



Kudos for Online Ethics Education

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Last week I received a wonderful letter from Bob Farmer, the Chairman of the State Ethics Commission. He was writing to express his gratitude for good work by many of our folks over the last year in creating an online ethics education program. The Commission recognized that it “would not be easy” to “develop an education program that would be convenient, user-friendly and cost-effective, especially given the very limited resources of State agencies.” They also “understood that effectively conveying information online is not the same as conveying that information in a live presentation.”

Chairman Farmer praised our colleagues for working tirelessly to “organize and present a very complicated law in an effective e-learning presentation, including helping [them] develop the subject matter, graphics, and interactive tools.” The Commission started offering the online ethics education on January 10, 2011. “Not only is the online program convenient and a cost-savings for State agencies, it is a very effective learning tool for individuals governed by the State Ethics Act.” Chairman Farmer specifically singled out the following folks for their “extraordinary assistance” in ensuring the success of this project: Norma Houston, Tom Thornburg, Todd Nicolet, Georgia Allen, Rob Moore, Greg Whisenhunt, and Christie Hinson “(also known as ‘The Voice of Ethics’)”.

The Commission also passed along a sampling of comments from state employees who have taken the online course. Here are a few of them.

- “This is an excellent way to get the training, well done and a pleasant voice.”
- “The online program is great! With the opportunity to review sections, it is actually better than the in-person training!”
- “Training is VERY good. I like the modules, running time and clear information, with good



audio. Thank you so much for making this training available.”

- “Nice to be able to take it online. Even though I am hearing impaired I enjoyed and felt successful because I could read it. Thank you for making this possible.”
- “This really is a very, very good on-line course? I would rather attend the class in person but when scheduling conflicts arise, as happened this year, this is a great alternative.”
- “The online education program was very professionally prepared, user friendly, and educational.”

There are many other similar comments, and a lot of well-deserved compliments for Christie—The Voice.



The Voice

I encourage you to check out [the online training](#) at the website for the State Ethics Commission. You can click on any of the modules and get a nice feel for the quality and effectiveness of the program. This training was a collaboration done under all sorts of pressures, and I congratulate everyone who was involved for delivering such an impressive product.

The demand for more online work from the School will grow significantly over time. For example, we are in the early stages of exploring the possibility of working with a private company to create an online MPA Program. We must continue to offer programs more conveniently for public officials, and online training is one path that saves them time and money. As the ethics program demonstrates, it also can do a nice job of meeting our educational objectives.

I am pleased that our internal expertise is strong and growing, and I am confident that we will continue to meet the expectations from officials for growth in this area. I look forward to seeing how we build on this remarkably successful effort.