

# Challenges and Responses: Reflection on Legal Education in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Qi An <sup>1, a</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Law, Yunnan Minzu University, Kunming, Yuehua Street 2929, China;

<sup>a</sup> anqilaw@126.com

**Abstract.** The rapid development of artificial intelligence will bring significant changes to the established legal education model. On the premise of clarifying the concept of legal education in the era of artificial intelligence, the traditional lecture-based knowledge map construction path shall be changed, the existing teaching resources shall be actively integrated, personalized programs shall be formulated for students, supplementary teaching work shall be accomplished with the help of artificial intelligence, and the connection between the curriculum and judicial practice shall be strengthened. In addition, the ethical limits of AI technology are grasped based on the content of the rule of law and values in the law curriculum so as to establish a systematic AI teaching model in law.

**Keywords:** Artificial intelligence; legal education; curriculum teaching reform.

## 1. Introduction

ChatGPT, a software developed by Open AI, has aroused a hot topic among the public because of its strong language understanding and text generation capabilities, and even its excellent “strong artificial intelligence” capabilities such as writing program codes and papers. The GPT-4, released in March this year, was seen as a “revolutionary” event that broke new ground in education and even scored high on a number of benchmark tests, which are widely used in areas such as writing code, essays, and journalism. Amidst the debate about whether ChatGPT will have an impact on traditional industries, this paper seeks to address the following questions: As the access to knowledge becomes easier and more efficient, does the traditional “cramming for test” model of learning make sense? What kind of learning styles and what kind of learning content can meet the challenges of the next generation of artificial intelligence? What role will technology play in legal education?

## 2. The possible impact of artificial intelligence on legal education

### 2.1 The emergence of deep conversational learning models

In the traditional learning model, the main focus is on teaching professional knowledge, clarifying professional concepts, and cultivating students’ legal thinking, i.e. the knowledge learning path of “input (lecture) - output (acceptance) - test”.<sup>[1]</sup> The practical teaching part in legal education is mainly through moot courts and professional internships, which play a role in the later stages of legal course learning as auxiliary content to the teaching of professional knowledge. In the age of artificial intelligence, however, the importance of information and legal knowledge has been diluted, and instead, skills such as creativity, critical thinking, inventiveness, communication (questioning), and collaboration, have been put in a more important place, which is precisely the revolutionary significance of education; with the help of conversations with ChatGPT, students’ learning efficiency and research ability of students will be significantly improved accordingly. Students can start from the existing legal concepts, carry out in-depth analysis and interpretation of legal concepts, improve students’ understanding and grasp of the law and its technical affairs, improve their learning efficiency, and improve their thesis research ability by analyzing legal proceedings, case study, legislative research, etc..

## **2.2 The development of “student-centered” personalized teaching methods**

The focus of traditional approaches to teaching and learning in law continues to be characterized by unilateral input aimed at all students, with the assessment of student knowledge and skills acquisition being the most direct measure of student ability and teaching effectiveness. The widespread application of artificial intelligence, however, offers the possibility of personalizing student development programs. For example, AI can be used to carry out in-depth analysis of student performance, so that student performance can be better identified and teachers can be provided with more effective learning support and customized curriculum arrangements. In addition, it can also help students with their professional career planning. For example, by analyzing their learning records and behavioral patterns, assessing their learning abilities, and analyzing their strengths and interests, it is possible to help them better position themselves and provide them with more effective career planning, reflecting the concept of “centering on students’ development, students’ learning, and learning outcomes”. [2]

## **2.3 The change in the objective of practice-oriented talent cultivation**

The goal of building a strong artificial intelligence nation can't be achieved without talents and the deep application of judicial artificial intelligence technology is also inseparable from talents. Under the guidance of the above construction objectives, the AI training programs and teaching modes of higher education institutions will be more and more intelligent, application-oriented, and cross-cutting in nature. The deep application of AI in judicial practice may also lead to profound changes in the traditional teaching mode. For example, the great popularization of artificial intelligence software in teaching and learning and the sharing of artificial intelligence judicial systems could be realized. The existing character of lecture-based and practice-oriented teaching will be changed to an AI-supported and practice-oriented training objective.

## **3. The Boundaries of the Integration of Technology and Legal Education**

What role should technology play in legal education? In the current training program and route of curriculum teaching, technology only plays a secondary and auxiliary role, the core teaching content is still completed by teachers, and students usually receive universal education. With the rapid development of artificial intelligence technology, the application of strong artificial intelligence makes legal knowledge become learnable materials. With the help of artificial intelligence, case analysis and literature search that used to take a long time for students may only take a few seconds to complete nowadays. This means that technology may deeply affect the core content of law courses. With the deep integration of technology and law courses, such issues as technical ethics and intellectual property rights in the application of artificial intelligence will arise, and students may also become lazy in learning because of their dependence on artificial intelligence. Recently, the University of Hong Kong expressly banned the use of ChatGPT or other artificial intelligence tools in teaching activities such as classroom teaching. It can thus be seen that while artificial intelligence technology brings convenience, we should also think about how to deal with the boundary in the integration of technology and law courses, and clear rules should be drawn between reasonable application and abuse.

Undoubtedly, it is undeniable that the content of legal education should shift to the mode of lay emphasis on both experience and technology. Law schools' response to legal artificial intelligence should not be limited to teaching the technology and the development status of artificial intelligence or to teaching the application of law related to artificial intelligence. In the context of the fact that artificial intelligence has changed the requirement and emphasis on knowledge mastering, the undergraduate law education nowadays in China should have a relatively thorough reform. The teaching content should not only be oriented by the needs of the judicial practice of artificial intelligence, but also reflect the cultivation of legal thought, legal theory, legal thinking, legal rational logic, legal humanity and moral ethics. It is necessary to establish a clear technical thinking

and turn facts into data in legal education. Legal issues should be determined through data analysis, avoiding judgments based on experience and perceptions lacking the support of data.

## **4. The future path of legal education**

The changes brought by artificial intelligence to education have far-reaching implications, and the conservative posture of shielding ChatGPT is not desirable, and the basic idea of openness shall be maintained. The specific reform path of legal education needs to be launched to adjust the following aspects:

### **4.1 Restructure the goal of legal education aimed at the acquisition of knowledge**

As for how to deal with the reform of legal education in the era of artificial intelligence, it is necessary to rethink the positioning and transformation of "legal educators". In the renewal of legal training objectives, on the one hand, it is necessary to form a technical thinking mode, and on the other hand, it is necessary to master the basic issues in the technical field, so as to lay a deepened and specialized technical foundation for entering society in the future. In the stage of post-school education, the study and application of market-oriented legal service artificial intelligence can be introduced, and the study and application of public-oriented legal service artificial intelligence can also be introduced. Market orientation takes efficiency as the core, has stronger innovation and disruptive innovation, and aims to rapidly expand the market space of legal services. The public orientation is oriented by social equity and justice, and focuses on the control of risks brought about by the application of artificial intelligence.

As the path to knowledge is greatly simplified, the primary goal of legal education shall also be adjusted to develop students who are capable of discernment and sound value judgment. In view of the fact that the teaching of law courses is itself a process of shaping the concept of the rule of law and values, the premise of the widespread application of AI in the teaching field shall be to integrate its value evaluation system into the basic principles of law courses and to incorporate the concept of the rule of law and the values of fairness and justice into the teaching of law courses. The focus of the course teaching shall shift from AI-assisted teaching to exploring the positive interaction between AI and course content. In this way, it is possible to clarify the technical risks of AI and cultivate a prudent and rational mindset for students to face AI technology through in-depth discussions on the ethical aspects of AI, so as to become more qualified crossover talents with "Artificial Intelligence + Law" advantages.

### **4.2 Use artificial intelligence collaboration to improve teaching methods**

China has already shared educational resources and platforms without differentiation in recent years through shared catechism resources and NetEase courses, reflecting the massive database needed in the initial development of AI technologies. However, the existing data-sharing functions are not yet mature and China still faces problems such as limited sharing scope, insufficient data drive, and poor connection to teaching and learning. At a time when AI is becoming more and more widely used, the judicial database of the judicial practice sector can be introduced into the scope of shared data, and ways and means of incorporating high-quality data into daily teaching can be sought. Teachers can be actively encouraged to undertake training and study in AI-related courses and through the supportive approach of AI. In addition, teachers can be released from tedious non-transactional work so as to improve their productivity through the use of artificial intelligence.

### **4.3 Construct an artificial intelligence education system in law**

On the premise that the national top-level programme has been designed, the existing legal training programme and teaching mode shall be reflected upon, and the existing human and material

resources shall be integrated and invested in the research of intelligent legal education mode. After adequate theoretical preparation, it is necessary to actively launch a corresponding curriculum teaching pilot, in order to practice the cross-curricular requirements of “artificial intelligence + law” and promote the positive transformation of intelligent legal education mode. In addition, it is also necessary to further strengthen cooperation with judicial practice departments and artificial intelligence technology companies, and to explore flexible and diverse teaching solutions for law school intelligence, so as to train a large number of excellent interdisciplinary talents for judicial practice. [5] For teachers, the deeper integration of AI into the teaching of law in the future will also bring challenges to daily teaching. For the group of teachers who are used to the traditional teaching mode, they need to change their teaching philosophy and actively explore how AI technology can be deeply integrated with the law curriculum to realize their contribution to teaching.

The formation of an intelligent education system will also lead to the interconnection between legal education and the education of other disciplines, which will gradually blur the boundaries between disciplines. In the practice of law, the problems of social life will produce the comprehensive application of multidisciplinary knowledge. The intelligent teaching system will become the teaching of a comprehensive discipline considering and solving these social and legal problems. This will not only break through the boundaries of traditional department law, but also break through the barriers between law and other disciplines, so as to break through the narrow feature of disciplines in traditional teaching and achieve the goal of cultivating talents with multi-disciplinary integration in teaching. In the intelligent education and teaching system, artificial intelligence will be people-oriented and build a curriculum system with multi-disciplinary integration.

## 5. Summary

To sum up, the widespread use of AI in judicial practice will inevitably bring significant challenges to the legal profession, which in turn will reverse the impact on all aspects of legal education. While enjoying the convenient services brought by technology, it is necessary to consider the boundaries of the integration of AI and education, be alert to issues related to technical ethics, privacy protection, and the digital divide, and adhere to the principles and bottom line that legal education shall adhere to in the wave of the era of AI so as to cultivate legal AI talents that better meet the requirements of the times.

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