

UGRD_YPHSL_2620_LAW4022_LIM HOW KHANG



Singapore Management University

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Code & Title

LAW4022 - Digital Innovation for Access to Justice

Effective Start Date

11/01/2027

Offering Unit / Department / School

YPHSL

Course Career

Undergraduate

Course Units

CU:

Grading Basis

GRD - Graded

1

Course Description

In this course, students will be introduced to topics on “equal access to justice” and how digital technology can assist to bridge the gap for those who lack access to the resources that could help meet their legal needs. Students will work in groups for one or more legal aid organisations or public agencies in Singapore to design and develop a solution that will improve access to justice or the effectiveness of legal representation. Depending on the type of application chosen for the project work, students will learn one or more of the following areas: (a) document assembly and expert systems; (b) chatbots; (c) machine learning and natural language processing; (d) data analysis and visualisation; (e) cloud computing services; (f)

Course Learning Outcomes

- Search and information retrieval. At the end of the term, the groups will showcase their solutions and compete for the opportunity to represent SMU at the Iron Tech Lawyer Invitational International competition (<https://www.georgetown.edu/iron-tech-lawyer/>).
- Understand the importance of equal access to justice and some of the common issues faced by both individuals with legal or justiciable problems and the organisations that assist them.
 - Evaluate and compare practices and solutions from other jurisdictions or service industries to generate new ideas for improving access to legal services or justice in Singapore.
 - Solve specific real-world access to justice problems through iterative design, prototyping and testing of digital applications in a collaborative team setting.

SMU Graduate Learning Outcomes

Interdisciplinary knowledge, Innovation and enterprising skills, Critical thinking & problem solving, Collaboration and leadership, Communication

Competencies

Regulatory and Legal Advisory

Course Area(s)

AREA - Business Options, AREA - Business-Oriented Electives, AREA - Econ Major Rel/Econ Options, AREA - Grad Req - Dig Tech/Data Ana (Intake 2024 onwards), AREA - IS Related Courses, AREA - Law Capstone, AREA - Legal Studies Electives, AREA - Social Sciences/ PLE Major-related, ENRL - SS Enrolment: 6 ISEP; 1 SUSEP, TRCK - Law: Law and Technology Track

CLASS SECTION INFORMATION

Instructor(s)

LIM HOW KHANG - (hklim@smu.edu.sg)

Instruction Mode

In Person

Consultations

Teaching Assistants

By appointment only

and

Office Location

YPHSL Room 4.39

Assessment Components (New)

Category* Class Participation	Weightage* 10
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Category* Projects/Assignments	Weightage* 30
Description Individual Essay	

Category* Projects/Assignments	Weightage* 50
Description Group Project	

Category* Projects/Assignments	Weightage* 10
Description Group Project Presentation	

Instructional Methods and Expectations

ASSESSMENT METHOD

Assessment Categories	Weightage (%)
Class Participation	10
Individual Essay	30
Group Project	50
Group Project Presentation	10
Total	100

There will be **no final examination** for this course.

No questions from past year papers or published test banks will be used verbatim for the graded continuous assessments in this course. There will be no final exam paper for this course.

COURSE METHODS

The course will be delivered through a combination of technical instruction, seminar-style discussions and hands-on exercises.

Note: Students will select their own groups for the Group Project/Presentation component or elect to be assigned based on their indicated interests in the projects available for selection. Further instructions will be provided at the beginning of the course.

Weekly Lesson Plan

CLASS SCHEDULE

	Topics	Readings (TBC)
1	Seminar: Unpacking the idea of “access to justice” and clarifying what are “legal” needs; Survey of legal institutions, existing legal services in Singapore, and pro bono services. A guest speaker working in the area of improving access to justice will share his/her experience.	

2	<u>Seminar:</u> Survey of legal technologies and innovations in Singapore and globally; the Legal Profession Act: regulating advocate and solicitors, professional standards/liability and the implications for automated services. A guest speaker working in the area of improving access to justice will share his/her experience.	
3	<u>Seminar:</u> Limits of technology and costs/risks introduced by technology (cybersecurity, privacy, transparency); Evaluating solutions, including measuring for impact and sustainability. A guest speaker working in the area of improving access to justice will share his/her experience.	
4	<u>Workshop:</u> Tech Topic 1 (determined based on projects)	
5	<u>Workshop:</u> Tech Topic 2 (determined based on projects)	
6	<u>Workshop:</u> Tech Topic 3 (determined based on projects)	
7	<u>Workshop:</u> Tech Topic 4 (determined based on projects)	
8	Mid-term Break	
9 -12	Project Check-In and Testing for Feedback	
13	Competition: Project Presentations	

Note: The above syllabus/schedule is meant only as a guide and is subject to amendment.

Recommended Textbooks and Readings

RECOMMENDED TEXT AND READINGS

There are no compulsory textbooks for this course; readings from a variety of texts and other online sources will be used.

The following texts will be referenced:

Richard Susskind, *Online Courts and the Future of Justice* (2019) Oxford University Press, Cambridge. (Available online via SMU Library.)

OECD/Open Society Foundations (2019), <i>Legal Needs Surveys and Access to Justice</i> , OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/g2g9a36c-en
Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, Keynote Lecture delivered at the Negotiation and Conflict Management Group (NCMG) ADR Conference 2019: <i>Technology and the Changing Face of Justice</i> (14 November 2019) https://www.supremecourt.gov.sg/docs/default-source/default-document-library/ncmg---keynote-lecture.pdf
The Law Society (England & Wales), <i>Technology, Access to Justice and the Rule of Law: Is technology the key to unlocking access to justice innovation?</i> https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/support-services/research-trends/technology-access-to-justice-rule-of-law-report/
Roger Smith, <i>Digital Delivery of Legal Services</i> (updated February 2019) https://www.thelegaleducationfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Digital-Technology-Winter-2018.pdf
Networked Society Institute, University of Melbourne (2018) <i>Current State of Automated Legal Advice Tools</i> https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2018-05/apo-nid143431.pdf

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity

All acts of academic dishonesty (including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation of acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized possession of exam questions, or tampering with the academic work of other students) are serious offences.

All work (whether oral or written) submitted for purposes of assessment must be the student's own work. Penalties for violation of the policy range from zero marks for the component assessment to expulsion, depending on the nature of the offence.

When in doubt, students should consult the instructors of the course. Details on the SMU Code of Academic Integrity may be accessed at <https://smu.sharepoint.com/sites/oasis/SitePages/DOS-WKLSWC/UCSC.aspx>.

Responsible Use of AI

The University recognises the importance of equipping students with the skills to navigate an AI-driven world. While AI tools may support learning, they must be used judiciously and responsibly. Students must not present AI-generated output as their own work.

Each course may set specific guidelines on the use of AI in assessments. Students are required to follow these guidelines carefully and should seek clarification from the instructors if uncertain.

Misuse of AI constitutes a breach of academic integrity and will be subject to the same penalties as other acts of academic dishonesty.

Copyright Notice

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Accessibility

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. Students who anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability are encouraged to inform the course instructor as soon as possible. Students may also contact the university's disability services team if they have questions or concerns about academic provisions:

accessibility@smu.edu.sg. Please be aware that the accessible tables in our seminar room should remain available for students who require them.

Digital Readiness for Teaching and Learning (DRTL)

As part of emergency preparedness, instructors may conduct lessons online via the Zoom platform during the term, to prepare students for online learning. During an actual emergency, students will be notified to access the Zoom platform for their online lessons. The class schedule will mirror the current face-to-face class timetable unless otherwise stated.