



TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: John L. D'Agati *John L. D'Agati*

SUBJECT: Permission to Operate: University of Connecticut School of Law

DATE: January 3, 2019

AUTHORIZATION(S): *MaryEllen Elin*

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision (Consent Agenda)

Should the Board of Regents grant permission for the University of Connecticut (UConn) School of Law to offer courses applicable to its Juris Doctorate (J.D.) and Legal Studies Master of Laws (L.L.M.) programs in New York City (collectively called "Semester in New York City Program")?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State statute and State regulation.

Proposed Handling

This question will come before the full Board at its January 2019 meeting, where it will be voted on and action taken.

Procedural History

N/A

Background Information

The University of Connecticut (UConn) School of Law has applied to the Department for permission to operate its Semester in New York City Program under §3.56 of the Rules of the Board of Regents. This program is designed solely for students who are matriculated in UConn School of Law's Juris Doctorate program.

The program will be modeled after its “Semester in DC Program,” which has operated in Washington, D.C. since 2009. UConn School of Law’s plan is to place 10-15 students per year in full-time, unpaid, credit-bearing, educational field placements with government agencies, public interest legal organizations, corporate law offices, and other legal practices in New York City. Students will simultaneously take two seminar courses: Legal Profession, the basic required professional responsibility course; and a New York City Field Placement Seminar in which students explore practical, ethical, and professional-role issues arising in their field placements and reflect critically on their experiences. These courses will be taught two evenings per week by UConn faculty members. The program will operate one semester per year under the overall supervision of the Law School’s Field Placement Program Director and the Associate Dean for Clinical and Experiential Education.

UConn School of Law reports that the need for this program is driven by the absence of any other means of supporting field placements and related instruction for their students in New York. The geographical distance between Hartford and New York City makes it very difficult during the academic year for their students to obtain legal practice-based experiences, hands-on knowledge of legal rules and norms, and career-building networks in New York City. In a survey of their students conducted in March 2018, 71% of respondents indicated that they were very interested or interested in a Semester in New York City Program.

UConn School of Law is accredited by the American Bar Association. Department review indicated that UConn demonstrates an institutional quality comparable to New York State degree-granting institutions and its programs are comparable in quality to the standards for the registration of similar programs in New York.

Consistent with the master planning process described in Education Law §237 and §137 of Chapter 82 of the Laws of 1995, the Department solicited input from existing degree-granting institutions concerning the need for this proposed program and its impact on existing institutions and programs. No New York State institutions lodged any objections or statements of negative impact regarding this proposed program.

Related Regents Items

N/A

Recommendation

The Department recommends that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: That the Board of Regents grant the University of Connecticut School of Law permission to offer courses applicable to its Juris Doctorate (J.D.) and Legal Studies Master of Laws (L.L.M.) programs in New York City (collectively called “Semester in New York City Program”), effective January 15, 2019 and ending on January 30, 2024.

Timetable for Implementation

Subsequent renewals of this permission to operate, if sought, will be subject to the terms of §3.56 of the Rules of the Board of Regents. If UConn School of Law seeks to renew its permission to operate after its current term, it must notify the Department no later than January 30, 2023.