

History – LL.M. Roadmap: An International Student’s Guide to U.S. Law School Programs

From 2007 to 2008, Perfecto ‘Boyet’ Caparas conceptualized, originated and transmitted to Prof. George Edwards, in Prof. Edwards’ concurrent capacity then as IU McKinney External Faculty Director of the Graduate Programs and Co-Chair of the Graduate Affairs Committee, his (Caparas’) own original, comprehensive and integrated body of written work and system containing seed ideas, approaches, principles, concepts and perspectives on various facets of LL.M., J.D. and S.J.D. education in the US, from the point of view, perspective, based on the interests, needs, aspirations of and intended for foreign attorneys and professionals as well as law school administrators, that Prof. Edwards used for and in LL.M. Roadmap: An International Student’s Guide to US Law School Programs, including the following:

American Education for Foreign Lawyers – Exploring opportunities and options, such as J.D., Master of Laws (LL.M.); Doctor of Juridical Science (S.J.D.) how law degrees in other countries compare to American J.D.?; Why choose J.D. over LL.M.? – legal job market in the US and competitive edge if you intend to work in the US ; what is your goal? – To practice law in the US or in another foreign country or to practice international law in your own country or to teach;

US Bar Exams – Are foreign lawyers eligible to take Bar exams in the US?; States that allow foreign lawyers to sit for Bar exams; Requirements for foreign lawyers to take Bar exams in US states; Trend of foreign bar passers; Can you work in the US after passing Bar exam? – Immigration restrictions; Bar Review Courses;

Legal job terrain in the US – Outsourcing and its impact on law practice; Role of lawyers in international trade; Globalizing law practice;

How US education can prepare and qualify foreign lawyers to engage in international law practice; Optional Practical Training (Source: Department of Homeland Security, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)); Optional Practical Training (OPT) for Law Students and Graduates – nature, scope and eligibility; Foreign Students Eligible for OPT; Student and Exchange Visitor Program – SEVP; Foreign students: Within 60 days of concluding Law studies; F-1 and H-1B visa; Cap-gap;

Hands-on learning approaches; professional legal work opportunities like internships; LL.M. thesis; legal research skills including LexisNexis and Westlaw;

Law school survival skills;

Your aspirations? – To teach and pursue career in academe, Specialize in a specific field of law as a law practitioner; To hone your skills and abilities in a specific field of international law; To write scholarly works; Pursue a career in judiciary or government; Develop international network of friends and associates; Academic thrusts; Hands on learning; Experiential learning; Actual, professional working environment; Global perspective for a lawyer in today’s global village; International internships; International community; Friendship w/ scholars, leaders in various fields of law and governance; Law School activities; Law school organizations;

Cultivating lawyering skills; Moot court; research; Scholarly works; Law publications; Law Reviews and Journals; writing your dissertation; Choosing courses; classroom environment; Teaching style; Mostly Socratic method; classmates: J.D. students mostly from the US; Freedom to choose your LL.M. courses; Beyond minimum courses required for your LL.M. track, freedom to choose your courses; Provided you satisfy requisite courses, if any; In school hands on lawyerly skills training; Trial advocacy; Requisite courses; Nature of course;

Legal clinics; Immigration law; Assistance to indigent clients in civil and criminal cases; You earn academic credits; You gain firsthand experience in US legal practice; You benefit from personal and direct supervision of expert faculty; LL.M. students study w/ J.D. students;

Insights into lives of LL.M. students; LL.M. graduates who pursued J.D.; LL.M. students or graduates who worked as research assistants for law professors; LL.M. students who did internships; gained actual work experience for academic credits; Factors involving OPT such as being highly competitive; J.D. preferred over LL.M.; personal preferences of hiring private employers;

Racial discrimination in the US?; Laws that address racial discrimination; Laws that help ensure equal opportunity for foreign students in the US vis-à-vis American students;

Optional practical training; Enrolment in desired courses; policies against sexual harassment;

LL.M. graduates who returned to their home countries citing specific examples of LL.M. graduates from Japan, China who got promoted or worked in a bank, resumed work in an international law firm, *etc.*, and Korea who managed a law firm;

Hurdles in OPT including being extremely competitive and that J.D. graduates preferred over LL.M.s; what if you decided you want to stay for good in the US? – visa concerns, requirement for employer sponsorship; difficulty due to requisite proof of lack of willing and able US citizen who qualifies and willing to do the job;

Becoming a USA attorney; American Bar Association policies pertaining to LL.M.; LL.M. and taking Bar Exams in US jurisdictions; how ABA regards LL.M. vis-à-vis J.D.; how J.D. graduates usually prepare for Bar Examinations citing BarBri, *etc.*; nature of Bar exams in US, time limit, number of multiple choice options for Multi-State Bar Exams; skills you need to acquire if you are taking Bar exams in US; statistical Data samples; non-J.D. graduates – how they fare in New York Bar exams; emerging demands for LL.M. graduates w/ certain foreign legal background and training, citing the China market, outsourcing and the role of US firms; options for LL.M. graduates; Advantages of LL.M. Degree – gaining expertise in a specific field of law, eligibility to sit in the Bar exams in certain states in the US; hurdles to foreign educated and trained lawyers – IRAC structure of analysis, multiple choice; beyond LL.M. horizons: If you are returning to your home country after completing your LL.M. studies, if you are staying on in the US; roads traveled by IU Law LL.M. graduates – pursuit of J.D.; waiver of LSAT requirement; LL.M. academic credits that may be transferred to J.D.; LL.M. then J.D.; what next? – Optional Practical Training?, Bar Exam?; limitations of student visas; hurdles to work visa sponsorship;

Costs of LL.M. studies; help w/ costs of LL.M. studies including merit-based scholarships, need-based financial assistance, on-campus job opportunities; nature of jobs, research assistants to Law professors, library work; requirements and limitations for part-time and full-time LL.M. students; scholarship grants; federal study loans; private study loans; pitfalls in obtaining study loans; ways to save on costs of living and studies; how LL.M. students survive; practical tips, including saving money in buying books, saving by cooking at home, looking for cheaper student insurance coverage, cheaper car insurance, *etc*; internships with state agencies, judges, law firms, American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana (ACLU), hospital Legal Department, In-House Corporate Counsel, Hospital Legal Department, county agencies, not-for-Profit, Public Defender Externship; about Internships – competitive; factors – good grades, for academic credits, professional work environment;

Who are our LL.M. students? Cross-section of LL.M. students from various countries; LL.M. students from various American states; what LL.M. students do; What happened to LL.M. graduates? LL.M. graduates who returned to China, Japan, *etc*; LL.M. graduates who pursued J.D.; LL.M. graduates who took the US Bar exams; LL.M. graduates who pursued OPT; LL.M. graduates who are Legal Permanent Residents or US citizens;

Issues and concerns, visa, optional Practical Training, OPT w/ pay, OPT challenges – Competitive: J.D. vs. LL.M.;

Life after LL.M. – S.J.D., PhD, Bar examinations, OPT;

Home and School, Free bus services plying campus routes; J.D. and LL.M. Mentor Program; Meetings w/ attorneys, judges, faculty; LL.M. gatherings; Law Leadership Opportunities – LL.M. Representative to Student Bar Association; International moot court competition; Student conferences; Pro bono legal services, *etc*.