




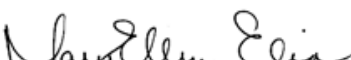
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

**TO:** The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

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

**SUBJECT:** Cornell University – Cornell NYC Tech: Master Plan Amendment to offer a Master of Laws (LL.M.) in Law, Technology and Entrepreneurship Program

**DATE:** October 19, 2015

**AUTHORIZATION(S):** 

#### **SUMMARY**

#### **Issue for Decision (Consent Agenda)**

Should the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment for Cornell University to offer a Master of Laws (LL.M.) in Law, Technology and Entrepreneurship at Cornell NYC Tech, the University's branch campus in New York City?

#### **Reason(s) for Consideration**

Required by state statute.

#### **Proposed Handling**

The question will come before the full Board at its October meeting where it will be voted on and action taken.

#### **Procedural History**

Cornell University submitted a proposal for a program in Law, Technology and Entrepreneurship leading to the Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree to be offered at Cornell NYC Tech, the University's branch campus in New York City. The proposed program requires a master plan amendment because it would be the University's first graduate level program in the discipline of the social sciences at the branch campus.

## **Background Information**

In December 2011, Cornell University and Technion-Israel Institute of Technology were selected as winners of a competition to build an applied sciences and technology graduate campus on Roosevelt Island, which is anticipated to be ready for occupation in 2017. In the meantime, Cornell NYC Tech, the University's branch campus, is located at the headquarters of Google Inc., 111 Eighth Avenue, New York City. The branch campus currently offers eight graduate-level programs in business, engineering, and the physical sciences. Cornell NYC Tech is expected to help drive innovation in New York's technology sector by expanding a crucial resource: highly talented people who are savvy in the technology, business and legal aspects of starting and growing companies, and who are motivated to build those companies locally because of their close ties to New York's burgeoning tech ecosystem.

The proposed program provides a new academic model where education and research are tied closely to creating and growing companies and industries. Technology and enterprise are on equal footing and engage multiple disciplines—now including law—that are essential to connect cutting-edge education and research to real-world impact. A primary objective is to educate lawyers to be grounded in the law and lawyering skills necessary to become first-class attorneys in technology and entrepreneurship, and capable of working as part of an integrated team that bridges the gap among technologists, business people and entrepreneurs, lawyers, and other professionals. The proposed program will better equip students to understand the institutional, legal, and business considerations applicable to entrepreneurs, as well as the public policy and legal frameworks that promote (or limit) innovation.

The impetus of the proposed program is two-fold. First, there is a fast-growing interest in how law relates to technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Second, there has been a recent and dramatic rise in demand for law school courses that enable students (and practitioners) to span the gap between law education and practice. Combining the two, the proposed program will benefit a wide spectrum of law practitioners and students.

The proposed program is a one-year (26 credits), full-time degree program intended for practicing attorneys and recent law school graduates who have an interest in technology and entrepreneurship. All classes will be taught on the Cornell NYC Tech campus. The students in the proposed program will participate in practicums and other special events currently offered at the campus. In addition, the proposed program requires the completion of a project of providing legal support to business and engineering students as they address issues or capitalize on innovation opportunities for startups and larger companies. Students will be supervised by experienced practitioners.

After departmental review, the Office of College and University Evaluation (OCUE) determined that the program meets all standards for registration. As part of the master planning process, the Department canvassed institutions of higher education in the New York City region. No objections or statements of negative impact were received.

### **Recommendation**

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment to authorize Cornell University to offer a program in Law, Technology and Entrepreneurship leading to a Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree at the University's branch campus in New York City. The amendment will be effective until October 27, 2016, unless the Department registers the program prior to that date, in which case master plan amendment shall be without term.

### **Timetable for Implementation**

If the Board of Regents approves the master plan amendment, the Department will register the program at Cornell's branch campus.