

## Students will get hands-on international transactional experience

**S**tarting this fall Michigan Law students will have the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in handling international transactions. The Law School's new International Transactions Clinic (ITC) "will be focused on negotiating and documenting cross-border deals, particularly in emerging markets," according to a notice announcing the new clinic.

Michigan Law pioneered the requirement that students take a course in Transnational Law in order to graduate. This new clinic further recognizes the expanding role that globalization plays in domestic as well as international practice.

The new clinic will be taught by Professor Michael S. Barr, veteran international transactional lawyer and clinical assistant professor Timothy L. Dickinson, '79, and Deborah Burand (see story on p. 78), who joins the Michigan Law family from the Grameen Foundation and has nearly 20 years' experience in microfinance and international finance.



*Timothy L. Dickinson, '79*

The clinic "will concentrate on teaching students skills that are critically important to their professional development as they enter into practice areas that involve international transactions," according to Dean Evan H. Caminker. "These include drafting and negotiation skills as applied to cross-border transactions, exposure to ethical issues that arise in the international commercial context, structuring and documenting investments in enterprises that primarily work in emerging markets, and an understanding of international economic and financial policy."

Clinical courses provide real-world experience for students by having them work with real clients on real cases under the supervision of their instructors. "In some cases, clients of the ITC might be providers of microfinance (loans, savings, insurance, and/or remittances) to microentrepreneurs and other low income households," according to a description of the new clinic.

"In other cases, clients of the ITC might be socially responsible investors that want to see their investments provide a double bottomline return—e.g., making a positive social impact on people's lives while also earning a financial return. Still other clients might be stakeholders interested in promoting business opportunities at the base of the pyramid, such as microfranchises (or those that fund microfranchises) that are developing 'business in a box' models to build business skills and offer employment opportunities to poor individuals.



*Deborah Burand*

"Clients also could include international organizations that are helping to build enabling legal and regulatory environments for businesses operating in emerging markets. And, finally, clients might include multinational corporations or other types of business enterprises, such as small or medium entrepreneurs, that are conducting cross-border transactions."

The clinic's international focus also will give students the opportunity to use cutting-edge communications technology when working with clients. Although direct contact will be the case whenever possible, students also can expect to communicate with clients via e-mail, Skype, or other electronic means.

Students will be encouraged to take the clinic for two terms "so as to allow them to provide legal support in the negotiation and documentation of multiple international transactions."



*Michael S. Barr*