

**TOPIC: PROPOSAL TO OFFER A MASTER OF LAWS DEGREE AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO LAW SCHOOL**

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I. SUMMARY

The University of Colorado, Law School in Boulder (“Colorado Law”) has submitted a program proposal to offer a Master of Laws (LL.M.) with three particular concentrations: Natural Resources Law (NRL), Technology and Intellectual Property Law (TECHIP), and Entrepreneurial Law (ENTRP). The proposed degree will expand the current law program by offering an advanced degree in addition to the Juris Doctor (J.D.). Colorado Law has an especially strong national reputation for academic excellence. This program is designed to offer opportunities for law students to study in particular fields while utilizing the strength of the faculty and depth of curricula.

II. BACKGROUND

The following is summarized from the Colorado Law’s proposal to offer a Master of Laws degree:

Colorado Law proposes to add a graduate student program to the J.D. law program in order to enhance the intellectual climate and rigor of the J.D. program by integrating advanced students into existing J.D. courses; including LL.M. students on advanced research projects conducted by the faculty and students in the Natural Resources Center, and The Center for Energy and Environmental Sustainability, and the Silicon Flatirons Center for Law, Technology, and Entrepreneurship; and by inviting LL.M. students to participate in collaborative writing projects being conducted by law faculty members. In short, the proposed degree program will compliment and augment what we already do and will place Colorado Law among the leading law schools in the nation that offer an advanced graduate degree program in law.

ROLE AND MISSION SUPPORT

The Master of Laws degree supports the role and mission of the University of Colorado, Boulder. The statutory mission states:

The Boulder campus of the university of Colorado shall be a comprehensive graduate research university with selective admissions standards. The Boulder campus of the university of Colorado shall offer a comprehensive array of undergraduate, masters, and doctoral degree programs. The Boulder campus of the university of Colorado has exclusive authority to offer graduate programs in law. C.R.S. 23-20-101(a)

EVIDENCE OF DEMAND

The globalization of the practice of law has resulted in an unprecedented increase in the number of foreign-trained lawyers seeking American bar admission and training in American law. Similarly, a record number of American-trained lawyers are seeking admission to practice abroad, particularly within the European Union and therefore seek the LL.M. degree to add to their credentials. The Colorado Law faculty has emphasized that the proposed degree program must only enroll strong students who will add intellectual rigor to the classroom, produce strong scholarly work product, and enhance the intellectual climate of the law school.

DUPLICATION/SIMILAR PROGRAMS IN THE STATE

The University of Denver Sturm College of Law graduate program that provides advanced legal study for non law graduates is a popular and impressive certificate program that invites professionals to earn a Masters degree in six specialty areas. These are Energy Law and Policy, Mineral Law and Policy, Water Law and Policy, Environmental Law and Policy, Land Use Law and Policy, and International Resources Transactions Law and Policy. While there will be direct overlap between the proposed degree program and DU's LL.M. in Environmental and Natural Resources Law, the duplication will be minimal. The Colorado Law program will require a thesis emphasizing the doctrinal study more likely to appeal to student preparing for an academic career, while the DU LL.M., complimented by the six certificate programs, appears to emphasize the practical preparation invaluable to legal practitioners and corporate executives.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

The Department staff has reviewed this proposed program to ensure that it meets the State's performance measures outlined in C.R.S. 23-1-107. The program meets all performance measures.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the Master of Laws degree to be offered by the University of Colorado, Law School.

V. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. 23-1-107

ACCOMPANYING MATERIALS

Copies of all relevant materials are on file in the Academic Affairs office and are available upon request.