

Gullickson Directs General Practice Course

During the summer of 1969, 45 senior law students spent ten weeks of intensive study of the practice of law, learning how to do the work they will encounter during their first years of private practice in Wisconsin.

Under the direction of Professor Stuart Gullickson, the General Practice Course was offered for the first time in the summer of 1968. An honor graduate of the Law School, Professor Gullickson joined the staff in late 1967 after 18 years of successful practice in Merrill and Wausau. The course represents a substantial revision of the traditional Summer Problems Course, which was offered in the Law School for 20 years. The conception of the course grew from an extensive study by a joint committee on Continuing Legal Education of the American Law Institute and the American Bar Association, on **Meeting the Educational Needs of the Newly Admitted Lawyer**. Professor August Eckhardt, of the Law Faculty, served as reporter for the Committee. Its report was published in November, 1967.

Because it is still the only course of its kind in the United States, its success and progress are being studied closely by other law schools.

The Faculty of the course is composed of 40 successful practicing lawyers. Each comes to the campus as one of a team of 4 for one week of teaching. The high ratio of teachers to students permits close association between the lawyer-teachers and the students.

Subjects chosen include:

- Preparing the defense of a criminal case.
- Probating estates.
- Debtor-Creditor proceedings.
- Organizing corporations.
- Real estate transactions.
- Preparing a civil case for trial.
- Divorce and administrative proceedings.
- Law office management.

The method of teaching includes lectures, demonstrations, small group instruction, and practice,



**Gene Drake interrogates Prof. Gullickson,
in "Judge" Irv Charne's Court**

with much of the emphasis placed upon practice. Each week of instruction is planned and executed by a team of four faculty members under the supervision of Professor Gullickson. Classes are held in the mornings, five days a week, so that the afternoons can be devoted to practice by individual students.

Practice provides students with an opportunity to "do it themselves." During the ten weeks they are required to probate an estate, prepare a civil case for trial, process the purchase of a home, draft a will, prepare a wage earner plan for presentation in court, organize a corporation, process a divorce, etc. Daily work is graded and unsatisfactory work must be repeated.

Evaluation of the course reveals that it has several advantages over the traditional summer clerkship served by many law school graduates to satisfy the Law School's requirements for admission to the Wisconsin Bar upon the motion of the Dean. Its offerings are more varied than many months of experience as a clerk in a law firm would provide. There is discussion and close supervision of the work of each student. Faculty members are chosen for their expertise in particular aspects of the practice of law, so students meet lawyers who are among the most skillful practitioners of their profession.

Professor Gullickson points out that the course through its various

offerings takes notice of the fact that there are certain elements common to most items of law business. These common elements include ethical concerns, negotiation, recognition of tax consequences, keeping the client informed, and processing the fee. Traditional legal education prevents consideration of these common factors by dividing the law practice into separate subjects for teaching purposes. One result of the General Practice Course is the development of a sense of completeness and continuity, according to Mr. Gullickson. It also provides an opportunity for members of the practicing Bar to become well acquainted with the needs and interests of the newly graduated students.

"We have found," Professor Gullickson reported, "that on the one hand we could give the students an understanding of the senior partner's point of view, and on the other hand have them see that most lawyers are sensitive people with a real concern for their clients, and that money is only one part of their total motivation."

An additional benefit is that of providing beginning lawyers an early start in continuing legal education.

Student reactions to the course are almost all favorable. "I wish I'd known some of these things earlier," said one. "I would definitely have decided to go into private practice."