Foundations in Legal Informatics
INFO I350, NEWM N485 & INFO I590
Syllabus & Course Information
Kim Brand & Seth Wilson
Adjunct Faculty
Fall 2015

(See Version notes at the end)

Prerequisites Courses: NONE
Credit Hours: 3

Elective for graduate and undergraduate new media and informatics degrees and other programs, including the for-credit and non-credit paralegal programs.

Faculty

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This course was originally conceived, authored and delivered by

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To whom a great debt is owed and much appreciation is deserved.
Course Objectives

**I350: Foundations in Legal Informatics** covers the various types of information technologies that are used in a typical law firm - an emerging field known as legal informatics. This is not a course for law school students; it is a course that will help Informatics students understand enough about the law and the legal system to be able to design, deploy and support new technologies in a typical law office. You will also be learning about important areas of the law, such as evidence and civil procedure, that influence and may even restrict what you can do with technology.

This year we have abandoned the former textbook for the course: *Using Computers in the Law Office*, 7th Edition by Matthew Cornic. If you can find a copy it may be a useful resource. We are convinced that free materials, produced or curated by us, combined with your own curiosity, will be adequate for you to achieve the learning objectives set out by this course. The field of legal informatics is changing quickly – so we expect you to stay informed and investigate law practice technologies on your own during the class and after you graduate.

Course Rules

You *must* use Microsoft Word, Excel and Powerpoint for the assignments. As an IUPUI student you can download the MS Office Suite for free. We understand that Word Perfect, Google Docs and open source alternatives are available. We don’t want to deal with them.

Additionally, you *must* use OnCourse for submission of assignments, quiz/test taking and for access to course resources. That is also the best way to communicate with us. You can send us email, but if you do we may not notice it and you may not get graded or receive credit.

Getting a good grade in this course *depends on participation!* Plan now to post to the forums weekly and submit your assignments on time. Plan on spending about 2 hrs for reading, 1 hr for research and 1 hr posting to forums per week. There will be lots of opportunities for extra credit – use them!

This is a *college course* so we expect you to be able to spell and write well. You should be familiar with technical terms and concepts, be competent at Internet research and be experienced with productivity software like Microsoft Office, ZIP utilities and various cloud based programs. Your employer will probably expect the same.

OnCourse has bugs. PCs break. Files get lost. Defend against these *Acts of God, Violence and Stupidity* by keeping copies of your posts, messages, etc. backed up. We recommend Box.com – it’s free to IUPUI students. Maintain a record of every assignment submission. Grading mistakes are inevitable. Sometimes mistakes are in your favor but sometimes they reduce your score and you should be prepared to help us fix them - *especially* if it is in your favor.

We grade most lengthy materials you submit by scanning your submission for keywords that address the issues. In this method you will benefit by clear/focused writing that hits the
question topics in a way that makes it simple to find your answer. Drivel counts against you. Assume we are lazy or busy – make that work for you.

Some of the grading is subjective; it depends on what we think about what you write. If you write well, make reasonable statements and sound like you learned something you'll get a good score. We can make mistakes too - so if you don't think you got the score you deserve ask us about it. Give us evidence if you want us to change a grade.

We'll take points off for not using .ZIP files to submit multiple items in a single assignment. When you submit attachments, PLEASE put your name in the filename along with the assignment ID. That will make it harder (but not impossible) for us to lose 😊

We are both adjunct faculty. Kim is a full time entrepreneur – he has 2-3 full time jobs and proferring generally happens very late, very early or on weekends. Seth is a full time attorney. If you need to reach us try OnCourse messaging first. Then: kjbrand@iupui.edu and/or sethwils@iupui.edu . Then try calling our office: 317-833-3000 (Kim) or 317-632-4402 (Seth) and our staff will track us down. We will try to get back to you within a couple days.

Please note: Your work for the final project may be no more than six pages + spreadsheet. Endnotes are OK but not graded. This is not a term paper or legal brief. In real life, nobody wants to read unnecessarily long papers ;(  

Also note: these rules may be changed with notice and when and if we decided they need to be.

Core Competencies

Upon completion of the course, students will know how to:

• Be an advocate for the design and deployment of technology in a law office.
• Be aware of data safety practices and disaster recovery basics.
• Be aware of data security practices, principles and methods.
• Be familiar with the basic means to protect PCs and networks from infection by viruses and malware, intrusion prevention, hacking and other means by which internal data and services can be compromised.
• Identify, conduct research and make recommendations about the purchase of new software and hardware.
• Use standard software such as Word and Excel for legal documents.
• Use specialized legal software for a variety of law firm management processes, including time management, billing, conflicts checking, case and client management and docket control.
• Use specialized legal software for litigation support.
• Advise a law firm on the appropriate and ethical use of email and websites for advertising and communication.
• Advise a law firm about the electronic discovery process and the role of technology.
• Use the Internet and other computerized tools and systems for legal research.
• Assist the law firm in using courtroom filing and in selecting appropriate technology for presenting evidence.
• Identify what can and cannot be done with courtroom technology, including images, audio and video, at all stages of a legal case based on the rules of evidence and court procedure.
• Articulate the ethical issues of using technology in the practice of law, with reference to the Model Rules of Professional Conduct.
• IUPUI Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PUL)

Student performance in this course will be assessed based on learning outcomes in the following areas:

• Core communication: written, oral and visual skills [1A]
• Core communication: quantitative skills [1B]
• Core communication: information resources skills [1C]
• Critical thinking [2]
• Integration and application of knowledge [3]
• Intellectual depth, breadth, and adaptiveness [4]
• Understanding society and culture [5]
• Values and ethics [6]

Per IUPUI policies, faculty are required to designate a PUL (Principles of Undergraduate Learning) of Major, Moderate and Some Importance for every course in the undergraduate curriculum. For I350 Foundations in Legal Informatics, the PULs are:

• Major Importance: 3 Integration and Application of Knowledge
• Moderate Importance: 2 Critical Thinking
• Some Importance: 1C Information Resources Skills

Expectations/Guidelines/Policies

(See IUPUI Fall 2015 Calendar here)

We are not focused on deadlines here. However, in order for Seth and Kim to share Forum Post Grading Duties (FPGDs) you MUST post to the appropriate Forum for that week’s material by Sunday at 5pm.

Other assignments may be completed by the end of the semester: December 13, 2015; although you can certainly submit them earlier if you wish. The final project will be due on Monday, December 18, at 5:00 p.m. There is no final examination for this course.

Our deadline for submitting grades is December 22 @ 8:00pm. End-of-semester-grade-drama has sometimes resulted in last minute appeals of poor grades. We hope to avoid that this year. You can help by keeping track of your grades as they are earned and appealing a poor grade contemporaneously with the assignment.
Please note that in order to be granted an Incomplete, you must have completed at least 75% of the course requirements. This is a campus policy.

Work must be your own and it must be identified as such. Work of others, such as quotes used in a paper, must be properly identified and cited. Studying together either in person or via the Internet and email is encouraged; however, sharing significant amounts of work or presenting the work of others as one's own is not allowed. Please let us know if you have questions about the proper way to use quotations and citations.

Since we don't meet face-to-face, we will rely on you to check your OnCourse email & messages at least weekly. We will check our messages and email at least every other day. According to campus policy, faculty are only required to keep materials you submit during this course for one month after grading and we reserve the option to dispose of it after that time.

Regulations, policies, guidelines, requirements and updates are to be followed, including those of Indiana University, IUPUI and the School of Informatics & Computing. This includes those that are printed in the IUPUI Fall 2015 Class Schedule, the current IUPUI Campus Bulletin, posted or referenced in the course's website on OnCourse.

Emergency Preparedness at IUPUI

Safety on IUPUI's campus is everyone's responsibility. Know what to do in the event of an emergency so that you can protect yourself and others. For specific information, please visit the Emergency Preparedness website.

Course Presentation Information

There are no class meeting times for this course. Instead, online courses are conducted "asynchronously", which means that we will be sending and receiving email messages and participating in "virtual discussions" using the OnCourse Discussion Forum tool. Look on the left side of your OnCourse screen and select Forums. There will be a Discussion Forum for each weekly module of the course. Please participate in the Discussion Forums regularly - not only is this 15% of your grade, but it will also be a much more rewarding course if we all share our thoughts and expertise.

This is a 3-credit hour course, so you can expect to be just as busy as you would be in a face-to-face format. Providing this course through the Internet is intended to give you the opportunity to take the course in a flexible but structured and supportive environment.

The course will be divided into weekly modules. Each module will officially begin on Monday. Modules will officially end on Sunday at 5pm, but once we have posted a module, it will be available throughout the semester in case you want to review.

For each weekly module, there will be a reading assignment. Most of the reading assignments will be from resources we post, but we will also link to or reference other materials as well.
As indicated above, for each weekly module, there will be a Quiz. Please take the Quiz the following Sunday at 5pm. We are not fixated on dates and deadlines – we have lives outside of teaching. But it is harder to keep track of submissions, grade schema and our intentions if you fall far behind.

Finally, if you have questions, please do not hesitate to email us: kjbrand@iupui.edu and sethwils@iupui.edu.

PLEASE NOTE: This course is a work in progress. The schedule, syllabus and course-work may change upon reasonable notice.

Required Textbooks

NONE. It makes us very happy to acknowledge that buying a $$$ textbook is not a requirement for this course.

Equipment & Software Needed

Because this is an online course delivered through OnCourse, you will need a computer with broadband access to the Internet, Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Standard (to create PDFs) and the ability to access cloud-based copies of law practice management software. For this course we recommend Clio. You will need to able to listen to podcasts, view PowerPoint presentations and short videos too.

We use Windows PCs. We think Macs are fine, but we can’t resolve issues you may have with Apple products.

Grading Scale

2000 points possible

Minimum percentages for each grade:

- 100% A+
- 93%  A
- 90%   A-
- 87%   B+
- 83%   B
- 80%   B-
- 77%   C+
- 73%   C
- 70%   C-
- Below 70%  F

F is the new D; seriously.
Assignment Information & Due Dates

Basic Legal Documents - **due December 13, at 5:00 p.m.** - 20% of your course grade (400 points) [corresponds to PULs 1B, 1C and 2]

Law Firm Management Assignment - **due December 13, 5:00 p.m.** - 10% of your course grade (200 points) [corresponds to PULs 1C, 2 and 3]

Book Report - **due December 13, 5:00 p.m.** - 10% of your course grade (200 points) [corresponds to PULs 1C, 2 and 3]

DON’T WAIT UNTIL December 13 to complete these assignments! We just won’t count them late until then. Pace yourself.

Quizes (After Every Module – **due every Sunday @ 5:00 p.m.**) – created for every Module - 20% of your course grade (400 points) [corresponds to PULs 2, 3 and 6.] There will be 15 Quizes worth 25 points ea. There are actually 16 weeks – but there will be no Assignment or Quiz over Thanksgiving break November 26-29. You get 25 free points that week!

Final Project - **due Monday, December 18 @ 5:00 p.m.** - 25% of your course grade (500 points) [corresponds to PULs 3, 1A and 1C]

Participation in weekly Discussion Forums - 15% of your course grade (20 points per week for 15 Weeks = 300 points.) Please participate in the Discussion Forums regularly - not only is this 15% of your grade, but it will also be a much more rewarding course if we all share our thoughts and expertise; [corresponds to PULs 2, 3 and 1A.]

If you don't participate (i.e. you don't post a comment) you get 0 points. If you post an illogical, incomprehensible, incomplete or ill-thought comment you get 10 points. If you post something you seemed to have thought about you get 15+. If you do a good job you get 18 points, and if you do a REALLY GOOD JOB you get 20 points. **We DO NOT GIVE CREDIT FOR LATE POSTS.**

Note: 15 points = 75% = C. You can easily get an A for this aspect of the course if you write brief, thoughtful comments on the weekly reading. Commenting on another poster’s comments is OK too.

We assign extra points if another student thinks enough of your post that they comment about it or disagree with it. This is a form of crowd-sourced curation like reddit.com. Please don’t attempt to game the system by creating grade-inflating comment-syndicates – we’ll notice 😊

Total 100% (2000 points)
Redemption, Bonus Points & Extra Credit

Find a mistake in our work - 20 pts. Max: 100 pts.

Contribute substantively to the learning outline, produce a class module or conduct a guest lecture, 50 to 100 pts.

Administrative Withdrawal

A basic requirement of this course is that you will conscientiously participate and complete all required course activities and/or assignments. Please notify us via email if you are unable to participate or complete an assignment on time. If you miss more than the first 25% of the course without contacting us, you may be administratively withdrawn from the course. Since our course is online and we do not meet, we use the Discussion Forum questions to monitor course participation.

If you have not participated in these activities by the stated deadlines, you may be withdrawn. An administrative withdrawal may have academic, financial and financial aid implications. The administrative withdrawal will take place after the full refund period and if you are administratively withdrawn from the course, you will not be eligible for a tuition refund. If you have questions about the administrative withdrawal policy at any point in the semester, please contact the Registrar.

Weekly Flow

OnCourse is a complicated system. It is easy to get confused about where to go and what to do – at least it is for us as instructors 😃

Here is how it flows for us each week:

- We create a Module for each week which includes instructional materials, lecture notes and possibly other media, links, etc.
- We create a Forum for comments each week on the materials in the Module. You get points based on the quality of your participation – up to 20.
- We (or a fellow student) posts a Quiz for each week by Monday afternoon.
- There are assignments due by the end of the course – please don’t wait that long to do them.

We’ll get you details about the assignments within the first few weeks of the course.
Version Notes

Version 1.0 August 1, 2013: Initial Release
Version 1.1 August 17, 2013: Fixed inconsistent percent of grade in Participation in weekly Forums, Added note about Number of Quizzes and Free Week at Thanksgiving; Added Weekly Flow section
Version 2.0 August 23, 2014 Major update for Fall 2014