

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST FOR A NEW PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA:
DOCTOR OF JURIDICAL SCIENCE**

Action Requested: Consider recommending approval of the request by the University of Iowa to establish a new Doctor of Juridical Science Program in the College of Law.

Executive Summary: The proposed program will offer new opportunities for students in the field of legal academic research and scholarly writing. This proposal was reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. No concerns were raised when it was presented to the Iowa Coordinating Council for Post-High School Education. The proposed program addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priorities to “provide educational excellence and impact” and “economic development and vitality” as well as Goal #8 – “Iowa’s public universities and special schools shall be increasingly efficient and productive.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of program.** The Doctor of Juridical Science (SJD) is a professional doctorate that combines research with coursework. The degree is awarded to highly qualified individuals who have successfully completed a prescribed course of legal study after having earned a primary legal degree (J.D. or a foreign law degree) and a Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree. Pursuit of this degree requires coursework, research, and defense of significant writing of publishable quality. The program will admit students directly into the SJD program or from the Iowa LL.M. program; in some circumstances, students may be admitted from another law school’s LL.M. program. It is anticipated that the proposed program will take three years to complete; the second and third years will be focused on research undertaken with the guidance of a faculty advisory committee drawn from the College of Law and, where appropriate, other colleges.
- ◇ **Proposed program objectives.**
 - ⇒ The first year of the program will follow the “research track” of the LL.M. program, which focuses its writing requirements on research rather than practical skills. Candidates will complete coursework in an approved course in advanced legal research and any other course requirements identified by the candidate’s committee.
 - ⇒ In the second year, the candidate will research and develop theories for the dissertation and begin drafting the paper.
 - ⇒ In the third year, the candidate will complete the dissertation, supplementing the research as needed.
- ◇ **Relationship to existing programs at SUJ.** The proposed program will allow the College of Law to strengthen existing connections with the Departments of History and Philosophy in the College of Liberal Arts and Science and to enhance the level of faculty-faculty and graduate student interactions with the two programs as well as other programs.
- ◇ **Need for proposed program.** The College has noted an interest, particularly from lawyers trained in foreign jurisdictions with academic or judicial careers, to have an opportunity to undertake an in-depth study of the U.S. legal system. There is also a correlation between the quality of a law school’s LL.M. applicant pool and the availability of an SJD program.

- ◇ Unique features. The University of Iowa College of Law is the only public law school in the state and is part of a research intensive setting that supports high caliber inter-disciplinary scholarship. The College has a world-renown library, with significant domestic and international legal holdings. These factors, as well as the College's highly regarded faculty, make the College a strong place to welcome advanced, intensive legal scholarship.
- ◇ Duplication. No other public or private institution in Iowa offers a Doctor of Juridical Science program. Both the SUI College of Law and Drake Law School award Doctor of Jurisprudence (JD) degrees (the first professional degree in law), as well as Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees (a one-year degree allowing specialization in an area of law, but typically not requiring significant scholarly writing). The Doctor of Juridical Science is currently offered at the University of California – Los Angeles, the University of Wisconsin – Madison, the University of Michigan, and the University of Arizona, among others.
- ◇ Student demand. Prospective LL.M. students and other scholars regularly inquire about the possibility of pursuing a doctoral degree at the Iowa College of Law.
- ◇ Projected enrollment. The projected enrollment is two students in Year 1, increasing to 18 students by Year 7. It is likely that 2-4 students will be admitted each year for the first three years, increasing to 6-9 students annually thereafter.
- ◇ Workforce need/demand. Neither the state nor the national workforce requires an advanced research degree for entry into the legal profession. The interest is primarily found from domestic students who are interested in pursuing an academic career and from foreign-trained lawyers interested in pursuing advanced legal studies to support a career as an academic or judge or to enhance their own professional opportunities in their home country.
- ◇ Resources. No new faculty, facilities, or equipment will be required for the proposed programs. Existing faculty and classes will support the programs.
- ◇ Cost. Existing faculty in the College of Law will support the necessary courses for the proposed programs. Regularly offered courses, either in the JD program or the LL.M. program in the research track will support the proposed program.
- ◇ Link to institutional strategic plan. The proposed program will complement the LL.M. program. Prospective LL.M. students increasingly express interest in a more extended research program leading to an SJD degree. In addition to recruiting top SJD candidates, the proposed program is expected to strengthen the College's ability to recruit LL.M. candidates by raising the profile of the graduate programs. The program will also enhance the College's scholarly reputation and leverage the significant asset of the Law Library.