



FILM/TV CLE GUIDELINES

OVERVIEW

In recent years, many CLE providers have shown film clips as part of their CLE courses. The Commission encourages the use of film, as long as the film provides educational value and not merely entertainment value.

This Commission has approved CLE credits for programs that used films as tools to focus discussion on issues relevant for professionalism. The many films about lawyers are filled with the professionalism issues that confront lawyers.

As an illustration, clips from the movie *Anatomy of a Murder* can be used to focus discussions on the ethical dilemmas facing a lawyer in preparing a witness and developing a theory of defense. The story written by a Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court was loosely based on a case he tried as a defense lawyer. In the movie the defense lawyer pushes the envelope in terms of suggesting a defense to his client. Did he suborn perjury? Or did he merely explain the law? What are the boundaries? The clips can readily provoke thoughtful conversations especially if experienced lawyers lead the discussion. Many films can be used in the same manner. These Guidelines will explain the Commission's policy on using films as part of professionalism CLE.

CREDIT HOURS

Credit hours will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

When the provider interweaves film clips throughout the program with a discussion of relevant issues, credit hours will be evaluated on a basis similar to a regular CLE program.

When the provider shows significant portions of the movie that are not relevant or necessary to the discussion of the CLE topic, credit will be provided only for the time deemed relevant to the discussion. Additionally, if a provider shows clips from the movie prior to a discussion of the clips, the provider must ensure that participants stay for the discussion period in order to receive CLE credit. The Commission often audits film CLEs and we may contact a provider if it appears that the aforesaid guidelines are not being met.

COURSE MATERIALS

Providers must prepare course materials separate from the film itself. These materials will be evaluated just as materials are for other programs. Providers must also prepare a timed agenda that specifies when film clips will be shown and when discussions will take place.

FACILITATION SUGGESTIONS

Film-based CLEs have been successfully facilitated in the following ways:

1. A skilled moderator leads a panel of three experts and the audience in a discussion on the issues of professional responsibility presented by movie clips. A good practice is to choose experts who will have had actual experience relevant to the film clips selected.
2. One or two individual facilitators lead a group discussion. In such a case, providers are encouraged to have their attorneys sit in small round tables, if the group is large enough, to enable frank discussions both with the facilitator(s) and with each other.

We hope you have found these Guidelines helpful. Please contact [Lindsay Shaw](#) if you have any questions or comments.