

**OHIO NORTHERN UNIVERSITY**  
**2007 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING**

Academic Program: LL.M. in Democratic Governance and Rule of Law  
Department: \_\_\_\_\_  
College: Law  
Submitted by/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The Annual Report on the Assessment of Student Learning consists of three parts.

Part I provides the learning objectives and measures as previously identified.

Part II requests information about assessment activities for the previous academic year.

Part III requests information about programmatic or operational changes occurring or being proposed as a result of assessment activities.

Reports must be submitted by department chairs to the Office of Institutional Research by **December 3, 2007**. Each annual report will be evaluated by the University Assessment Committee and returned to the department chair and the respective Dean by **March 3, 2008**.

**I. ASSESSMENT PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

*Instructions: Please complete the following sections.*

**A. Learning Objectives**

1. To obtain knowledge and understanding of diverse governance and legal systems from around the world.
2. To obtain knowledge and understanding of critical problems and issues confronting nations developing democratic and law based institutions and procedures.
3. To learn how to apply the new knowledge and understanding to legal and governance problems confronting their home countries.

**B. Measurements**

Unlike the J.D. student at the law school, the LL.M. students only attend the College for one year, and, as they are already licensed attorneys in their home countries, do not take a bar examination. Thus, the measures used to assess their learning must differ from those applied to the J.D. students. The LL.M. program relies upon the faculty evaluation of the students in each of their seven required courses, including their capstone seminar designed to utilize the knowledge gained in their other courses, and surveys both during and after their year at Ohio Northern.

1. Faculty evaluation of mastery of course material.
2. Successful completion of capstone seminar paper.
3. Periodic surveys of students' attitudes towards program and suggestions for change.

4. Post-graduate surveys of students and their employers regarding application of learned principles. (The graduating class of 2007 was the first LL.M. class. The program will survey the graduates after one year to evaluate the value of the instruction and its application to their professional activity. The program will also attempt to obtain an assessment from their employers regarding the knowledge and skills the program provided to the graduates.)

## **II. ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES FOR 2006-07 (ACADEMIC YEAR)**

*Instructions: Please complete the following sections.*

### **A. Describe the *measures* used to collect the data?**

(Which measures did you use during the past year? Which learning objectives does each measure address? How and when did you administer the measures?)

#### **1. *Faculty evaluation of mastery of course material.***

Satisfactory completion of the LL.M. program includes receiving passing grades in the seven required courses and at least one elective. The curriculum of the required courses directly reflects the first two learning objectives of the program, while the capstone seminar also serves the third objective. The faculty utilized both examinations and research papers to evaluate the students' mastery of the material.

#### **2. *Successful completion of capstone seminar paper.***

During the spring semester the students are required to prepare a research paper addressing a particular governance or law reform problem in their home country. Drawing on the material they have learned in their other courses and their background as practicing attorneys in their home countries, the students identify, analyze, and propose a solution, including implementation suggestions, for this problem. Their proposals are critiqued by classmates and the faculty member before the final paper is submitted for evaluation by the faculty member, in this case the director of the LL.M. program.

#### **3. *Periodic surveys of students' attitudes towards program and suggestions for change.***

During the course of the year, the LL.M. students were surveyed about the program and their suggestions for improvement. The focus of these surveys was primarily on the logistical aspects of their experience in Ada and the United States, but a number of questions focused on the course content and presentation.

### **B. Present the *results* of the data collection and analysis for each measure listed above.**

(Present the data resulting from 2006-07 assessment activities. What are the standards and expectations for performance? Did the students meet the standards? What gaps were found between the standards for student learning and the actual results? *Please do not include any students' names.*)

#### **1. *Faculty assessment of student learning in the seven required LL.M. courses:***

The LL.M. students are evaluated using a High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, Fail standard rather than the traditional grading system used for the J.D. students. This special system reflects the different nature of their backgrounds (practicing lawyers from foreign

countries with differing legal systems) and the possible effect of differences in English language skills. The results of their evaluations for 2006-2007 are as follows:

Fall Semester:	American Legal System	5 HP, 5 PS, 1 LP
	Comparative Admin. Law	6 HP, 5 PS
	Comparative Const. Law	2 HP, 9 PS
	Legal Context of Am. Bus.	3 HP, 6 PS, 2 LP
Spring Semester:	Competitiveness & Corruption	5 HP, 6 PS
	Legal Issues in Trans. Dem.	6 HP, 5 PS
	Rule of Law Seminar	5 HP, 6 Ps
	Electives	8 HP, 14 PS

## 2. *Topics and summaries of capstone “Rule of Law Seminar” course:*

The evaluation of the seminar papers is set forth in the table above. The following listing of the topics and brief summaries demonstrates the nature of the topics addressed and reflects the application by the students of the material addressed in their other courses.

- “Independence of Journalists and Media in Kyrgyz Republic: Comparative Analysis with US, Ukraine, and Estonia” - An analysis of current legal protections for the press in Kyrgyzstan and recommendations to enhance the freedom of journalists and the media.
- “Government Funding of NGOS as an Integral Component of the ‘State-Civil Society’ Partnership in the Kyrgyz Republic” - Recommendations for assuring stable funding for non-governmental organizations based on an analysis of several foreign models.
- “Solidarity with Victims of Terrorism in Kyrgyzstan” - An argument for the importance of the government demonstrating its support for the victims of terrorism as a means of discouraging terrorist activity and recommendations based on foreign examples.
- “Migration Reform in the Republic of Uzbekistan” - A discussion of the many problems of the millions of Uzbek workers abroad, particularly in Russia and Kazakhstan, and steps the Uzbek government can take to better protect its citizens outside of the country.
- “E-government in Kazakhstan: Obstacles and Risks of Implementation” - An explanation of the enthusiastic embrace of electronic government by Kazakhstan and a critical look at its real benefits and drawbacks.

- “Parliamentary immunity from arrest: Cases of USA, Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania” - An examination of the nature and extent of parliamentary immunity, its uses and abuses, and recommendations for Ukraine.
- “National Measures Aimed at Combating Human Trafficking in Ukrainian Citizens” - A discussion of the problems of human trafficking from Ukraine (and the greater instance of non-sex related trafficking) and recommendations for steps the Ukrainian government can take within the country to control the problems.
- “Privatization of Hydropower Generation Plants and Energy Distribution Companies in Georgia: Lessons Learned” - A recounting of the missteps of the energy sector privatization projects in Georgia and recommendations for reforms in future privatizations based on foreign experiences.
- “Freedom of Information and Private Information Exempt from Disclosure According to International Experience and Practice in Georgia” - A discussion of the protection of private information from government disclosure and recommendations for reforms in Georgia based on international standards.
- “Lobbying Reform in Georgia” - An examination of current regulations governing lobbyists in Georgia and recommendations for reform in light of the expanded role of the democratic parliament.
- “Importance of Judicial and Prosecutorial Training in Bosnia and Herzegovina” - A discussion of the critical role training plays in establishing an independent judiciary, and the need for independent control of training standards and curriculum by judges and prosecutors.

### 3. *Period Surveys of students*

The LL.M. program conducted a number of surveys of the participants during the course of the 2006-2007 year. Questions focused on the logistics of their stay at the university, as well as a the course of instruction, faculty, and method of delivery of the material. Below is a list of the surveys and the responses.

All surveys were ranked according to the following:

- 1 = very satisfied
- 2 = somewhat satisfied
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = somewhat disappointed
- 5 = very disappointed

Subject surveyed

Timing

- Effectiveness of orientation 30 days after arrival
- Satisfaction with living conditions

Communications before you arrived:	1=7	2=5	3=1	4=0	5=0
Visa process:	1=8	2=2	3=1	4=1	5=0
Transportation arrangements:	1=8	2=3	3=1	4=0	5=0
Apartment:	1=11	2=1	3=0	4=0	5=0
Furnishings and Supplies:	1=9	2=3	3=0	4=0	5=0
Computer, Phone, Technology Support:	1=10	2=2	3=0	4=0	5=0
The Library Session with Prof. Armstrong:	1=6	2=5	3=0	4=0	5=0
The Course Reading and Briefing session with Prof. Crider:	1=8	2=3	3=0	4=0	5=0
The Technology session with Larry Baumgardner:	1=4	2=6	3=3	4=0	5=0
The Cultural session with Stephen Larrabee:	1=4	2=5	3=2	4=0	5=0
The Lexis/Nexis session:	1=5	2=6	3=1	4=0	5=0
The Campus/Ada tour:	1=7	2=3	3=2	4=0	5=0
The orientation at Liberty Bank:	1=6	2=3	3=2	4=0	5=0
The shopping trips:	1=10	2=1	3=0	4=0	5=0

- Weekend seminars After each seminar

### 1<sup>st</sup> Weekend Seminar “Transition from one Party Rule to Democracy” Gustavo Vega

Materials to prepare you for the seminar:	1=8	2=0	3=3	4=0	5=0
The content of the sessions(s) on Friday morning:	1=2	2=6	3=1	4=2	5=0
The content of the session(s) on Friday afternoon:	1=7	2=1	3=2	4=1	5=0
The content of the session(s) on Saturday:	1=6	2=4	3=0	4=0	5=0
The effectiveness of Prof. Vega:	1=4	2=4	3=3	4=0	5=0
The format of the sessions:	1=3	2=2	3=4	4=2	5=0

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Weekend Seminar. “Human Rights” Julie Mertus

Materials to prepare you for the seminar:	1=1	2=8	3=1	4=0	5=0
The content of the sessions(s) on Friday morning:	1=1	2=8	3=0	4=1	5=0
The content of the session(s) on Friday afternoon:	1=0	2=6	3=3	4=1	5=0
The content of the session(s) on Saturday:	1=1	2=6	3=2	4=1	5=0
The effectiveness of Prof. Mertus:	1=4	2=2	3=3	4=0	5=0
The format of the sessions:	1=0	2=5	3=4	4=0	5=0

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Weekend Seminar “Transitional Justice” Jean Marie Kamatali

Materials to prepare you for the seminar:	1=6	2=2	3=2	4=0	5=0
The content of the sessions(s) on Friday morning:	1=9	2=0	3=1	4=0	5=0
The content of the session(s) on Friday afternoon:	1=9	2=1	3=0	4=0	5=0

The content of the session(s) on Saturday:	1=10	2=0	3=0	4=0	5=0
The effectiveness of Prof. Kamatali:	1=10	2=0	3=0	4=0	5=0
The format of the sessions:	1=6	2=3	3=1	4=0	5=0

- Courses and instructors

After first semester

The effectiveness of Prof. Helmer:	1=11	2=0	3=0	4=0	5=0
The textbooks used for Prof. Helmer's Course:	1=8	2=3	3=0	4=0	5=0
The content of Prof. Helmer's Course:	1=10	2=1	3=0	4=0	5=0
The effectiveness of Prof. Levinson:	1=0	2=1	3=4	4=4	5=2
The textbooks used for Prof. Levinson's Course:	1=1	2=0	3=4	4=3	5=3
The content of Prof. Levinson's Course:	1=1	2=4	3=6	4=0	5=0
The effectiveness of Prof. Veltri:	1=10	2=2	3=0	4=0	5=0
The textbooks used for Prof. Veltri's Course:	1=8	2=3	3=0	4=0	5=0
The content of Prof. Veltri's Course:	1=10	2=1	3=0	4=0	5=0
The effectiveness of Prof. Torres:	1=2	2=3	3=5	4=1	5=0
The textbooks used for Prof. Torres's Course:	1=2	2=9	3=0	4=0	5=0
The content of Prof. Torres's Course:	1=1	2=3	3=6	4=1	5=0

- Overall program assessment

End of spring semester

### Second Semester Classes

The effectiveness of Prof. Helmer:	1=2	2=2	3=1	4=0	5=0
The textbooks used for Prof. Helmer's Course:	1=1	2=4	3=0	4=0	5=0
The content of Prof. Helmer's Course:	1=2	2=1	3=2	4=0	5=0
The effectiveness of Prof. Levinson:	1=1	2=2	3=2	4=0	5=0
The textbooks used for Prof. Levinson's Course:	1=1	2=2	3=2	4=0	5=0
The content of Prof. Levinson's Course:	1=1	2=2	3=2	4=0	5=0
The effectiveness of Prof. Fenton:	1=4	2=1	3=0	4=0	5=0
The textbooks used for Prof. Fenton's Course:	1=3	2=2	3=0	4=0	5=0
The content of Prof. Fenton's Course:	1=4	2=0	3=1	4=0	5=0

### Graduation

Closing out process for your apartment:	1=3	2=1	3=0	4=0	5=1
Timing and quality of information regarding graduation:	1=4	2=0	3=1	4=0	5=0
Graduation dinner:	1=5	2=0	3=0	4=0	5=0
Graduation ceremony:	1=4	2=1	3=0	4=0	5=0
Travel arrangements:	1=3	2=2	3=0	4=0	5=0
Overall experience:	1=4	2=1	3=0	4=0	5=0

### III. PROGRAMMATIC /OPERATIONAL ADJUSTMENTS

*Instructions: Please complete the following sections.*

**A. Describe the *adjustments*, if any, to the program or the program's operations (including budgetary) which are either being proposed or have already been made in order to narrow the gaps identified between learning objectives and actual outcomes.**

(What changes in curriculum, instructional strategies, course content, personnel, facilities, equipment, resource allocation, etc. are recommended to address the gaps between expected performance and actual results?)

During the course of the LL.M. Democratic Governance and Rule of Law Program several evaluations took place. Program staff reviewed each evaluation and made changes in the program for the 2007-2008 academic year. Below is a summary of the major evaluations conducted by the program and the changes that were incorporated.

#### ***1. Orientation***

At the end of the two week orientation session, each student completed an evaluation of the scheduled events and made recommendations. In addition, in the final evaluation completed by the students, several of them provided additional input on improving the orientation process after having a better grasp of the entire program.

In general, the students were very satisfied with their pre-orientation and orientation experience. The communications they received from the program staff before they arrived were very helpful and they were very happy with their flights, transportation and apartments and furnishings. They were also very satisfied with the sessions that were conducted for them and felt that they received a lot of pertinent information that helped them prepare for the rigors of the program and life in Ada, Ohio.

The students did have some suggestions to improve the process including: a more comprehensive legal writing component, better opportunities to meet JD students and a better structure for providing them with transportation to local stores. In response to these recommendations, program staff restructured the orientation program.

The orientation program now includes five sessions focusing on legal research and writing, which includes three writing assignments. In addition, the director of the legal research and writing department of the law school meets with individual students to discuss any particular issues they may have. Finally, during orientation a separate session will be conducted by the Communication Skills Center, whose main purpose is to provide support to the students in helping them prepare research papers.

The program staff also designed several more formal and informal programs to have the LL.M. students engage with J.D. students during the first two weeks, thus helping them transition to life in the States. Also, the program staff revamped and improved the process to select International

Peer Advisors. These advisors are each assigned a student to work with one-on-one to help them assimilate and provide logistical support.

In addition to these changes, the program staff also developed some of their own initiatives to help improve the orientation process. Moving forward, all pre-orientation sessions will now include a chat with alumni of the program and entering students to provide the new students the opportunity to ask questions and receive input from our alumni. All orientation programs will also include a day trip to local courts. Students will have the opportunity to visit and meet with officials in Municipal Courts, the Court of Common Pleas, and the Court of Appeals. Finally, the program staff has also developed and will include a session on communicating with reporters and the media which will help prepare the students for the numerous interviews they will partake in during their time in the program.

## ***2. First Semester Evaluation***

At the end of the first semester, all of the students completed an evaluation and also met with program staff to discuss their experiences to date. The students were very happy with the content of their courses and with the professors teaching the classes. They also expressed their happiness in regards to the weekend seminars and field trips that were set up for them.

The students did have some suggestions for improving the courses. They indicated that having mid-term exams and mid-term papers would be beneficial. They also asked that the assignments from the different professors be better coordinated so that everything was not due at the same time. In addition, they suggested that having more J.D. students in their classes would be beneficial. Finally, the students asked that the field trips and seminars be curtailed towards the end of the semester so that they could focus on their studies.

Based on these suggestions, the program staff met with each of the professors teaching the courses and set up a system so that there would be more mid-term and in-term assignments and coordinated the timing of exams and papers. Also, the LL.M. classes will be marketed better towards the J.D. students in the hope that more of them will sign up to take the classes. The schedule has also been altered to avoid having field trips and seminars during the final month of the semester.

## ***3. Final Evaluation***

At the end of the program, each student completed a final evaluation and had an exit interview with one of the program staff. Once again, the students expressed their pleasure with the courses, their professors, and the field trips and seminars that were conducted during the year. They also made a point of thanking the staff with helping them revise their CV's and conducting mock interviews and circulating their CV's amongst international organizations operating in the development field. All of them were also very happy with the graduation ceremony and the other year end events.

The students indicated again that having more J.D. students in their classes would be a great benefit and about half of the class suggested that roommates for the LL.M. students should be J.D. students, not other LL.M. students.

Based on the above suggestions, the program staff has worked closely with professors teaching international subjects to see if some of their students would be interested in taking the LL.M. classes and have asked them to promote these courses in their classes. The program staff also reviewed the suggestion about having J.D. roommates with LL.M. students but decided that first year law students have enough pressure in their first year without having to worry about living with an individual from another culture.

**B. Describe the *changes* that need to be made to the assessment plan and practices for the future?**

(Have questions been raised about the effectiveness of the assessment plan? If so, what changes are needed? Are different objectives, measures, analysis, etc. needed? )

During the coming year the survey instruments will be refined to better capture student attitudes towards the content and delivery of the course material, as well their views of the relevancy of the material to their legal experience.