Legal Analytics Lab Partners with Atlanta Firm to Build Predictive Model in Civil Employment Cases

"Collaborating with the Legal Analytics Lab on a short-term sprint project will allow the firm to explore what's possible with its data, and to take its existing analytics capabilities to the next level," said Charlotte Alexander, director of the Legal Analytics Lab and associate professor of legal studies at the Robinson College of Business with a secondary appointment with the College of Law.

Georgia State University's Legal Analytics Lab has a sprint project planned with an Atlanta employment law firm, Barrett & Farahany, to build a model to predict the outcome of various types of employment-related cases filed in federal district court. The sprint will take place during the spring semester.

Charlotte Alexander, director of the Legal Analytics Lab and associate professor of legal studies at the Robinson College of Business with a secondary appointment with the College of Law, said the firm had started its own in-house data analysis initiative, collecting summary judgment opinions and tallying the outcomes for plaintiffs and defendants. However, the firm wanted to do more with the data.

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A team of 10 law and 10 master's students in analytics, under the guidance of law and analytics faculty members, including Alexander, Anne Tucker (law) and Javad Feizollahi (analytics), will use text mining and machine learning to extract information from docket sheets, complaints, briefing on dispositive motions, and judges' opinions to build, train, and test the predictive model over the course of three months.

"The sprint project will expand beyond just summary judgment outcomes to include all possible lawsuit outcomes, and will mine the text of the court documents themselves to try to identify predictors of those outcomes," Alexander said.

"Students will get exposure to a real-world data challenge, and will be required to think carefully and rigorously about how to define the research questions, what the data show, and how to develop analytical tools to best achieve the research goals," she said.

Alexander said students will be assigned to small teams, composed of both J.D. and M.S.A. students, and will meet weekly as a large group with faculty and law firm representatives. The sprint will culminate with a student presentation to the firm about their methodology and conclusions.

"The firm also will use the model to guide its decisions and strategy in litigation going forward," Alexander said.

"The Legal Analytics Lab is unique in offering students this sort of experiential learning opportunity at the intersection of law and data science," Alexander said. "Students learn how to apply cutting-edge analytics tools to legal questions and problems, and gain experience that sets them apart in today's competitive legal job market."

The Legal Analytics Lab is housed in Robinson College of Business' big data analytics facility, the Institute for Insight. The lab is focusing on three subject areas: civil litigation, intellectual property and compliance and corporate social responsibility.

Learn more about the [Legal Analytics Lab>>](#)