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UC-Berkeley Law Names New Dean

Maria Zilberman, The Recorder

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SAN FRANCISCO — UC-Berkeley School of Law has concluded its search for a new dean, selecting New York University School of Law professor Sujit Choudhry.

Choudhry, who will be UC-Berkeley's 12th dean, begins his five-year tenure on July 1, the school announced Monday.

An expert in comparative constitutional law, Choudhry joined the NYU faculty in 2011. He founded the school's Center for Constitutional Transitions, which provides research and advice on constitution building. Choudhry was previously a professor and associate dean at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law for 12 years and has earned legal degrees from Toronto, Oxford University and Harvard Law School.

"Berkeley's big advantage is culture," Choudhry said in an interview Monday. "The place has gusto, it has get up and go. It's very energetic and forward-looking and there's a lot of appetite to be innovative."

Choudhry will assume his leadership position during a time when national law school enrollment is dropping and debt-burdened graduates are struggling to find jobs. He noted it is especially important for Berkeley to prepare its graduates for the job market because of the school's public mission and "commitment to social mobility and access."

"A lot of our kids are the first in their families to attend law school, and they don't have deep social and professional networks to draw upon for those job options," he said.

Berkeley Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Claude Steele praised Choudhry's "enduring commitment to social mobility, diversity and educational excellence."

Choudhry replaces Christopher Edley Jr., who served as dean from 2004 to 2013. A former member of the Clinton and Carter administrations, he was recruited from Harvard Law School, where he taught for more than two decades. His academic work focused on administrative law, civil rights and domestic policy.

Acting Dean Gillian Lester, [who was named the new dean of Columbia Law School in April](#), will continue in her role through June 30 and remain in residence until the end of the year.

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