

ANALYSIS

Post-Pandemic, Law Schools See Legal Tech Education Playing an Even Bigger Role



A law class in session. Photo: Diego M. Radzinski/ALM

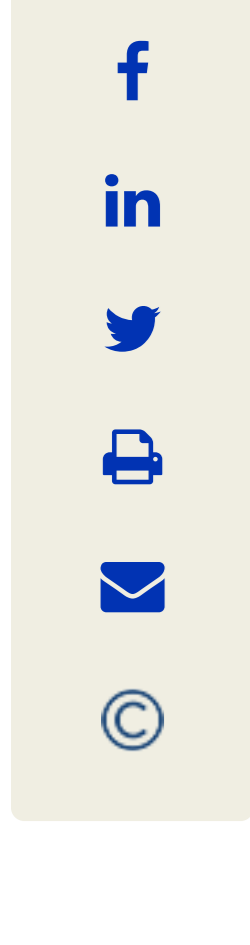
More legal tech courses will be provided by law schools in upcoming semesters, especially those which focus on legal departments' software, law school professors say.

July 20, 2021 at 11:30 AM

Victoria Hudgins Reporter

Legal Education

3 minute read



The pandemic forced many law school professors to finally recognize the importance of technology in the legal profession. Now, as law school students return back to the classroom, legal technology professors said the yearlong experience of remote learning and emerging career opportunities will intensify law schools' focus on legal tech.

To be sure, the pandemic accelerated an ongoing legal tech education trend, noted North Carolina Central University School of Law professor and associate dean of technology and innovation April Dawson.

"The trend prior to the pandemic and law schools having to move to remote learning was to increase legal tech education anyway," she said. "But [during] the pandemic, not only law schools but law firms, courts and all of us in the legal profession had to adapt and embrace technology. I think that has accelerated legal educators' awareness of the significance of tech, legal tech and law school students' exposure to it."

Still, after 16 months of primarily staring at a computer screen, some law students and professors want a break from remote-based legal tech courses, noted University of Miami School of Law professor Michele DeStefano. She is also the founder of LawWithoutWalls, a program of lawyers, business professionals and law and business students to create innovations in law, business and technology.

"I will admit, [during] the next year and a half there will be more focus on in-person and [remote learning] will take a back burner," DeStefano said. "I think the world is really wanting that, if for a little bit, if technology takes a little back burner. I don't think we'll be worse for the wear."

However, while the prevalence of remote courses may wane, the prominence of increasingly tech-forward corporate legal departments will push law schools to provide students with legal tech courses, DeStefano added. "I think future legal tech courses will focus on real-world use cases ... [and] focus more on the experience of the client, and how do you make sure every time they interact with you it's delightful [and] how technology can help with that," she said.

Law schools' continuing attention on tech will also be spurred by their students, noted University of California, Hastings College of the Law professor and director of applied innovation Alice Armitage. In fact, students are already shifting law schools' legal tech focus toward more in-house technology, she added.

Learn more

TRENDING STORIES

'Our Profession Cannot Long Endure a Remote Work Model,' Morgan Stanley CLO Tells Law Firms

CORPORATE COUNSEL

'Arrogant' and 'Tone Deaf': Morgan Stanley CLO Stance Draws Ire From UK, European Finance Partners

INTERNATIONAL EDITION

'A Very Pro-Attorney Market': The Pandemic Has Given Individual Attorneys More Leverage

THE AMERICAN LAWYER

'Arrogant' and 'Tone Deaf': Morgan Stanley CLO's Return-to-Work Stance Draws Ire

LEGALTECH NEWS

Morgan Stanley Letter Pits Client Preference Against Talent Market Demands

THE AMERICAN LAWYER

Learn more

"First, there were courses on how to build legal tech companies," Armitage explained. "They envisioned working at a law firm and building a startup. Then over time, I still get a lot of students in that [course], but it's not the only thing I teach. It's legal ops, legal informatics and access to justice and the impact of legal tech. And there's more interest in legal ops and access to justice rather than law firm practice."

To ensure their students land jobs after graduation, Dawson believes more law schools will continue to add legal tech courses to their curriculum. "I think the emerging legal jobs are tied to technology, and all law schools are concerned about their graduates being gainfully employed."

You Might Like

July 14, 2021
Innovations in Diversity and Inclusion, In-House: Asurion
By Zach Warren
1 minute read

American Lawyer
The Law Firm Disrupted
Dan Packel surveys the new competitive pressures on law firms and how their managers are coping, plus insights on the tactics and tech employed by would-be disruptors.
Dan Packel
1 minute read

LAW.COM RADAR
TRENDING LAW FIRMS THIS WEEK

- Greenberg Traurig (25 new blips)
- Latham & Watkins (24 new blips)
- Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith (21 new blips)
- Kirkland & Ellis (17 new blips)
- Sidley Austin (16 new blips)

Go To Law.com Radar

June 09, 2021
'A Perfect Fit'? More Law Schools Embrace Legal Ops to Match Student Interests, Employer Needs
By Victoria Hudgins
1 minute read

June 04, 2021
It's Year Two of Pandemic Law Firm Summer Associate Programs. Here's How Things Are Shaping Up
By Karen Sloan | Zack Needles
1 minute read

LAW.COM | PRO
What Your Highly Compensated Business Professionals Really Think About How You Treat Them

Does the Equity in Your Firm's DE&I Initiatives Focus Enough on Equity Partnership?

Law Firm Leadership Amid an Epic Battle For Talent

The American Lawyer is proud to present its inaugural Northeast Trailblazers issue.
Click here to view the list of honorees!

Law.com
Bench Report
Jacqueline Thomsen is your guide to what's happening with judges across the country, from the opinions they're writing to the rules they're facing, and the scrutiny they may (or may not) be under. Tune in for the latest on judicial trends, including who might be next to sit on the bench and what's in store for the future of the judiciary.
Jacqueline Thomsen

July 19, 2021
Settle or Fight: Why Google Bent on Ad Sales but Is Standing Tough on 'Neighboring Rights'
By Anne Bagamery
1 minute read

ALM REPRINTS & LICENSING
Mentioned in a Law.com story?
License our industry-leading legal content to extend your thought leadership and build your brand.
LEARN MORE

FEATURED FIRMS

- Law Offices of Gary Martin Hays & Associates P.C. (470) 294-1674
- Law Offices of Mark E. Salomone (857) 444-6468
- Smith & Hassler (713) 739-1250

More From ALM

Professional Announcements Legal Compass Events & Webcasts Lawjobs

The Paperless Law Firm: 5 Practical Tips to Make the Modern Office a Reality
Brought to you by LEAP Legal Software
Download Now

Practice Management in the Cloud - Cloud Computing, Its Benefits and Pitfalls
Brought to you by LEAP Legal Software
Download Now

The 5 Biggest Challenges Facing Law Firms
Facing Small Law Firms In 2021
Brought to you by LEAP Legal Software
Download Now

[Go to Resources](#)

Sign Up Today and Never Miss Another Story

As a part of your digital membership, you can sign up for an unlimited number of a wide range of complimentary newsletters. Visit your My Account page to make your selections. Get the timely legal news and critical analysis you cannot afford to miss. Tailored just for you. In your inbox. Every day.

[Subscribe to ALM Legal Publications Newsletters](#)