meetings were held in Jacksonville, and one meeting was held at the University of Florida in Gainesville.
The James C. Adkins Inn of Court was started in Gainesville in 1986, and through concerted efforts to bring in more law student participation, and to include Gainesville's innovative spirit, the Bennett Inn sprang to life in 2011. Gerald T. Bennett was a staunch advocate for professionalism among his students as a favorite professor at the University of Florida, until his untimely death in 1999.

Attendance Policy:

Participation is essential for The Bennett Inn to be truly cooperative and interactive, and each of you has agreed as part of the application process to attend all meetings. If you are unable to attend a meeting, please find a substitute to attend in your place.

Mentoring policy:

It is also understood that mentoring a student is a key aspect of The Bennett Inn. All attorneys have agreed to mentor the student members assigned to their group. Each group is responsible for ensuring that each student member of the group has monthly interaction with at least one attorney member of the group outside of the regularly scheduled Bennett Inn meetings. At the end of the year, we will ask each attorney and student to share with us an evaluation of the mentoring experience.

The Meeting Toast:

Each meeting, a student will be tapped to give the toast at the close of the meeting. This will end the meeting. The toast should be appropriate and somehow related to professionalism and camaraderie, and/or related to the program topic for the evening. Each program chair will tap the student to give the toast for that meeting.

AMERICAN INNS of COURT

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE CHECKLIST

Inn Name: Inn No.:

	Due Date	Designations				Your Inn	
		Bronze	Silver	Gold	Platinum	Assigned to and/or notes	Completed
File with AICF *(one time)*							
Become a chartered Inn and remain a chartered Inn in good standing	ASAP	X	X	X	X		
Obtain an EIN (federal tax ID) and file with the national office	ASAP	X	X	X	X		
File a Group Tax Exemption Option form with the national office *(opt in or out)*	ASAP	X	X	X	X		
E-file copy of the Inn's approved bylaws with the national office	ASAP	X	X	X	X		
Record any law school affiliation(s) with the national office	ASAP	X	X	X	X		
Core Competency 1. Administration							
Comply with IRS tax filing for FY2014:	Nov 15	X	X	X	X		
• **Option 1:** Inn has gross annual (July 1–June 30) income under $50,000 and has instructed the national office to file the 990N on its behalf							
• **Option 2:** Inn has gross annual (July 1–June 30) income under $50,000, chooses to self file the 990N with IRS, and send copy to the national office							
• **Option 3:** Inn has gross annual (July 1–June 30) income over $50,000, file 990-EZ and Schedule A with IRS, and send copy to the national office							
Submit Annual Operating Budget	Nov 30			X	X		
National dues paid in full	Jan 31		X	X	X		
Submit American Inns of Court IRS Tax Filing Status Verification form to the national office for FY2015	Jun 30	X	X	X	X		
Requirements of IMS or Non-IMS Inns		X	X	X	X		
• Inns using the Inn Management System (IMS)							
– Post meeting dates, locations and program topics *(minimum of six required)*	Oct 1						
– Maintain current membership roster *	Ongoing						
– Update Inn leadership information	Jun 30						
• Inns not using Inn Management System (IMS) *(submit to national office)*							
– Inn meeting dates, locations and program topics *(minimum of six required)*	Oct 1						
– Inn membership roster	Nov 30						
– Inn leadership information for the next Inn year	Jun 30						
Core Competency 2. Communications							
New Member Orientation—held prior to first meeting of the Inn year	Nov 30		X	X	X		
Membership Satisfaction Survey	Jun 30				X		
Maintain one of the following items *(choose one)*			X	X	X		
• Inn Handbook—in printed or electronic format	Jun 30						
• Inn Web site—hosted by national office or other	Ongoing						
Core Competency 3. Programs							
Document monthly program development process ‡	Jun 30		X	X	X		
Submit programs to the national program library *(Submit on a quarterly basis)*	Jun 30			2	4		
Core Competency 4. Mentoring							
Submit an outline of the Inn's formal or informal mentoring efforts to the national office ‡	Jun 30			X*	X		
Submit a description of mentoring evaluation process to the national office ‡	Jun 30			X*	X		
Core Competency 5. Outreach Activities							
Submit a description of the Inn's community outreach program to the national office	Jun 30			X*	X		
Additional Requirements							
Describe how your Inn engages Alumni, Emeritus, and Honorary members ‡	Jun 30			X	X		
Develop and implement an Inn leadership succession plan ‡	Jun 30			X	X		
Describe how your Inn promotes the American Inns of Court Diversity Policy	Jun 30			X	X		
Document participation in and/or hosting of joint Inn meeting	Jun 30				X		
Submit current Inn news to the national office	Ongoing				X		

Notes: * Dues are assessed on number of active members as of June 30
‡ Items need only to be submitted once, unless information has changed. Please provide an end-of-year summary or complete the Recurring Item Confirmation form by June 30
* The Inn has a choice of doing the Mentoring or Outreach requirement for Gold Level
Detailed explanations of each requirement are available in Achieving Excellence Overview.

Gerald T. Bennett Innovation and Technology Inn Leadership Succession Plan

Since our inception, our Inn has maintained a unique perspective on leadership and learning—we are a Cooperative Learning Inn, and as such, we maintain a large percentage of law students in our general membership, and a large group of students in leadership positions. Each program co-chair is a law student and we have two student members on our Board of Directors, as well as two recent graduates from law school. We have a young and innovative group of leaders who get involved as students and stay involved as young lawyers, and hopefully stay involved as they develop into older members. We have had a short history, but our members have demonstrated the true value of learning from our younger members. We have an intense mentoring program that provides for all students to have the mentoring experience on a monthly basis. What we have found is that WE LAWYERS also learn from the mentoring experience!

As to the officer elections to the Board each year, the officers and board members are selected and voted upon each year by the then-sitting Board of Directors, and the slate is presented to the general Inn membership. Each position on the board is for a term of one year. The president serves a total of three years on the board, first as president-elect, then as president, and then as past-president. All other positions are filled at the discretion of the president and the board, but we have a policy of inclusion, so if members wish to be part of the board membership, we try to put them into a program chair position initially, which includes participation in the program committee, and then we often see movement from those positions to the board for those who participate and provide good contributions. At the same time, our Inn values the master/barrister perspective, which is why approximately forty-to fifty percent of our leadership positions in any given year are held by members who previously served in a leadership position.

The group program co-chairs are selected each year by the Board Member Program co-chairs, and serve on the Program committee. These co-chairs direct their group's programs and mentoring programs.

Officers and board members are encouraged to attend the Florida Leadership Summit each year. As a rule, we always have our National Inn Liaison (Board Member) attend this event. The National Liaison's role is primarily to focus the membership on Achieving Excellence and to keep the Archives, History and Administration of the Inn on track. We hope to continue our commitment to excellence in the success of our very young Inn!

Mentoring Program

We have determined that our mentoring program last year was a great success—we now have a board position that is the mentoring chairman. The evaluations from students helped us see the true benefit of our extensive mentoring program. Each month, each student member will participate in a mentoring activity with one of our attorney members. Each meeting, we request a report from each group regarding the mentoring experiences of the students. This creates a lot of interaction. We will continue to evaluate and update our mentoring policy and program.

THE GERALD T. BENNETT INN OF COURT

BY- LAWS

ARTICLE I

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of The Gerald T. Bennett Inn are:

1. To be a society of judges, lawyers, legal educators and law students;

2. To promote excellence in legal advocacy;

3. To foster greater understanding of, and appreciation for, the adversary system of dispute resolution in American law, with particular emphasis on ethics, civility and professional standards of excellence;

4. To provide significant educational experiences that will improve and enhance the skills of lawyers as counselors and advocates and of judges as adjudicators and judicial administrators;

5. To promote interaction and collegiality among members in order to minimize misapprehensions, misconceptions and failures of communication that obstruct the effective practice of law;

6. To facilitate the development of law students and less experienced lawyers as skilled participants in the American court system through an emphasis on cooperative learning;

7. To facilitate the development of law students, professors, lawyers and the judiciary.

8. To build upon the genius and strengths of the common law and the English Inns of Court and to renew and inspire joy and zest in legal advocacy as a service worthy of constant effort and learning;

9. To promote collegiality among professionals and to transmit ethical values from one professional generation to another; and

10. To focus on cutting edge legal issues, theories, and technologies in the legal profession.

ARTICLE II

ORGANIZATION

1. Name of Association. The name of this Inn shall be The Gerald T. Bennett Inn of Court (hereinafter "The Inn").

2. Nature of Association. This Inn shall be and remain chartered and affiliated with the American Inns of Court Foundation as a member Inn and shall be an unincorporated association composed of judges, practicing lawyers, law school educators and law students who accept an invitation to membership. It is desired that this Inn will be co-sponsored by the Levin College of Law at the University of Florida.

3. Relationship with Courts. This Inn shall be and remain outside the jurisdiction of the courts but shall endeavor to work in close cooperation with the trial and appellate courts. Federal, state and local trial and appellate judges will participate in the organization in the tradition of the common law.

4. Operative Year. The operative year of the Inn ("The Inn Year") shall commence on July 1 and end on June 30 of the following calendar year.

5. Officers. The officers of this Inn shall be a President, a Vice President (who shall be the President-Elect), and a Treasurer. Co-officers will be allowed to hold one position but each position will only have one vote. The President, Vice President and Treasurer may be nominated by the Membership or the Executive Committee, at a board meeting or general meeting, and shall be elected by vote of a majority of the Active Members present at a meeting called for the purpose of these elections as scheduled by the President. The President in the first year that these by-laws are adopted shall be an otherwise eligible Member who is a current or past member of the judiciary. In all subsequent years, the President may be an otherwise eligible Member of the judiciary, a past judiciary, a practicing attorney, a law professor, or a pupil.

a. Duties of the President. The President provides general leadership and guidance to the officers and membership of the Inn. In addition to other duties which may be imposed by the Masters and by the Trustees of the American Inns of Court Foundation, the President shall have the following duties:

1. Schedule and preside at all meetings of the Inn;
2. At the commencement of the term as president, establish a calendar for the operation of the Inn and ensure that the Inn complies with all deadlines for submissions of membership information, dues, programs, and other requirements established by the national office of the American Inns of Court Foundation;
3. Ensure that an annual curriculum and agenda for Inn meetings and activities are developed and furnished to members;

4. Serve as Chairperson of the Executive Committee and schedule and preside over at least one Executive Committee meeting prior to the first general membership meeting of the Inn year;

5. Establish Inn committees, appoint committee chairpersons and notify members of their appointment to serve on Inn committees;

6. Serve as an ex-officio member of all Inn committees;

7. Call and conduct meetings of officers and committees as required to plan and conduct activities of the Inn;

8. Ensure that the officers, executive committee and committee chairs perform their duties;

9. Supervise and monitor group activities of the Group Teams to encourage the proper functioning of this important aspect of Inn organization;

10. Encourage attendance at all Inn meetings;

11. Serve as liaison with other Inns of Court, the American Inns of Court national office, and the national board of trustees;

12. Extend invitations for membership in the Inn of Court as authorized by the Executive Committee;

13. Ensure that all Inn operations and activities are in accordance with the Articles, Bylaws and policies of the American Inns of Court Foundation and these By-laws.

14. Perform such other duties as shall be directed by the Executive Committee;

15. Designate the Vice President or other Inn member to attend the American Inns of Court National Leadership Conference; and

16. Appoint the Inn Administrator, the Membership Chair, the Program Chair, the Public Relations Chair, the Law School Liaison, a Barrister Representative (when necessary), a National Inn Liaison, and such committee members as the President in his or her discretion deems necessary for the efficient operation of the Inn for the upcoming Inn year.

b. Duties of the Vice-President. The Vice-President shall:

1. Assist the President in all of the President's responsibilities;

2. Assume the responsibilities of the President in the absence of the President;

3. Together with the Treasurer, plan and arrange the annual business meeting;

4. Attend the American Inns of Court National Leadership Conference in the year prior to becoming president, if able to do so.

5. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President or the Executive Committee.

c. Duties of Treasurer. The Treasurer shall:

1. Collect dues from Inn members in a timely fashion;

2. Receive and disburse monies and other property paid to the Inn in accordance with directives and policies of the Executive Committee and the American Inns of Court Foundation;

3. Prepare and maintain accurate financial records for the Inn in accordance with directives and policies of the Executive Committee and the American Inns of Court Foundation;

4. Together with the Vice-President, plan and arrange the annual business meeting; and

5. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President or the Executive Committee.

6. Executive Committee. The governing body of the Inn shall be an Executive Committee comprised of the Officers, the Inn Administrator, the Membership Chair, the Program Chair, the Public Relations Chair, the Law School Liaison, the National Inn Liaison, Members at Large, if any, the immediate Past President and a Barrister Representative in the event that a Barrister is not otherwise a member of the Executive Committee. Each position may be filled jointly with more than on individual but each position will only have one vote. In addition, an individual may hold more than one position (ex. one individual may serve as both the Inn Administrator and the Program Chair). Each position is allowed one vote. After the first year that these Bylaws are in effect, the President, Vice President, and Treasurer shall be elected by a majority vote of the Active Members present at a meeting called for that purpose. All other members of the Executive Committee shall be appointed by the President. The membership of the Executive Committee shall always include at least one Active Master who is a judge (active or retired) and, if in any given year, none of the positions identified herein is held by a judge,

then a judge (active or retired), if one is willing to serve, shall be elected to the Executive Committee by a majority vote of the Active Masters who are present at a meeting called for that purpose, or by the President, at the President's option.

a. Term of Office. The term of each position on the Executive Committee (except for Treasurer and Inn Administrator) shall be one year except that the Inaugural Executive Committee will serve from March 2011 through June 30, 2012. The Treasurer and the Inn Administrator may serve as long as they are willing but may be removed by a majority vote of the Executive Committee. The President may not succeed himself or herself as President. The Vice President shall succeed to the office of President. All other officers and members of the Executive Committee may succeed themselves in their particular positions and may be appointed or elected to a different position on the Executive Committee. Nominations may be made in advance, through email or other written form, or from the floor at the meeting designated for nominations as scheduled by the President (see Article II, Paragraph 5). Exceptions may be established by the Executive Committee.

b. Duties and Authority of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee, acting by majority vote of its members, shall:

1. Take such action as may be necessary to carry out or assist the officers in carrying out the responsibilities defined by these By-Laws or by the Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws, Policies or Directives of the American Inns of Court Foundation;
2. In consultation with and upon the advice of the Membership Committee, confer and terminate memberships in the Inn;
3. Confer Emeritus status upon qualified Active Masters of the Inn;

4. Establish membership dues;

5. Before the end of the Inn Year prepare nominations of officers for the next Inn Year to be presented to the membership for vote at the annual business meeting;

6. Determine the rate of compensation, if any, for the Inn Administrator.

7. Inn Administrator. The Inn Administrator shall:

a. Communicate with the Inn membership as directed by the President;

b. Send notices of monthly meetings;

c. Confirm venues and arrange for refreshments at monthly meetings;

d. Take notes at all Executive Committee meetings and prepare minutes of the meetings for consideration and approval by the Executive Committee;

e. Act as liaison with the American Inns of Court national office, assuring that leadership information and the membership roster are submitted to the American Inns of Court in a timely manner;

1. Forward to the American Inns of Court national office a complete roster of the active members of the Inn in the form requested by the national office;

2. Ensure that all forms and all information requested by the American Inns of Court national office be submitted in a timely fashion;

f. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President or Executive Committee.

8. Membership Chair. The Membership Chair shall:

a. Maintain records of attendance;

b. Before the end of the Inn year, distribute membership forms to determine interest from members who wish to continue their membership in the following year and solicit nominations of new members from the current members;

c. Contact nominees, provide them with information about the American Inns of Court and The Gerald T. Bennett Inn of Court and solicit statements of interest in membership of the Inn;

d. Evaluate attendance records and examine pupil team participation of current members who have expressed an interest in continued membership;

e. At the commencement of the Inn year, receive all applications, including student applications, for new and renewed membership and prepare a membership roster to be proposed to the Executive Committee, insuring that the proposed membership roster complies with the criteria and restrictions on membership contained in these bylaws;

f. Extend invitations for membership in the Inn as authorized by the Executive Committee;

g. Prepare Group Team assignments for approval by the Executive Committee prior to the first general membership meeting of the Inn year;

h. Update and maintain annual and permanent membership rosters of active and alumni members of the Inn, including the full address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address, membership category and attorney identification number of each member, in conjunction with the Inn Administrator;

i. Maintain a waiting list of potential members that have been recommended by current members;

j. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President or Executive Board.

9. Program Chair. The Program Chair shall develop and supervise the educational component of the Inn. The Program Chair shall:

a. Appoint a Team Leader from each Group to be responsible for the Group's presentation of one general meeting program;

b. Call and preside over at least one meeting with the Team Leaders from each Group and the President prior to the first general membership meeting of the Inn year;

c. Distribute program information from the national office to each Team Leader;

d. Supervise and consult with the Group Team Leaders as necessary to assist them with developing their programs;

e. In conjunction with the Team Leaders, submit a Program Report Form for each program together with all required supporting documentation as requested by the national office in a timely fashion;

f. Review all applicable rules and regulations of the Florida Bar to ensure that the Inn programs comply with the requirements for CLE credits;

g. Submit all necessary forms in a timely fashion to the proper office of the Florida Supreme Court to ensure that Inn members are awarded the appropriate CLE credit;

h. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President or the Executive Committee.

10. Public Relations Chair. The Public Relations Chair shall:

a. Submit news and photographs of the Inn's activities for publication in The Bencher, The Legal Intelligencer and such other publications as may be appropriate;

b. In the first year of the Inn's existence, organize a team to create a website for the Bennett Inn;

c. In subsequent years, monitor and update the Inn's website and add blogs, other social networking sites or links, or other relevant information, as needed, or at the request of the President;

d. Encourage Inn members to submit topical articles for publication in The Bencher;

e. Recognize significant and noteworthy achievements of Inn members (such as awards) in an appropriate manner, at the request of the President;

f. Arrange for community guests to be present and to make brief presentations to the general membership during monthly meetings, at the request of the President;

g. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President or the Executive Committee.

11. Law School Liaison. The President shall designate an individual to serve as the Law School Liaison. Preference will be given to a law professor of the University of Florida Levin College of Law, but employment at the University of Florida is not a requirement to serve in this position. The Law School Liaison shall:

a. Recruit law students for participation in the Inn and provide applications from interested law school students to the Membership Chair who will organize the applications for the Executive Committee's consideration;

b. Provide full names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mails of students accepted to the Inn to the Membership Chair and the Inn Administrator at the commencement of the Inn year;

c. Act as liaison between the Inn and the Law School Dean, Administration, faculty and students;

d. Supervise the law students' participation in the Group Teams and at monthly meetings to ensure that they are receiving a relevant educational experience from their participation in the Inn;

e. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the President or the Executive Committee.

12. National Inn Liaison. The National Inn Liaison shall:

a. Act as liaison with the American Inns of Court national office, assuring that there is an exchange of information between the American Inns of Court and the membership of The Gerald T. Bennett Inn.

13. Members at Large. At its discretion, the Executive Committee may also appoint Board Members at Large to serve on the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

1. Invitations to Membership. The Membership Chair shall make recommendations to the Executive Committee with respect to Inn membership. The Membership Chair shall

consider recommendations made by members of the Inn and shall also actively seek to identify potential members who will best serve the Inn and its ideals and objectives, while at the same time broadening and diversifying the membership of the Inn. With respect to the student members referred to in subsection (e) hereof, the Membership Chair shall solicit the recommendations of the Law School Liaison. Memberships shall be conferred upon those accepting invitations extended by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee's discretion in extending invitations to membership is absolute and non-reviewable. Membership shall not be denied to any person on account of race, creed, religion, sex, age, disability or national origin.

2. Term of Membership. Membership in the Inn shall be for a one year term, which may be renewed by invitation of the Executive Committee, except in the case of Rotating Members as discussed in Article III, Section 3(f). Continued membership in the Inn is contingent upon reasonable Inn activity to be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee. When considering applications for renewal of membership, the Executive Committee shall ensure that new members within each membership category are invited to join the Inn each year.

3. Designation of Categories of Membership. Members shall be selected in the following five categories:

a. Masters. Membership in this category may be held by judges (active or retired), lawyers, and law school educators who have demonstrated superior character, ability and competence as attorneys and who have at least sixteen (16) years of experience in the legal profession.

b. Emeritus. This membership may be conferred by the Executive Committee upon active Masters on the basis of long and distinguished service to the Inn.

Emeritus Members shall be under no obligation to pay dues, attend meetings or participate in other programs of the Inn but will enjoy all privileges of Active membership except the right to vote. Emeritus Members will retain such membership status for life if they so desire. Any person who has been granted Emeritus status may be re-invited to serve again in an active capacity.

c. Barristers. Membership as a Barrister may be extended to those who have been members of a bar for at least six (6), and no more than fifteen (15), years and must have demonstrated good character and a desire to improve and refine their legal skills. After fifteen years' practice of law, Barristers may be considered for nomination and election as Masters of the Inn, provided that, if the attainment of fifteen years' practice of law occurs during the term of a Barrister, he or she shall complete that full term and shall thereafter be eligible for consideration for membership as a Master.

d. Associates. Associate Membership may be extended to those who shall be recent law school graduates admitted to the practice of law for not more than five (5) years. Associates may be considered for membership as a Barrister after he or she has attained six years of practice.

e. Pupils. Pupils shall be persons in their final two years of law school at the University of Florida Fredric G. Levin College of Law or other accredited law school, at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Students in their first year at law school may be approved for Inn membership by the Executive Committee; however second and third year law students will be given preference in selection.

f. Rotating Members. Rotating members shall be those meeting the qualifications of Masters, Emeriti, Barristers, Associates, or Pupils whose invitation to membership is restricted to a nonrenewable term of one year. Rotating members who have

served their terms of membership may, after not participating in the Inn for a period of at least one year, be invited to membership again. It is the goal of the Inn that Rotating Members will constitute approximately one third of the total membership. At the discretion of the Executive Committee, a Rotating Member's status may be changed to a renewable membership if the goal of maintaining one third membership is not affected.

g. Other Provisions. No more than three members of any one law firm shall be active members of the Inn at any one time, and no more than two members of any one law firm shall serve on the Executive Committee at any one time.

h. Termination of Membership. Any active member of the Inn who, without an excuse acceptable to the Executive Committee, fails to attend three or more sessions of the Inn in any one operative year, or otherwise fails to meet his or her obligations to the Inn or its members may be dismissed as a member of the Inn. Any absence that is caused by space limitations will be considered an excusable absence. Failure to pay assessments and dues within a reasonable time and after reasonable notice may be considered by the Executive Committee as a ground to terminate membership of the person in default. The Executive Committee may, in its sole discretion, terminate the membership of an active member for cause, including disbarment or other disciplinary action. The Executive Committee may, in its sole discretion, terminate the membership of an active member if, as a result of a change in his or her professional employment, the active member no longer qualifies for membership in the category assigned. Membership may also be terminated without cause in the sole discretion of the Executive Committee.

4. A list of members acquired by any member of the Inn shall not be provided to any person or organization without the express written permission of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IV

FINANCES

1. Financial matters within this Inn shall be managed and controlled in accordance with policies and directives established by the American Inns of Court Foundation and these By-Laws.

2. This Inn shall remit annually to the American Inns of Court Foundation a reasonable amount to be levied by the Board of Trustees of said Foundation for the purpose of paying its proportionate share of operating expenses of the Foundation.

3. The Executive Committee is empowered to levy and collect assessments in the form of dues in amounts which it may deem appropriate to meet its obligation to the American Inns of Court Foundation as well as the Inn's operating needs.

4. The Fiscal Year of the Inn for financial reporting purposes shall be the same as the operative year.

ARTICLE V

MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Schedule for Meetings. Regular meetings of the general membership of the Inn shall be called by the Executive Committee at least five times per year and shall be held on a regularly scheduled day of each month. At or before the first meeting of the general membership of each Inn year, the Inn Administrator shall distribute a schedule of meetings for the balance of the year. Scheduled meetings may be changed at the discretion of the Executive Committee. It shall be the duty of the Inn Administrator to notify all members of the Inn of any such changes.

2. Content of Meetings. The main themes and subject matter of regular meetings shall be practical legal skills with emphasis on technology, cooperative learning, legal ethics,

Article I
Objectives

The objectives of this American Inn of Court are as follows:

1. To establish a society of judges, lawyers, legal educators, law students and others, to promote excellence in legal advocacy in accordance with the Professional Creed of the American Inns of Court;

2. To foster greater understanding of and appreciation for the adversary system of dispute resolution in American law, with particular emphasis on ethics, civility, professionalism and legal skills;

3. To provide significant educational experiences that will improve and enhance the abilities of lawyers as counselors and advocates and of judges as adjudicators and judicial administrators;

4. To promote interaction and collegiality among all legal professionals in order to minimize misapprehensions, misconceptions and failures of communication that obstruct the effective practice of law;

5. To facilitate the development of law students, recent law school graduates, and less experienced lawyers as skilled participants in the American court system;

6. To preserve and transmit ethical values from one generation of legal professionals to the next; and

7. To build upon the genius and strengths of the common law and the English Inns of Court and to renew and inspire joy and zest in legal advocacy as a service worthy of constant effort and learning.

Article II
Organization

1. **Nature of Organization.** This American Inn of Court shall be and remain chartered and affiliated with the American Inns of Court Foundation and shall be an unincorporated association composed of judges, practicing lawyers, law school educators, recent law school graduates, and law students who accept an invitation to membership, as hereinafter described.

2. **Governing Body and Officers.** The officers of this American Inn of Court shall be a President, a Counselor, a Secretary/Treasurer or Secretary and Treasurer and such other officers as the Masters of the Bench ("Benchers"), by majority vote of those present at a meeting duly called for that purpose, may deem necessary. The President and Counselor must be selected from among the Masters of the Bench and shall be elected by vote of a majority of the Benchers present at a meeting called for that purpose. All other officers may be selected from any category of membership and shall be elected by majority vote of all members present at a meeting called for that purpose. Whenever possible, either the President or the Counselor should be a judge. The officers, and such other members as may be selected by majority vote of those present at a meeting duly called for that purpose, shall constitute an Executive Committee.

   a. **Terms of Office.** The term of each office shall be established by this American Inn of Court. Officers may succeed themselves.

   b. **Duties of the Officers.** The Officers shall be responsible for the general operation of the American Inn of Court in accordance with this Charter, any Bylaws adopted by this American Inn of Court and by the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Policies and Directives of the American Inns of Court Foundation, including the *Officer Manual*.

   c. **Duties and Authority of the Executive Committee.** The Executive Committee, acting by majority vote of its members, shall:

      (1) Take such action as may be necessary to carry out or assist the officers in carrying out the responsibilities imposed by this Charter, any Bylaws adopted by this American Inn of Court and by the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Policies and Directives of the American Inns of Court Foundation;

      (2) Determine the size of each membership category in the American Inn of Court;

      (3) Establish, collect and remit local and national membership dues assessments as described hereinafter;

      (4) Appoint a representative to attend the national leadership conference of the American Inns of Court Foundation;

(5) Confer and terminate memberships in this American Inn of Court; and perform such other duties as may facilitate proper operation of the organization.

3. **Relationships with Courts.** This American Inn of Court shall be and remain outside the jurisdiction of the courts but shall endeavor to work in close cooperation with the trial and appellate courts. Federal, state, and local trial and appellate judges will enjoy full participation in the organization.

Article III
Membership

1. **National Membership in the American Inns of Court Foundation.** Each person who is an active member of this American Inn of Court is also a member of the American Inns of Court Foundation. An inactive or former member of this American Inn of Court may, upon application and payment of dues, be granted national membership in the American Inns of Court Foundation.

2. **Invitations to Membership.** Membership in this American Inn of Court shall be conferred upon those accepting invitations extended by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee's discretion in extending invitations to membership is absolute and non-reviewable. Invitations may be extended on the basis of recommendations made to the Executive Committee by any member of the American Inn of Court or in response to written application filed with any officer. Membership shall not be denied to any person on account of race, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, or national origin.

3. **Maximum size of this American Inn of Court.** Total active membership should not exceed the number of people who can participate regularly in programming, discussions and other activities of the Inn. Local conditions vary, but experience has shown that active membership of more than about eighty (80) often detracts from the active participation that is crucial to the Inn experience. Members shall be given suitable certificates of their membership in this American Inn of Court. Membership in any category may be terminated in the sole discretion of the Executive Committee.

4. **Designation of Categories of Active Membership.** There are four categories of active membership in an American Inn of Court: (1) Masters of the Bench ("Benchers"); (2) Barristers; (3) Associates; and (4) Pupils. Membership in this American Inn of Court shall consist of Benchers,

Barristers and either Associates or Pupils or a combination of Associates and Pupils, as determined by the Executive Committee.

a. **Masters of the Bench (Benchers).** Membership as Masters of the Bench or "Benchers" may be held by judges, lawyers and law teachers who have demonstrated superior character, ability, and competence as advocates. Retention of status as a Master of the Bench is contingent upon reasonable active participation in the American Inn of Court, periodically reviewed by the Executive Committee. Benchers may serve indefinitely but must serve continuously for at least five (5) years before being eligible for election to emeritus status. Any Bencher granted emeritus status may be invited to serve again in an active capacity.

b. **Barristers.** Active membership as Barristers may be held by attorneys who have some experience but who do not yet qualify as Masters of the Bench and who have demonstrated good character and a desire to improve and refine their skills as advocates.

c. **Associates.** Membership as Associates shall be held by lawyers who are recent law school graduates but who do not yet meet the American Inn of Court's minimum experience requirement for Barristers.

d. **Pupils.** Membership as Pupils shall be held by persons who are law students.

5. **Designation of Categories of Inactive Membership.** The Executive Committee may confer Emeritus and Honorary memberships as follows:

a. **Emeritus Members.** Emeritus membership may be conferred upon active Masters of the Bench on the basis of long and distinguished service to the American Inn of Court.

b. **Honorary Members.** Honorary membership may be conferred upon individuals, whether they are lawyers or not, on the basis of distinguished service to the bench or bar, furtherance of American Inn of Court objectives or other noteworthy achievements.

c. Honorary and Emeritus Masters of the Bench shall be under no obligation to pay dues, attend meetings or participate in other programs of this American Inn of Court but shall enjoy all privileges of active membership except the right to vote.

GERALD T. BENNETT INN OF COURT
ADOPTS
AMERICAN INNS OF COURT DIVERSITY POLICY

On November 10, 2014, the Executive Committee of the Gerald T. Bennett Inn of Court adopted unanimously the American Inns of Court Diversity Policy (the "Diversity Policy"). The Bennett Inn has practiced the tenets of the Diversity Policy throughout its history but had never formally adopted the Diversity Policy. The following is a description of how The Bennett Inn promotes the Diversity Policy;

1. The Diversity Policy has been published on our website at www.bennettinn.org.
2. New Inn members chosen annually are reviewed and selected for diversity enrichment.
3. Nominations for new Inn members are sought from all existing Inn members who represent the Inn's concern for diversity.
4. Officers and Executive Board members are nominated and elected based on diversity enrichment and leadership among other factors.
5. Inn members are provided multiple opportunities in small group settings and one-on-one mentoring sessions to discuss each member's individual situation as a lawyer and to learn about other Inn members with diverse perspectives in the practice of law.

ALUMNI AND EMERITUS POLICY

The Bennett Inn embraces and encourages our Alumni to participate as much as possible with Inn activities. Because we have only been active since 2011, our alumni list is small—we have limited turnover in attorney membership, but we do keep an alumni list and update it every year, as well as on our website, www.bennettinn.com.

We welcome Alumni to our programs, space permitting, and encourage them to serve as substitutes when members must be absent.

Bennett Inn of Court Program Development

It is the goal of the Bennett Inn of Court to have two program chairpersons. It is also a goal to have each group (there are five groups) have a program chairperson and an assistant. The idea between the co-chair for the overall programs and the assistant for each group program chairperson is to have continuity, i.e., one person always learning and carrying on the tradition. The goal is to have all members of the Inn have a role in taking the lead in developing programs, preparing programs, etc.

Developing a program begins during a late July or August meeting. Group program directors and the overall Inn program chairpersons begin to develop ideas about topics for each of the five groups. Prior to this program meeting, the program chairpersons participate in a meeting of the Inn Board of Directors. The Board makes some suggestions for topics for programs. The ideas from the Board are shared with the group program leaders who are also encouraged to come up with their own ideas. The overall goal is to have program topics for all five meetings selected and finalized within approximately five days following the program meeting.

At the program meeting the group leaders are encouraged to select a co-group leader for the reasons described above.

Program leaders are encouraged to select program topics that involve technological advances in the practice of law, technological legal issues which arise in litigation, and "cutting-edge" legal issues and/or current topics. Examples include laws that have been enacted and which go into effect (usually in October following the summer meeting), evidentiary issues, legal technology issues, current trends in substantive law, etc.

Each program is encouraged to have the Inn members participate in some way whether it be by role playing, various scenarios, fact sheets provided to the members, questions and answers, group discussions, etc.

The overall purpose of the program development for the Bennett Inn of Court:

1. Sharing of leadership roles and developing a plan for all members to ultimately participate as program leaders;
2. Active participation by Inn members in most programs;
3. Strong consideration for technological issues and cutting-edge legal issues;

4. Programs involving handout materials and interaction between the presenters and the audience.

Timing considerations: not too long and not too short.

Program group leaders are responsible for applying for CLE credit from The Florida Bar, completing a National Inn of Court program form, and preparing and gathering evaluation forms for each presentation.

Program group leaders are also responsible for initiating a mentoring program between lawyers/judges and law students. The Bennett Inn of Court prides itself on having such a high ratio of law students as members, including law students as members of the board. Mentoring is to be stressed at each meeting and group leaders are encouraged to encourage group members to invite law students to hearings, depositions, mediations, etc., have lunch with law students, etc.

Each program is submitted to The Florida Bar for CLE approval.

Program leaders and program presenters are encouraged to be active, novel, and engaging.