Description of the Course:
We focus the Center class almost entirely as a “lawyering” class, meaning that we will be working with you to develop skills you will need to be lawyers working both for and even against tribal interests. You will be reading a great deal of material, and you will be doing a great deal of writing. Some of the assignments will involve the drafting of legal pleadings, others will involve the drafting of tribal legislative, contractual, and other language. The court is designed to allow for greater complexity of subject matters as we proceed through the class. You will, no doubt, acquire some form of writing sample from this class. We may also assign you a real-world project, depending on the availability of such projects, which means that the syllabus may change, after consultation with the students. Indian lawyering involves contract review, code drafting, tribal court practice, legislative lobbying, complex litigation in trial and appellate courts, even United States Supreme Court work, and complex transactional work. We hope to give you a taste of all of this material, as well as a chance to learn how to interact with opposing counsel, tribal leadership, and others.

Important Note: All writing assignments are due at 9AM on the Monday before class.
Another Important Note: Most materials will be available on Turtle Talk -- http://turtletalk.wordpress.com/matthew-lm-fletcher/center-class-spring-2012/
Yet Another Important Note: Each student is responsible for their own assignments, but we encourage you to work together as you see fit to discuss ideas, drafts, etc. The practice of law is not solitary (unless you are a backstabbing jerk with no friends).
And a Final Note: This syllabus may change dramatically, but only with your consent. There are a number of projects (tribal court cases and research) that you are likely to do before the end of the semester.
Week 1 (January 11, 2012)
Show up to Michigan Supreme Court oral arguments in *In re Morris* and *In re Gordon*

Week 2 (January 18, 2012)

**INTRODUCTION TO LAWYERING IN INDIAN COUNTRY**

Reading:

- *Dibakonigowin* [pages 220-36]
- *The Reemergence of Tribal Society and Traditional Justice Systems*
- *Law School Training of American Indians as Legal Warriors* [pages 6-27]
- *Lawyering For Indigenous People – Roundtable Discussion* [skim]

Write a 2-3 page reaction paper to these materials (due January 17 at 9 AM – an extra day because of MLK day). What about them surprised you? What about them was unsurprising to you? Be prepared to discuss next in class.

Week 3 (January 25, 2012)

**TRIBAL COURT BENCH BRIEFS**

Reading and Assignment:

- Materials in two tribal court cases that will be available in hard copy
- Students will be divided into two teams, and will collaborate on a bench brief for a tribal judge. The brief will include the following sections: (1) procedural history; (2) relevant facts; (3) jurisdiction; (4) standard of review; (5) questions presented; and (6) analysis, discussion, and recommendations.
- Rough draft of each bench brief due Monday, January 30, 2012 at 9 AM.

Week 4 (February 1, 2012)

**TRIBAL COURT BENCH BRIEFS (CONTINUED)**

Assignment: Conclude the bench brief, which will be due in final form (unless other arrangements made) on Monday, February 6, 2012 at 9 AM.