
A graduate of Trinity College who earned his Ph.D. in classics at Princeton, Frier came to Michigan as an assistant professor in 1969 and rose to associate professor in 1975 and to professor in 1983. During his years at Michigan, he has earned an international reputation as a scholar of the first rank in Roman law.

Most law students who take Roman law, Frier has found, are interested in obtaining a vantage point from which to view their own legal system—one that is both comparative and historical. “From this vantage point,” he feels, “students can begin to develop a sense both of how relative law is to time and place, and of how it might be organized in a different fashion.” Roman law is particularly relevant because it is the first of the three great Western systems of law, and it provides much of the intellectual basis for modern civil law as well.

Avery Katz joins Law School

Avery Katz has been added to the Law School faculty with a joint appointment in economics. A graduate of The University of Michigan in economics, he earned both the J.D. and the Ph.D. in economics at Harvard.

Katz has been involved in research applying economic analysis to civil procedure. His doctoral dissertation, Essays on the Economics of Litigation, consists of three separate essays on related topics: economic determinants of litigation expenditure, the relative merits of the English and the American rules for funding litigation, and an economic analysis of frivolous law suits.

Dean Sandalow to step down

Just as the present issue of LQN was going to press, Dean Terrance Sandalow announced that he had decided to step down from his position as head of the Law School next summer, one year earlier than originally planned. “After eight years as dean—nine by the time I relinquish the position next summer,” Sandalow said, “I have decided that it is time for me to return to teaching and scholarship, the activities that drew me into an academic career. He added, “My years as dean have been immensely challenging, at times—as during the budget crisis several years ago—a bit more so than I would have preferred. But they have also been immensely rewarding.”

McCree appointed special master for the third time

With the recent appointment by the U.S. Supreme Court as special master in the case of Kansas v. Colorado, Wade H. McCree, Jr. joins a small, elite company of lawyers. The former U.S. Solicitor General and federal judge who is now the Lewis M. Simes Professor of Law at Michigan was recently appointed to serve as special master for the third time. The role of the special master is to act as a trial judge in matters falling within the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

McCree is one of a small number of persons to be appointed special master three or more times, according to Francis Lorson, chief deputy clerk of the U.S. Supreme Court. Only two other people, Robert van Pelt, U.S. District Judge for the District of Nebraska at Lincoln, and Albert J. Maris, U.S. Judge for the Court of Appeals, Third Circuit, have received the appointment more than three times. At the time of their appointment, both were U.S. judges who had taken senior status, as was Walter J. Hoffman, U.S. District Judge for the District of Virginia at Norfolk, who was appointed three times.

Lorson notes that McCree’s three-time appointment, concurrent with his service as law professor, is unique in the history of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Professor McCree is still presiding over an earlier case, New Jersey v. Nevada, which concerns the issue of radioactive waste disposal. That case was preceded by the famous Howard Hughes case centering on the question of Hughes’s domicile.

His latest appointment involves a suit between Colorado and Kansas concerning the rights of the two states to the waters of the Arkansas River, which originates in Colorado. The first hearing in the case was held this fall at the Law School. The trial is expected to commence within the next 18 months upon completion of pretrial discovery proceedings currently underway.

Visiting faculty

A number of outstanding visiting faculty are teaching at the Law School this year.

One visitor for the year has been here since May. Richard B. Ginsberg, visiting from the State Appellate Defender’s Office, is teaching criminal appellate practice this fall. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania in history and of the U-M Law School, Ginsberg is a former VISTA volunteer and staff attorney with the Washtenaw County Legal Aid Society.