

COURSE CONCEPT · LAW SCHOOL ADJUNCT SEMINAR

The Lawyer as Builder

Legal Engineering: Turning Statutes into Tools · Access to Justice by Design

A hands-on seminar where students take a real statutory scheme and ship a working, open, public-interest tool for it — by directing AI agents the way a lawyer directs a junior associate — and learn to verify it, in the open, against the real thing. The law is the curriculum. The tool is the proof.

WHY NOW

The law is good. It rots in the administrative layer — the forms, the logins, the instructions. A state child-support calculator that asks an ordinary parent for a bar number. A department of revenue that tells parents, in writing, to search Google. The doctrine is sound; the delivery is broken. Students should learn to see that gap and close it.

Over two weekends I built free, open-source child-support calculators for seven states by directing AI agents — one read the statutes into a precise spec, one wrote the engine, one deployed, one checked every screen. Then I validated against the states' own tools, found two of my own errors, and fixed them in the open. That whole arc — build, verify, be wrong out loud, fix — is the syllabus. The seven-state build is the worked template students start from.

FORMAT

CREDITS

2-credit experiential seminar

CADENCE

Weekly evening session

GRADED ON

A built artifact, not an exam

Experiential, not lecture. Not a coding class — the rigor is legal. Students bring the judgment; the machine does the math, in public.

THE SPINE — THE LEGAL RIGOR

- **Statutory interpretation under pressure.** Reducing a messy scheme to a precise, testable spec. The part where most of the work hides.
- **The advice / information line.** UPL, disclaimers, where a tool stops and a lawyer starts.
- **Verification discipline.** Check against ground truth. Be wrong in the open. Fix where everyone can see. Trust is visible work plus a fix, not perfection.

- **Open source, licensing, stewardship.** Build to own, not rent. Who maintains a public good after the semester ends.
- **Judgment vs. mechanics.** We're hired for judgment, not math skills. Let the machine do the math, and show the rule behind every line.

CAPSTONE

Each student or team ships one real, open tool — a state's calculator that doesn't exist yet, or another locked box: eviction answers, expungement eligibility, benefits screening, simple-estate assembly. A public good, MIT-licensed, with the school's name on it.

WHAT THE SCHOOL GETS

- Experiential credits — the accreditation pressure point — from work students actually want to do.
- A current AI offering that's hard to staff otherwise, taught by a practitioner who shipped.
- Free public tools tied to the clinics already doing this work by hand.
- A clean press story: students publishing public goods under the school's name.

WHAT I'D NEED

A faculty sponsor, a room, and a slot in the next cycle. I bring the curriculum, the toolchain, and the first build as the worked template. Glad to start with a single guest session to test the fit before anyone commits to a semester.

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Calculators: csg.tcblaw.org · Code: github.com/tcbmem-png/csg_tcblaw (MIT)