

Kinsler named dean of law school

Jack Dodson
Senior Reporter

Last summer, Leary Davis, Elon's former law school dean, referred Elon School of Law professor and senior scholar Jeff Kinsler to Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn., when the school was looking for a legal consultant to help organize a future law school.



Jeff Kinsler
Belmont University
Law School Dean

When the school asked him to expand upon that position and become the dean of the law program this fall, Kinsler accepted.

Since that initial contact, Kinsler has written a feasibility study for Belmont and helped the school through the planning process.

The school announced Oct. 7 it will open a law school.

Kinsler said he will have very different responsibilities with his new position, though he has served as a dean before, having preceded

his time at Elon as the dean of Appalachian State University's School of Law.

This job is different, though, because he said he has to start everything from scratch: recruiting 100 students, hiring a new staff and building facilities, as well as planning the curriculum.

"We're going to try to implement a curriculum where there are skill-related opportunities each semester," Kinsler said.

Other schools have made changes that include this, he said, but they have not implemented hands-on experience into their curriculums to the extent Kinsler plans.

"Right now, law school is similar to a lot of other graduate schools," Kinsler said. "A lot of classes."

By bringing in practicing judges and lawyers, Kinsler hopes to offer Belmont students the opportunity to see what a law degree means outside the classroom.

The students will not only hear from professionals, but will also have the chance to work with law outside of traditional study.

"Every school does a bit of this, but we're going to try to do it in a more organized and pervasive fashion," Kinsler said.

After moving sometime in the spring, Kinsler said he will start his duties as dean while he's finishing his last semester at Elon.

The doors for the Belmont law program are expected to open in fall 2011.

Bars and restaurants smoke-free after Jan. 1

SMOKING BAN from PAGE 1

entrances.

Restaurant and bar owners are responsible for the posting and enforcing of smoke-free environments. Bass said he encourages businesses to post signage and lead in the transition of smoke-free establishments as soon as possible.

"There are no smoke police," Bass said. "It is the responsibility of the individual businesses to enforce the law."

Many restaurants in the county allow smoking, but those are separated from sit-down dining services.

In Burlington, The Red Bull Tavern and Grille allows smoking in the bar area and outside patios.

"I think it will hurt the bar business, but you will see a lot more restaurants adapting," said Matt Beveridge, a server at the restaurant since it opened two years ago.

Sandy's Subs & Italian Grill on East Haggard Avenue in Elon, a popular establishment for students, will be one restaurant that must adjust to the new law, as will as West End Station.

Sandy's owner Greg Saldanha said he thinks banning smoking will hurt his business. Saldanha opened his restaurant 20 years ago as a non-smoking facility and received some complaints until 10 years ago when he began to allow smoking on the bar side of his establishment.

Sandy's has a smoke-free section, closed off from the bar, that has worked well for both parties.

"People enjoy drinking a cold beer and a smoke," Saldanha said. "It's a tough position to be in."

Saldanha is adding an outside patio for customers by the time the new law takes effect.

"It's a good law for health issues but I want to have a place for my customers to smoke if they like," Saldanha said.

According to the Health Department of Alamance County, there are more than 100 restaurants which are already smoke-free.

Mellow Mushroom, a pizza parlor which opened Monday, does not allow smoking even though the smoking ban does not take effect until January.

"We have decided that not allowing smoking is in the best interest of our patrons," manager Mike

Fox said.

According to the new law, local governments may adopt stricter rules than the statewide smoking law. Any enclosed area the public is permitted in the local government may be able to impose rules and fines for local business owners and visitors to comply with.

"As we speak, in the county, there is no more than the basic law that applies now," Bass said.

The Elon Poll, released March 2, found 87 percent of North Carolinians agree that employees have the right to work in a smoke-free environment, while 51 percent were in favor of banning smoking in all restaurants and bars.

"I personally hate smoking, but I think (a) restaurant or privately owned establishment should be allowed to make any choice they want about allowing smoking in their businesses," Elon senior Matt Horowitz said.

The new law does not prohibit smoking in all work environments — but in all restaurants and bars with few exceptions. Cigar bars, private non-profits and country clubs, as well as certain lodging establishments, may be exempt under audit.

"If having the workplace smoke-free is a requirement, I don't think the law would have passed," Bass said.

North Carolina is joining 23 other states and the District of Columbia in requiring smoke-free establishments since the U.S. Surgeon General released a report in 2006 arguing that there is no safe exposure of second-hand smoke and indoor spaces should be smoke-free.

The American Lung Association launched an anti-smoking campaign shortly after The Smoke-Free Air Challenge in hopes to have the country smoke-free by December 2010.

The Lung Association's annual report, State of Tobacco Control, which measures tobacco control by local legislators in 2008, rated North Carolina with a grade of F.

"With large groups of the public in restaurants and hotels, we see that the culture of people in the United States want to be in a smoke-free environment," Bass said.

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