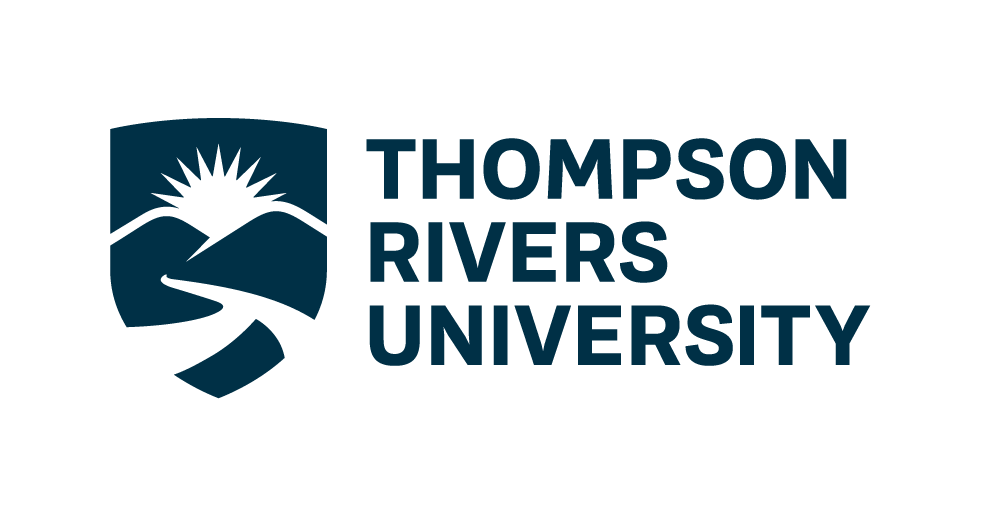
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**LAWF 3780-02 (3,0,0)**

**Fall 2021**

**Professor Katie Sykes**

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**Designing**

**Legal Expert Systems**

**Apps for Access to Justice**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Welcome to Designing Legal Expert Systems!**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | “Designing legal expert systems” … what *is* that? | Basically, making tools to help people get legal information they need, any time they want, in a simple and user-friendly way. | | So, is this a technology course? | Kind of. But not really. The most important theme in the course is learning to think about legal problems from the point of view of the client or user, and how to give them helpful solutions that they like using. | | Are we going to make apps? | YES! | | Isn’t that scary? | NO! It’s not scary at all. In fact, it’s really fun!  We use a platform called **Neota Logic Studio**. It enables us to make apps without knowing how to write computer code.  I learned it, and I am almost certainly much dumber than you about technology. | | Are we going to do anything else? | YES!  We will learn about how innovation is changing the practice of law, and what you can do to build a future-ready career based on the values you want to bring to the practice of law. | | How’s my grade calculated? | Your grade is based on a mix of individual (40%) and team (60%) assignments.  The main assignment is building an app with your team and then presenting it to a panel of judges in the Battle of the Apps (20% each).  There are assignments all through the semester. **You can’t leave it all to the end**.  There’s more information in the chart below, and on Moodle (see the Assignments tab). | | What’s the Battle of the Apps? | A competition at the end of the semester where you pitch your app to a panel of judges – and beat the other teams! | | What’s Mattermost? | A collaboration site that we’ll use to work together. It’s like Slack (a popular communication platform that you might have used), but it is an open-source alternative that meets BC privacy law requirements. It’s a bit like a social media or chat site for doing collaborative work. | | What’s Trubox? | A site that hosts our Law and Innovation blog. This is where you write blog posts, comment, and see reflections from other students – including from past years. | | How is the course delivered? | Classes will be online as needed for COVID-19 safety. The Zoom link is on Moodle. Classes are **Tuesday / Thursday, 2:30-4 pm.** If we are able to have in-person classes, they will be in **OM 3741.** Materials are on Moodle.  You’ll also use Neota Logic’s training platform to learn how to build with Neota Studio.  Starting around the middle of the semester, you’ll gradually shift focus to mainly working with your team on your app. . | | When and where are the classes? | **Tuesday / Thursday, 2:30-4 pm on Zoom as needed for COVID-19 safety, and if/when possible in OM 3741.** | | When and where are office hours? | **Monday 11:30-1 and Wednesday 2:30-4, Zoom or (if possible) OM 4775.** | | What will I learn from this course? | After taking this course, you’ll be able to:   * Break down legal questions and legal analysis into a series of steps, rules and outputs * Understand and apply fundamental principles of legal expert system design * Design and build apps using Neota Studio * Understand and apply principles of user-centred design in legal materials * Think critically about access to justice and how technology can (and can’t) help to solve it | |

**Themes, week by week**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Week 1 Sept 9* | Introduction to the course |
| *Week 2 Sept 14, 16* | How to future-proof your career  Teamwork and communication |
| *Week 3 Sept 21, 23* | Unmet legal needs: crisis / goldmine  Process mapping |
| *Week 4 Sept 28* | Legal knowledge engineering. **NB – Sept 30 is Orange Shirt Day; no class.** |
| *Week 5 Oct 5, 7* | Design thinking  “No success like failure” |
| *Week 6 Oct 12, 14* | Regulatory issues with legal apps  Plain language writing |
| *Week 7 Oct 19, 21* | User testing |
| *Week 8 Oct 26, 28* | Great presentations |
| *Week 9 Nov 2, 4* | **Workshop apps** |
| *Week 10 Nov 9* | Reflecting. **NB – Nov 11 is a holiday; no class.** |
| *Week 11 Nov 16, 18* | **Presentation run-throughs** |
| *Week 12 Nov 23, 25* | Final preparations / more presentation run-throughs as needed |
| *Week 13 Nov 29-Dec 3* | Battle of the Apps! (Exact date TBD) |

**Evaluation**

* **There are a lot of assignments!**
* Many of them are quick exercises that are graded simply (completion grades). If you do it and submit it on time, you get full marks.
* The assignments are organized through the semester to help you build up your skills step by step. They’re all on Moodle under the Assignments tab, and also on the Moodle calendar.

***Assignments by due date***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| When it’s due  (@ noon) | Assignment | Individual | Group | Weight | “Just do it”? |
| Oct 1 | *Process map* | 🗸 |  | 1% | 🗸 |
| Oct 8 | *Neota Academy training* | 🗸 |  | 5% | 🗸 |
| Oct 8 | *Flowchart* | 🗸 |  | 1% | 🗸 |
| Oct 8 | *Failure resume* | 🗸 |  | 1% | 🗸 |
| Oct 13 | *Storyboard* | 🗸 |  | 1% | 🗸 |
| Oct 15 | *User profiles* | 🗸 |  | 2% | 🗸 |
| Oct 15 | ***Practice app*** | 🗸 |  | **15%** |  |
| Oct 22 | *Draft process map* |  | 🗸 | 1% | 🗸 |
| Oct 29 | *Draft app rules* |  | 🗸 | 1% | 🗸 |
| Nov 1 | *Workshop draft of app* |  | 🗸 | 5% | 🗸 |
| Nov 5 | *Draft storyboard* |  | 🗸 | 1% | 🗸 |
| Nov 19 | *Blog post* | 🗸 |  | 5% | 🗸 |
| Dec 6 | *Two comments* | 🗸 |  | 2% | 🗸 |
| Dec 6 | *User testing documentation* |  | 🗸 | 2% | 🗸 |
| Dec 6 | ***Final app*** |  | 🗸 | **20%** |  |
| Date TBD – last week of semester | ***Final presentation (Battle of the Apps)*** |  | 🗸 | **20%** |  |
| Dec 6 | *Mistake log* | 🗸 |  | 2% | 🗸 |
| Dec 6 | ***Final content document*** |  | 🗸 | **10%** |  |
| Dec 6 | *Participation self-assessment* | 🗸 |  | 5% | 🗸 |

“Just do it” means all you need to do to get the grade is turn the assignment in on time. You will get full marks.

The reason for this is to let you experiment without fear. Don’t worry about making it perfect. Make it as good as you can. Give it a try, and build your skills one step at a time.

***Breakdown of individual and team assignments***

* Don’t worry, these aren’t more assignments! It’s the same ones again, but divided between the individual and team assignments, so you can also keep track of them that way.
* For team assignments, all members of the team get the same grade.

**Individual assignments – total 40%**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| When it’s due | Assignment | Weight | “Just do it”? |
| Oct 1 | *Process map* | 1% | 🗸 |
| Oct 8 | *Neota Academy training* | 5% | 🗸 |
| Oct 8 | *Flowchart* | 1% | 🗸 |
| Oct 8 | *Failure resume* | 1% | 🗸 |
| Oct 11 | *Storyboard* | 1% | 🗸 |
| Oct 16 | *User profiles* | 2% | 🗸 |
| Oct 16 | ***Practice app*** | 15% |  |
| Nov 13 | *Blog post* | 5% | 🗸 |
| Dec 6 | *Two comments* | 2% | 🗸 |
| Dec 6 | *Mistake log* | 2% | 🗸 |
| Dec 6 | *Participation self-assessment* | 5% | 🗸 |

**Team assignments – total 60%**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| When it’s due | Assignment | Weight | “Just do it”? |
| Oct 23 | *Draft process map* | 1% | 🗸 |
| Oct 30 | *Draft app rules* | 1% | 🗸 |
| Nov 1 | *Workshop draft of app* | 5% | 🗸 |
| Nov 4 | *Draft storyboard* | 1% | 🗸 |
| Dec 6 | *User testing documentation* | 2% | 🗸 |
| Dec 6 | ***Final app*** | 20% |  |
| Date TBD – last week of semester | ***Final presentation (Battle of the Apps)*** | 20% |  |
| Dec 6 | ***Final content document*** | 10% |  |

**Late assignments**

* Getting the work done on time is important, because each step builds on what you’ve learned previously.
* **“Just do it” assignments:** You get the points for doing the assignment on time. If it is one day (or part of a day) late, you get half marks (i.e., if it’s worth 1%, you get 0.5%). If it’s more than a day late you get 0.
* **All other assignments:** Grades are reduced by one full letter grade per day or part of a day that the assignment is late.

**What you can expect from me**

* You can expect my commitment to helping you create a successful career in a legal world that is as challenging and exciting as it’s ever been.
* You can expect me to help out to the best of my ability if you’re hitting a wall or struggling with a problem.
* You can expect me to listen if you tell me about something that isn’t working, and to make reasonable adjustments that make sense and are fair.
* You can expect me to respond to your questions, and to be available to talk one-on-one at reasonable times, which generally means **during business hours on week days** (or in office hours for in-person meetings). **The best way to connect with me is on Mattermost**. Use the Direct Message function if you want a private discussion. I’m also available by e-mail, but it’s not as good as Mattermost. (And please don’t use the messages in Moodle – it’s terrible!).

**What you should expect from yourself**

* You should plan on spending about eight hours per week *average* on your work for this course. That includes the class meetings online, videos, readings, activities, assignments, and your Neota training. The targeted work time is based on the assumption that your full course load in law school is the equivalent to having a full-time job.
  + Warning / full disclosure: towards the end of the course, as you’re working with the team to get your app ready to show off to the world, the work gets heavier. It can become quite hectic – and a little addictive.
* Know and comply with the University’s Student Academic Integrity Policy. Don’t submit work someone else did as your own.
* When you interact with other students, the professionals at Neota Logic, the Battle of the Apps judges, guest speakers, and others, always remember to conduct yourself with professionalism and integrity. Many people outside TRU help us to make this course run. Let them know you appreciate their help.
* Do your fair share of work with your team. Don’t dominate. Listen to your teammates. Communicate clearly with them. Be patient.
* In online interactions, be engaged and be kind. Remember that sometimes an online interface can make communication seem impersonal – but there is a person at the other end. Treat them as considerately as you would if they were face to face with you.
* Practice being the kind of lawyer, professional and human you aspire to be.

**Policies**

***All the policies and regulations referred to here are available on Moodle***

**Regulations**. Please read and be familiar with relevant TRU Senate-approved policies, available on Moodle.

**Grading**. Grading is in accordance with the updated Policy on Grading Systems (on Moodle – see the information on Faculty of Law on page 3). If grades fall between two whole numbers, my policy is to round up for increments of 0.5 and above and round down for increments below 0.5. For example, a grade of 74.5 would be rounded up to 75, and a grade of 74.2 would be rounded down to 74. **The Faculty Academic Planning Committee has granted an exemption from the A-range and B-median rules for this course this semester**.

**Academic Integrity**. As part of the academic community of both the Faculty of Law and the University as a whole, academic integrity is centrally important in the work of faculty and students. Please review the Thompson Rivers University policy on Student Academic Integrity, in particular Art. VI (Forms of Academic Dishonesty). If you have any concerns or questions, or require clarification about any matters related to academic integrity, please do not hesitate to discuss them with me.

Students should also be aware that admission to the practice of the law requires standards of integrity that are higher still than those expected of academics. A finding of academic misconduct, even if it does not result in suspension or expulsion from the Faculty of Law, may nevertheless be a bar to admission into articling or practice.

**Accommodation**. The Faculty of Law will provide reasonable accommodation to students on the basis of factors such as illness, disability, religious observances, family or personal emergencies or affliction, or other similar special needs, when such factors interfere with the ability of a student to attend or to complete assignments or examinations at regularly scheduled dates or in other circumstances. Students should feel free to consult me or the Associate Dean regarding such matters. Students facing more significant and long-term or recurring barriers should familiarize themselves with TRU’s policy on Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities and confer with Accessibility Services as soon as possible.