Exploring the ecology of law and informatics

Northern Kentucky University
Salmon P. Chase College of Law
is located in Highland Heights,
Kentucky. The campus is only seven miles from downtown Cincinnati, Ohio, a major Midwestern center of commerce, industry, arts, and entertainment.
The Law & Informatics Institute at Chase College of Law provides a critical interdisciplinary approach to the study, research, scholarship, and practical application of informatics, focusing on the regulation and utilization of information — including its creation, acquisition, aggregation, security, manipulation, and exploitation — in the fields of intellectual property law, privacy law, evidence (regulating government and the police), business law, and international law.

The Law & Informatics Institute was formed to address the fundamental shifts digital transactions and communications are having on society. Through the law school’s partnership with the College of Informatics, the Institute will explore key issues facing business and develop original research — a partnership that is the first of its kind in the nation. The Institute provides education on the best practices involving these evolving digital technologies to law students, graduate students, lawyers, and business leaders. The Institute will provide an important resource to assess these changes as well as to identify other areas that have yet to be addressed.

For students, the Institute provides a critical learning resource. Chase law students will participate in coursework, original scholarship, clinical programs, and externships to prepare them for the needs of their clients and to incorporate the digital practices in their approach to practicing law. Since the digital revolution has impacted the legal profession as much as any industry, this training will be essential to lawyers in the future. Law students working with the Institute will have a head start on navigating the changes redefining the profession.

In July 2005, Northern Kentucky University created the College of Informatics, realizing that traditional academic structures do not provide an optimal approach to the digital and information revolutions that are profoundly changing every aspect of human activity. The College of Informatics consists of three academic departments: Business Informatics (accredited by the AACSB), Communication, and Computer Science. In August 2011, the College of Informatics moved into Griffin Hall, a new $53 million, state-of-the-art, LEED certified building.

A close partner of the Law & Informatics Institute, the NKU College of Informatics explains the field as follows: “The common thread of informatics is information — its acquisition, collection, analysis, manipulation, application, packaging, presentation, and marketing. Today there is virtually no area of business, science, industry, or entertainment that does not use some aspect of informatics.” Learn more: informatics.nku.edu/index.php

Joint Degrees

In 2011 Chase College of Law developed two joint degree programs with the College of Informatics: the JD/MBI in Business Informatics and the JD/MHI in Health Care Informatics, and approved the launch of the new Law & Informatics Institute to work closely with the College of Informatics and partners from across the globe to provide innovative curriculum, training, and scholarship for informatics.

Juris Doctor/Master of Business Informatics

The Business Informatics joint program focuses on the study of information technology in the context of business and law. With an MBI earned through NKU’s College of Informatics, students with a computer science background will develop skills to manage vital information resources found throughout the business world. Today, JD/MBI graduates will be able to participate in strategic planning regarding data management in business, NGOs and government.

Juris Doctor/Master of Health Informatics

The Health Informatics joint program is an attractive alternative for individuals who wish to practice health law with a greater understanding of the underpinnings of regulatory compliance and data-driven health practices. With an MHI earned through NKU’s College of Informatics, students will develop skills to manage vital information resources found throughout the healthcare profession, develop institutional policies, and address regulatory needs.

Juris Doctor/Master of Business Administration

Law & Informatics students without a technical computer science background may elect to participate in the standard JD/MBA. With an MHI earned through NKU’s Haile/US Bank College of Business, students will develop skills to lead business organizations and provide legal counseling integrated with a client’s fundamental business needs. The JD/MBA brings critical management, accounting and finance, and leadership skills to enhance the student’s understanding of law.