



Mark Obrovec

CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

Hometown: San Diego, California

Highest degree earned: LLM

Subjects teaching: International and Comparative Intellectual Property and Gender and the Law

Career History

Mark Obrovec's professional experience includes human subjects protection specialist, University of Tampa; director of resource development, Mainstays Coalition of Orange County, Inc., Pebble Beach, California; and corporate lawyer, London, UK. Mark accepted a teaching position at California University in 2004.

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WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO TEACH AT YOUR UNIVERSITY?

California University had the laid-back attitudes and sense of community that I was looking for in a teaching position.

WHAT ARE THE OTHER FACULTY, STAFF, AND ADVISORS LIKE AT YOUR SCHOOL?

As an alum of CU, I am happy to work with several of the instructors who guided me in earning an LLM degree. CU encourages open thought and discussion, and its instructors view the American legal system as a living, ever-changing subject with thousands of unique facets. They are wonderfully knowledgeable people.

CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT?

Students engage in complex and often heated discussion, often coming to conclusions only after an exhaustive line of questioning. An overall kinship exists between CU students (be they JD or LLM)—unlike other law programs in which students can be made to feel isolated.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT TEACHING AT YOUR SCHOOL?

I enjoy the diversity of my students. With an increasingly large international population, I find that the students themselves are the factor that most informs my continuing knowledge of U.S. law.

WHY SHOULD A STUDENT CHOOSE YOUR UNIVERSITY FOR THEIR LLM PURSUIT?

Students are attracted to the culture at CU School of Law, knowing that the most advanced learning occurs in groups. The students at CU foster a thirst for knowledge that makes passionate students feel right at home.

HOW DOES TEACHING AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL DIFFER FROM TEACHING AT THE UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL?

I find it easier and more satisfying to teach LLM students who have had the opportunity to narrow down their lives' studies into highly specialized fields of research—it is at that plateau that true innovation exists.

DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR FIRST LAW STUDENTS THINKING ABOUT GETTING AN LLM?

Undergraduate students considering studying for their LLM should be advised that it is a program that requires excellent research and writing skills. Students should be able to commit at least three hours per day to reading the course materials and articulating their thoughts with clarity and depth.

WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU OVERCOME AS AN LLM TEACHER?

I think my greatest challenge has been seeing the world through a wider lens—I feel that I was more narrow-minded before I began teaching within the LLM program, and I am grateful for the insight it has given me.