

New LL.M. Program at AUA

BY SUZY ANTOUNIAN

The LL.M. program at AUA was launched in 1996 by a grant from the United States Information Agency. The grant will fund a two year graduate program for one graduating cycle. To implement this program, AUA established a partnership with the University of California School of Law at Berkeley (Boalt Hall). Professor Richard Buxbaum, Ralston Professor of International Law at Boalt Hall and the Dean of International and Area Studies at UC Berkeley is now the Coordinator of the AUA LL.M. program providing the leadership necessary to institute this new endeavor. In September 1996 the students were admitted into the AUA Intensive English Program for an eight month language training to improve their English language proficiency skills. In May 1997 the courses in law will begin. The first class of graduates is expected to graduate in the Fall of 1998.

This Program is designed to prepare Armenian lawyers, both recent graduates of Yerevan State University and persons already in mid-career, for professional and governmental involvement in the development of a free-market economy and a democratic society. Because it is an experimental program, whose financial continuation after the first two years is uncertain, it will focus more on the economic than on the state-structure side of Armenian development. Thus, while modeled to some extent on the highly successful LL.M. program of the Central European University in Budapest, it will not be a formal "two-track" model, one on the economy and one on the society; rather, some instruction on state and administration will be offered alongside the main courses on economic law.

The "economic law" courses will include the law of international and regional organizations with jurisdiction over economic activities (World Trade Organization, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and the institutions of the European Community); the law of international trade, technology transfer, and investment; and the law of international commercial dispute resolution. This field includes "international" and "domestic" law: for instance, the law governing the international sale of goods cannot be understood except on the basis of a domestic law on the same subject, on which the first rests; and the law of international capital markets cannot be taught without a grounding in the domestic law governing corporations and securities regulation. Therefore, modern business law — as found in modern Western legal systems such as those of the United

States, Western Europe, and in some of the Newly Emerging States of the Former Soviet Union — will be taught as a basis on which to understand both new international economic law and proposed Armenian economic legislation.

The "state law" courses will include a basic course in constitutional law, covering the separation of powers into legislative, executive, and judicial branches, as well as a separate course (or courses) in administrative law, and in its new substantive branches of environmental law, labor law, and the law of competition and antitrust rules.

The LL.M. program will be supported by a carefully selected library, which will include electronic access to U.S. and European legal databases, CD-ROM archives, and current periodical literature.

The program will be under the administrative supervision of a resident Assistant Dean, fluent in Armenian as well as English, who will remain in residence for at least the first three terms of the five-term cycle. Visiting Professors, principally from the United States, will be in residence for periods ranging from a full term to modules of four weeks. The first term's faculty and one of the second term's longer-term faculty have been selected and negotiations for their employment are now in progress.

An important incentive feature of the LL.M. program is the opportunity to compete on the basis of performance for a U.S. placement for a full semester (plus summer session); we expect to choose three to four students from an expected first class of 20-24 for this more research-oriented external semester. In addition, because the training of young potential faculty members of the YSU Department of Law is important to the ability to continue the program in the future, the University of California School of Law (Boalt Hall) at Berkeley has agreed to accept two such persons a year for three years, permitting the training of a total of six potential faculty members.

This is an exciting and extremely worthwhile venture, exciting both to potential U.S. visiting faculty and to the Armenian lawyers and graduate law students who have been selected for the lengthy intensive English-language training program that is now in progress. The possibility of helping the Armenian people to move towards a healthy economy in a responsible political climate is an incentive that motivates all of the present participants in the planning stage of this program, and will energize the faculty and administrators involved in its implementation. □

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

University Extension

BY SUZY ANTOUNIAN

Dean of Extension

The AUA Extension was established in 1992 to provide educational programs to the community at large. This was intended as a public service to bring practical knowledge and continuing education into the reach of the adult population who may be seeking to attain new skills during a time of change in Armenia. The Extension was also intended as a venue for providing flexible programs that could serve to bridge the American and Armenian educational experiences.

Over the years the University Extension has become a most active center with students coming from the burgeoning private sector, from government institutions and others seeking additional skills for a new opportunity. The programs vary. There are courses normally offered over a six week period, shorter workshops, seminars and lectures. Recent programs have included courses in management, accounting, critical thinking, business writing, secretarial skills, computer skills and English for the use of special groups including nurses, reporters, scientists and lawyers. The programs this year will also include regular English courses offered in four levels, courses in economics, translation techniques, drafting proposals, introduction to world politics and introduction to law and diplomacy.

In addition to the courses offered, the Extension will conduct this year a multiphased training program for practicing lawyers and judges in Armenia in partnership with USAID. A group of lawyers and judges will come to the U.S. for an intensive training program in commercial law which will be followed by further seminars and workshops conducted in Armenia by Armenian and American participants. At the end of June, the Extension will also hold a conference sponsored by the MacArthur Foundation on The Transcaucasus Today: Prospects for Regional Integration whereby speakers from the U.S. and the region will be invited.

In furtherance of its public service, the Extension has launched this year a

regular speaker series program to provide a neutral forum for the exchange of ideas in a context that encourages open debate and discussion. Individuals in leadership positions and prominence in Armenian society, as well as others from the foreign community and visitors to Armenia are invited to give a public talk once every three weeks. The lectures are followed by questions and answers whereby written questions are presented from the audience to the speaker. The text of the speech and selected questions and answers are transcribed in Armenian and English in a newsletter which is then cir-



culated free of charge to government offices and the academic and foreign communities in Yerevan. This simple program modeled after the programs offered by the Commonwealth Club of California in San Francisco, has consistently attracted a large public and awakened a vivid curiosity in Yerevan. Speakers have included Mr. Bagrat Asatrian, the Chairman of the Central Bank, Mr. Vahram Necessiantz, the World Bank Chief of Mission, Mr. Gagik Harutunian, the President of the Constitutional Court and Mr. Yuri Parsekhov, an international lawyer from Moscow.

The Extension is a lively place at AUA with programs regularly listed and advertised in Yerevan. Approximately, 450 people took part in its courses last year and a similar number is expected this year. Taking into account the public lectures the annual Extension audience expands to approximately 1,500 participants. For many people in Yerevan, the Extension activities have attracted them to the University and created a means to bring together what is American and Armenian about AUA. □