

UCI on Track for GC Program

September Start Expected on 2 Certificate Courses



Chemerinsky: announced plans to start certificate programs at Business Journal's 2012 General Counsel of Year Awards

■ By JANE YU

University of California, Irvine's School of Law is "well on track" to kicking off the first set of courses for its recently created Center for Corporate Law, with plans to hire an executive director in the next two months.

Classes for the corporate-counsel program are expected to begin in September, and are designed to address specific needs of becoming in-house counsel and advancing in that role—skills the school says are "rarely taught in law school."

The preparations include raising \$150,000 in initial funding, efforts which

began in September when Dean **Erwin Chemerinsky** announced the launch of the new program at the Business Journal's 2012 General Counsel of the Year Awards.

"This will pay the cost of the executive director and all of the publicity and logistics of the first session," Chemerinsky said. "And after that, the program will pay for itself."

Tuition rates for the courses have not yet been set.

A board of about 20 advisers for the program is currently being assembled. It will be chaired by **Mary Carrington**, who has been working to draft the school's curriculum proposal with the program-planning committee.

Chemerinsky said there is a need for legal education to specifically address the role of in-house counsel.

"I have repeatedly heard from those who work as in-house counsel the need for instruction as they make the transition," he said. "Being an in-house counsel is different in many ways than being an outside counsel. You have to be an entity that as an outside counsel you're not. It often involves certain tasks being expected of you. We're helping prepare these lawyers to make the transition, or to those who already are in-house counsel."

One Client

An in-house counsel, for instance, has to work with a single client, said **Arnold Pinkston**, general counsel at Irvine-based drug maker **Allergan Inc.**

"Value is not created by billing hours," Pinkston said. "[It's] created through a business strategy. Allergan discovers, develops and sells healthcare products. Lawyers at Allergan create value by helping the company discover, develop and sell those products."

Pinkston began his legal career at New York-based law firm **Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP**. He then moved to San Francisco-based **McKesson Corp.** in 1990, and went on to work at a number of other corporations, including Indianapolis-based **Eli Lilly & Co.** and **Beckman Coulter Inc.** in Brea.

"It would have greatly speeded my onboarding [in-house] to have had the UCI program available to me," he said. "I was blessed with a giving and talented mentor—**Art Chong**, currently the general counsel of [Irvine-based **Broadcom Corp.**—but it took me longer to get up to speed."

UC Irvine's Center for Corporate Law will initially offer two certificate programs: The corporate-counsel track will be aimed at "experienced, recently appointed or aspiring in-house lawyers," and the general-counsel program is designed for "current and future leaders of in-house legal departments," according to a proposal by the school.

6-Week Courses

Courses are expected to span six weeks, with classes five days a week.

"The curriculum ... is fairly comprehensive but designed such that a lawyer can focus on particular elements," Pinkston said. "Moreover, as I consider the curriculum, it would greatly benefit those outside counsel that regularly serve corporate clients."

One of the main objectives of UC Irvine's program is to foster international business relationships, with China and Korea in particular. The school already has ties with universities and lawyers there through the John S. and Marilyn Long U.S.-China Institute for Business and Law, and the Korea Law Center, which was created in 2009 along with the law school's launch.

"What we've discovered is, in Seoul and in Beijing, there's a real interest among lawyers who want to come to the U.S.," Chemerinsky said. "And we've learned that American lawyers want to go out, too. We think there's really room for exciting programs on that front. We want to create programs in China and in Korea that are focused on the corporate-counsel role." ■

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