UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
Faculty of Law

Proposal to FutureEd

Global Professional Master of Laws (GPLLM)
Specializing in business law

Archana Sridhar and Jane Kidner of the University of Toronto Faculty of Law submit the following proposal to FutureEd for inclusion in its October 2010 conference. We have conducted consultations with a broad array of stakeholders, including:

- Faculty members
- Alumni
- Lawyers in private practice at a range of law firms in Toronto
- Businesspeople
- Clients of law firms (including some of Canada’s “Big Five” banks)
- Service providers and professional associations in the legal industry (such as Legal OnRamp; ZSA (the largest legal recruiting company in Canada); and the Association of Corporate Counsel)

As a result of such dialogue, we are developing a new executive-style graduate degree in law and business that will fill a gap described at the April 2010 FutureEd conference in terms of advancing legal education and collaboration between academia and the profession beyond the JD program. Many stakeholders have expressed their support for our proposal and have contributed to modifications in program design and curriculum – so it is truly a collaborative effort (see Appendix 1 for endorsements).

Focused on business law and globalization, the proposed Global Professional Master of Laws (GPLLM) is designed to inspire legal and business leaders for the global economy and the changing practice of law. It will give lawyers and others a chance to go back to school in order to gain new perspectives about the impact of globalization on laws, markets, and businesses from a broad multi-disciplinary and comparative legal perspective – all while continuing to excel in their professions.

This program is innovative in a number of ways:

- The GPLLM will be the first degree of its kind and one of only a few executive-style graduate legal degrees offered in North America.

- Admission will be open to both lawyers and nonlawyers who have at least five
years of executive business or senior government experience.¹

• The degree is completed in one year during evenings and weekends, so students can continue to work while enrolled in the program.

• Classes will utilize collaborative learning methods and new technologies to encourage shared learning and networking.

• The GPLLM will eventually integrate intensive international experiences into its curriculum through the prestigious Centre for Transnational Legal Studies, a joint venture of the University of Toronto Faculty of Law, Georgetown University and other renowned law schools.

The program delivery model for the GPLLM is much like an Executive MBA, designed for working professionals with seminar-style courses in the evenings and some weekends. Although the format accommodates a professional’s schedule, the academic requirements and rigor of the GPLLM are consistent with the Faculty’s existing Master’s level graduate law programs.

The program will be offered as a full-time one-year degree program involving a total of 24 credit hours that are completed over the course of three consecutive academic sessions (September to August).² Students must take six compulsory courses, four of which will take place one night a week, and two of which will take place as three-day intensive seminars:

1. Law and Business in a Global Economy [foundational course]
2. Mergers and Acquisitions
3. Comparative Corporate Governance
4. Securities Regulation and Corporate Finance
5. Advanced Corporate Tax
6. Commercial Arbitration and Dispute Resolution

Students can then choose from the following courses for the remainder of their credit-hours (all of which take place as two-day weekend seminars):

Seminar 1 (choose one)
• Law and Policy of Public Private Partnerships
• Intellectual Property Law

Seminar 2 (choose one)
• Regulated Industries and Competition Law
• World Trade Law and Trade Regulation

Seminar 3 (choose one)
• Organization of Transactional Legal Practice
• Corporate Social Responsibility and Ethics

While the aim of the program is to add value to the working lives of professionals, the

¹ The GPLLM does not qualify graduates to practice law in Canada.
² Some of the course titles may change, but the program delivery model will stay the same.
academic rigor and theoretical framework provided by the GPLLM courses will offer students a new way of thinking about the law – beyond the nuts-and-bolts of business law practice. Globalization and its real-life effects will be infused throughout the curriculum – not just through comparative law add-ons or opaque discussions of international law. For example, the elective course “Organization of Transactional Legal Practice” will be designed especially for this program and will focus on trends and themes such as the role of corporate counsel in multinational corporations, professionalism and ethics, the structure and business of large global law firms, and knowledge management systems.

Courses in the GPLLM will be taught on the same basis as those in the regular J.D. and graduate programs; that is, by a combination of: (1) full-time faculty, (2) distinguished adjunct professors who are chosen for their specific area expertise and knowledge, and (3) distinguished visiting professors from leading institutions around the world.

The program has three audiences in mind:

**Lawyers:** Lawyers are frequently called upon to advise businesses, individuals, and governments on global matters that transcend national borders. Today’s lawyers need to understand the law within the context of different legal systems and develop appropriate global perspectives in order to identify issues and design deals for corporate and other clients. We anticipate lawyers (both those from law firms and from other practice settings such as general counsel) will make up the majority of each cohort.

**Business Leaders:** Professional success today requires not only a broad knowledge of and familiarity with legal principles of accounting and finance, marketing, sales, operations, and human resource management, but also a solid understanding of how to use the law to protect and advance the interests of businesses operating in a global context.

**Government Professionals:** Policymakers and advisors, lawyers in the public sector, and officials in every level of government from municipal to federal office deal with issues of law, business and globalization. An advanced understanding of how the law interacts with both the private and public sectors is crucial to furthering the public good and evaluating investments on behalf of the State.

This program is subject to appraisal and approval by Ontario Council on Graduate Studies (OCGS). We are finalizing the draft curriculum now and anticipating approval by the early part of 2011. We are currently launching a website and will have faculty in place in order to accept applications by March/April 2011 and register the first cohort into the GPLLM in September 2011. Tuition for the GPLLM is proposed to be $25,800 for a one-year course of study (which includes program materials and meals).
APPENDIX 1 – Endorsements

Mayo Moran, Dean, University of Toronto Faculty of Law

As Dean of the University of Toronto Faculty of Law, I have spoken with many alumni and other leaders in business and law about the need for an executive-style graduate program in law that would be theoretically sophisticated, academically rigorous and practically relevant. Our proposed Global Professional Master of Laws fills this need and includes some key innovations such as the admission of non-lawyers and a part-time, modular format. I am looking forward to the program’s launch early next year and am happy to endorse the program for FutureEd.

Jennifer Warren, Senior Vice President & General Counsel, CIBC

The proposed Global Professional Master of Laws is an idea that has come at the perfect moment. The global financial crisis that began in 2007 has underscored the significance of international financial regulations to businesses everywhere. Lawyers and business people need expert training to navigate rapidly changing policy environments and the GPLLM provides an ideal solution. As an alumna of the University of Toronto Faculty of Law, I am especially delighted to see the school developing such a distinctive program.

Jutta Brunnée, Associate Dean, Graduate Studies, University of Toronto Faculty of Law

As Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, I have worked with the Dean, other faculty members and senior administrators to design the Global Professional Master of Laws and gain the requisite university approvals. Exploring the interconnected themes of business and globalization, the GPLLM will maintain the highest academic standards of the faculty. More practically, the new GPLLM will provide a key option for outstanding graduate students who wish to continue pursuing their professional goals while reengaging with the law school for further study.

John Claydon, Director of Professional Development, Lex Mundi

The harmonization of laws around international transactions, the more competitive world-wide legal marketplace, the increasing complexity of regulatory compliance - all of these major trends are hallmarks of globalization's impact on business and law. The Global Professional Master of Laws fills a need for professional development in this area, and offers potential students a choice to obtain education in an academically rigorous way with an innovative new graduate degree.

Michael Trebilcock, Chair in Law and Economics, University of Toronto Faculty of Law

As an academic advisor to the new Global Professional Master of Laws, I have been pleased to see the collaborative efforts that have led to this new degree. A true combination of the best thinking from our faculty, alumni and other colleagues in the community, the GPLLM addresses the need for further
professional education around the globalization of the legal profession, particularly in the area of transactional law. I am confident that the curriculum will offer students a new way to think about their own professional paths and the situations they face on the job.