

## VII. STANDING COMMITTEE

### A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

#### Establishment of the Master of Laws in Health Law

##### RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is the recommendation of the administration and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee that the Board of Regents grant authority to the School of Law to offer the Master of Laws in Health Law degree program, effective Autumn Quarter 2009. The degree program will have provisional status with a review to be scheduled in the 2014-2015 academic year. At such time that continuing status is granted, a ten-year review cycle would begin.

##### BACKGROUND

In February 2008, the Graduate School received a proposal from the graduate faculty in the School of Law requesting authority to offer the self-sustaining Master of Laws (LL.M.) in Health Law degree program. Implementation is planned for Autumn Quarter 2009, with the program anticipating 33 degrees granted per year at maturity.

The overarching goal of the LL.M. in Health Law program is to provide graduate and professional level study and research in the use of law to promote social justice and improve individual and global health. The program will offer specialized legal education in all facets of health law, including public and private health system organizations and finance; public health law; global health and social justice; regulation of health care providers, researchers and entities; medical negligence; and the rights of patients and populations in the domestic, international and comparative contexts. The program builds on existing resources in the Law School's Center for Law in Science and Global Health, which currently offers a J.D. concentration track in health law. The center also collaborates across campus on programs involving health law.

The growing interest in domestic and international health law and policy is clearly reflected in the students applying to, and being accepted to, the J.D. program. The new prominence of the UW in global health has accentuated student interest, and some national scholars have described the field of health law as currently entering a "golden age." The LL.M. in Health Law program anticipates marketing the program to recent law graduates in addition to practicing attorneys who seek to either refocus or enhance their careers.

In April, 2008, the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School appointed two reviewers to evaluate the Master of Laws in Health Law proposal. One reviewer directs a health law program at a recognized law school; the other directs an institute for bioethics, health policy, and law at a medical school. The reviewers both supported approval of the degree program. Each reviewer made specific recommendations on the program, to which the program provided detailed responses.

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The Graduate School Council met on May 29, 2008, to discuss the LL.M. in Health Law degree proposal. The Council recommended unanimously that the proposal be forwarded to the Higher Education Coordinating Board for review and approval. The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School concurred with this recommendation.

On September 8, 2008, the Higher Education Coordinating Board Education Committee discussed the LL.M. in Health Law proposal, which was then considered by the full Higher Education Coordinating Board on September 18, 2008. The Board approved the proposal by the School of Law at the University of Washington to offer the Master of Laws in Health Law.

The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, the Dean of the School of Law, and the Provost have reviewed and approved the recommendation. The Higher Education Coordinating Board will be informed of the Board of Regents' action on the LL.M. in Health Law.