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Offer an LL.M. in Business Law for 24 Semester Credit Hours (SACSCOC Response)

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February 18, 2016

Dr. Mary Lewnes Albrecht
Associate Vice Provost
The University of Tennessee
527 Andy Holt Tower
Knoxville, TN 37996-0152

Dear Dr. Albrecht:

Thank you for your letter of September 16, 2015, conveying the prospectus for a Master of Laws (LL.M.) in United States Business Law, effective August 2016 on the Knoxville campus. I am also in receipt of your letter dated December 2, 2015, conveying approval of the program by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) and have added that notification as an addendum to your prospectus.

The program is designed for international students with an earned degree equivalent to a Juris Doctor (J.D.) and addresses the effects of growing globalization on the practice of law. Program need was supported by data from the American Bar Association (ABA) and the Law School Admission Council documenting interest in U.S. law schools focusing on international students/training. The LL.M. program also supports the missions of the University of Tennessee and the University of Tennessee College of Law. Appropriate internal program approvals were documented.

The one-year program consists of:

- 17 credit hours—courses currently offered in the College of Law's Concentration in Business Transactions which are available to students seeking the J.D.;
- 2 credit hours—new course in The Structure and Operation of the American Legal System;
- 2 credit hours—modified course on legal research and writing for LL.M. students;
- 3 credit hours—existing course in legal ethics

The 24-semester credit hour program does not meet Core Requirement 2.7.1 (Program length) of at least 30 semester credit hours at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level. The institution provided a discussion/justification for requiring fewer than the required number of credit hours and noted that students enrolled in the program will be practicing lawyers with law degrees from their own countries equivalent to the J.D.

Program learning objectives were delineated. A schedule of course offerings was provided and included course titles, credit hours, and course descriptions. A Faculty Roster Form was included; faculty qualifications appear appropriate.

Available library and information technology resources meet or exceed ABA standards; LL.M. students will have full access to resources through the College of Law and the University of Tennessee libraries. Resources are available through online databases, print, microforms, and other formats. The prospectus delineated discipline-specific collection resources as well as library physical facilities in support of the program initiative. Reference assistance is available on-ground and by telephone, email, chat, and instant messaging. Library instruction is available upon instructor request and may be provided in physical facilities or online.



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Student support services include the offices of Admission & Financial Aid, Records, and Career Services, amongst others. The institution's International House provides support for international students including student visa process. The International Law Student Association will also provide transitional services to help LL.M. students integrate with the larger university community.

Physical facilities to support the program include classrooms/conference rooms, law library, offices, etc. Three classrooms are configured as trial or appellate courtrooms. Classroom technology has been updated including computers, plain paper cameras, whiteboards, and internet accessibility. Currently, there is excess capacity in existing facilities to meet the needs of the program initiative.

Expenditures and estimated revenue for the first five years of the program were charted. Expenditures include faculty/staff salaries/benefits and program marketing costs. Revenue is based on projected enrollment from out-of-state students. Revenue is anticipated to offset programming cost with conservative enrollment estimates.

The program will be evaluated annually by the College of Law Dean's office using student performance, enrollment figures, profits, expenditures, etc. The Director of the Clayton Center for Entrepreneurial Law will evaluate the program every two years including student questionnaires on program strengths and weaknesses which mirrors the process used for students in the J.D. program. Adjustments to instructional and operational practices will be made based on assessments results.

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the Master of Laws (LL.M.) in United States Business Law. It was the decision of the Board to approve the program and include it in the scope of the current accreditation.

Enclosed is an invoice for \$500 to help defray the cost of review of the prospectus.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Belle S. Wheelan".

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President

BSW/MAC:iy

Enclosure

cc: Dr. Jimmy G. Cheek, Chancellor
Dr. Steven M. Sheeley