

Maurer School of Law: Indiana University
Digital Repository @ Maurer Law

Articles by Maurer Faculty

Faculty Scholarship

1972

Indiana University Seminar in Jurimetrics

F. Reed Dickerson

Indiana University School of Law - Bloomington

Robert Birmingham

Indiana University School of Law - Bloomington

Joseph Brodley

Indiana University School of Law - Bloomington

Follow this and additional works at: <https://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/facpub>



Part of the [Legal Education Commons](#), and the [Legal Writing and Research Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Dickerson, F. Reed; Birmingham, Robert; and Brodley, Joseph, "Indiana University Seminar in Jurimetrics" (1972). *Articles by Maurer Faculty*. 2843.

<https://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/facpub/2843>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Scholarship at Digital Repository @ Maurer Law. It has been accepted for inclusion in Articles by Maurer Faculty by an authorized administrator of Digital Repository @ Maurer Law. For more information, please contact rvaughan@indiana.edu.



LAW LIBRARY
INDIANA UNIVERSITY
Maurer School of Law
Bloomington

students are asked to read monographs describing recent pieces of empirical research and some of the works of Max Weber, O. W. Holmes, Roscoe Pound, Lon Fuller, Eugene Ehrlich, etc.

In the future, the format of the seminar might be changed such that it would be taught jointly by a law professor and Prof. Simon on a year long basis. The students would then be encouraged to work in larger groups so that more ambitious projects could be undertaken.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY SEMINAR IN JURIMETRICS

Robert Birmingham,* Joseph Brodley ** and F. Reed Dickerson ***

During a recent spring semester an experimental seminar in jurimetrics was presented in which 16 students were enrolled. The topics covered included the following: Impact of the computer on the practice of law; new storage and retrieval methods; use of the computer to index, perform housekeeping functions for the law office, do estate tax analysis, and predict judicial behavior; symbolic logic; game theory; decision theory; and language theory. Of the enrollees, 13 submitted seminar evaluations at the close of the semester. Of these, almost every student recommended that the seminar be repeated (none suggested otherwise). In general, the students were enthusiastic about the seminar; but some urged that its content be changed in several respects and almost all agreed that the method of presentation needed improving.

Several students suggested omitting the mathematical aspect. Several suggested omitting the materials on semantics and the theory of communication. Several recommended that less emphasis be put on symbolic logic. One considered the jurisprudential aspects of the use of computers in the law a waste of time.

As for the method of presentation, there was general agreement that less lecturing and more student participation was needed, and that in some instances specific relevance to the practice of law needed sharpening. A number of the students liked the inclusion of three outside speakers. Several urged a better balance between the theoretical and the practical.

Several students suggested that future offerings include specific student projects involving use of the computer. One wanted to know more about the mechanics of the computer.

Several students recommended that students be invited to make oral

* Robert Birmingham is an associate professor of law at Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind.

** Joseph Brodley is a professor law at Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind.

*** F. Reed Dickerson is a professor of law at Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind.

presentations during class time. One recommended a group project involving the use of indexing methods.

After giving the course and evaluating it in the light of these comments, it was strongly recommended that the seminar in jurimetrics be given again on a temporary basis, although not necessarily with the same faculty members participating. If the seminar was to be continued, it was also recommended that the subject matter be reevaluated, reliance on lecturing lessened and student participation through discussion and specific projects increased.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COMPUTERS AND THE LAW

James P. Chandler *

The Maryland offering is a seminar in which enrollment is limited to fifteen students. It carries three units of academic credit, two hours of which are classroom and one hour which is outside work in the computer center or other work approved by the instructor. It is open to advanced law students who have some basic knowledge of computer science.

The seminar has two objectives (1) to subject selected major legal problems presented by the new computer technology to intense critical study and (2) a close examination of the problems presented by the use of computers in legal research.

The topics covered in connection with the first objective are legal protection of computer software, problems of contracting with a computer supplier of hardware or software, protection of privacy from computerized invasion, use of the computer in law office management and use of the computer in judicial administration.

Discussion of the second objective includes the role of logic in legal reasoning and other implicit legal method assumptions of the marketed systems of computerized legal research. The study of this topic involves a critical evaluation of the major computer research systems such as Mead Data, Legal Information Thru Electronics, IBM STAIRS, Aspen Systems and Autocomp-Autocode. Also discussed is the future of computerized legal research with emphasis upon poststorage analysis systems.

Students enrolled in the seminar complete a substantial piece of written work on some aspect of the topics outlined above or carry out some other significant research project approved by the instructor.

Teaching materials for the course are *Computers and the Law Cases and Materials* by Roy N. Freed (published by the Boston University Bookstore) and *Materials on Law and Computers*, collected for use at the University of Maryland Law School by James P. Chandler (unpublished).

* James P. Chandler is an assistant professor of law at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, Md.