

Friday, January 23, 2026

8:30 – 11:45 a.m.

Trial & Appellate Advocacy Section

3.0 MCLE Credit Hours, 3.0 JCLE Credit Hours for Circuit Court Judges

Supreme Court Commission on CLE Course #: 260135

Room Location: Chatham B Ballroom

Storytelling through Written & Oral Advocacy

Effective advocacy is more than presenting facts and applying legal principles—it is about crafting a compelling narrative that resonates with decision-makers. This seminar explores the critical role of storytelling in both written and oral advocacy, offering practical insights and expert guidance for attorneys at every stage of practice. The program will open with a Civil Law Update presented by Professor Scott Bauries, who will provide a concise and insightful overview of recent developments in civil law, highlighting key trends and their implications for practitioners. Next, Professor Christine Coughlin, a leading scholar in legal writing, will discuss techniques for integrating narrative structure into persuasive legal writing. Her session will offer actionable strategies to enhance clarity, engagement, and persuasive force in written advocacy. The seminar will conclude with Dawes Cooke, an accomplished trial lawyer, who will address the art of oral advocacy. Drawing from years of courtroom experience, Mr. Cooke will demonstrate how to effectively use storytelling to build credibility, establish themes, and connect with juries and judges alike. Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of how to leverage narrative techniques to strengthen legal arguments, both on the page and in the courtroom. This seminar is an essential opportunity for litigators, transactional attorneys, and legal writers seeking to refine their persuasive skills and elevate their advocacy. As always, this seminar is mandatory for our circuit bench.

Agenda

8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Civil Law Update

Scott R. Bauries

*University of South Carolina Joseph F. Rice School of Law
Columbia, SC*

9:30 – 9:45 a.m.

Break

9:45 – 10:45 a.m.

Storytelling through Written Advocacy

Professor Christine Coughline

*Wake Forest University School of Law
Winston Salem, NC*

10:45 – 11:45 a.m.

Storytelling through Oral Advocacy

M. Dawes Cooke, Jr

*Barnwell Whaley Patterson & Helms, LLC
Charleston, SC*

Course Planner/Moderator:

Susan Barber Hackett
S.C. Court of Appeals
Columbia, SC