

Chemerinsky named UC Berkeley law dean

By Lyle Moran

Acclaimed constitutional scholar Erwin Chemerinsky has been named dean of UC Berkeley School of Law, the school announced Wednesday morning.

Chemerinsky, founding dean of UC Irvine School of Law, will start his five-year term at Berkeley on July 1.

"I care deeply about the public mission of the law school and the public service it provides through its clinical and pro bono programs," Chemerinsky said in a statement. "My goal as dean is to maintain the school's excellence — be it in intellectual property, social justice or business law — and look for every opportunity I can to enhance it."

UC Berkeley law professor and search committee member Sonia Katyal called Chemerinsky a "living legend — a person who exemplifies the very best that the field of law has to offer: brilliant, warm-hearted, thoughtful, open-minded, and deeply engaged in the culture of public service." Chemerinsky will serve as Berkeley Law's 13th dean, relieving Interim Dean Melissa Murray, and replacing Sujit Choudhry, who resigned in March 2016.

L. Song Richardson, UC Irvine School of Law's senior associate dean for academic affairs, will become that school's interim dean on June 1.

"I want to express my enormous gratitude to Dean Erwin Chemerinsky for all he has contributed to the success of the law school and the entire University during his tenure as dean," UCI Chancellor Howard Gillman said in a statement. "I'm very grateful that Song Richardson has agreed to serve as interim dean, knowing that she will work with the law school community to maintain our extraordinary momentum."



Daily Journal photo

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Erwin Chemerinsky will be the next dean of the University of California, Berkeley School of Law.

The school announced Wednesday that Chemerinsky, a preeminent constitutional law expert and founding dean of the University of California, Irvine School of Law, will assume the deanship on July 1 for a five-year term.

He replaced interim [Dean Melissa Murray](#), who took that position in March 2016 after former dean Sujit Choudhry stepped down amid [a sexual harassment scandal](#).

“I believe he will be a phenomenal leader for our law school, someone who will ensure that Berkeley Law remains not only a powerhouse of legal scholarship and training, but also a community built on mutual respect and inclusion,” said UC Berkeley Interim Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Carol Christ in the announcement of Chemerinsky’s appointment.

UC Irvine announced Tuesday that professor L. Song Richardson will be its interim dean. Chemerinsky founded Irvine’s law school in 2009 with the ambition of being a top-tier law school. It made an impressive debut on U.S. News & World Report’s influential law school rankings, and currently sits at No. 28.

Chemerinsky is among the nation’s top legal scholars, and is the author of 10 books and nearly 200 law review articles. He often publishes commentary on the nation’s top newspapers, dissecting the Supreme Court and major legal matters of the day.