



Something Big is Happening

AI and the Future of Legal Education

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The Premise

“The people closest to AI aren’t making predictions. They’re reporting what already happened to them.”

— Matt Shumer, “Something Big Is Happening” (Feb 2026)

His essay went viral. He specifically calls out law:

A managing partner at a major firm spends hours every day using AI. He calls it “like having a team of associates available instantly.”

This Is Not a Better Chatbot

We've moved from AI as a search engine to AI as an autonomous agent.

2023–2024

Ask a Question, Get an Answer (maybe)

- Chat-based Q&A
- Draft text, summarize, explain
- One turn at a time
- Frequent errors and hallucinations

February 2026

Describe a Task, It Gets Done

- Reads documents autonomously
- Makes decisions and iterates
- Writes and tests working software
- Dramatically fewer errors

We All Need to Be Using these Tools - Every Day

This is not about learning technology, it's about understanding what's happening.

Do not use “free versions” — you are missing almost all the advances.

Do not use chatbots as search engines (only).

Try to use them to help every day, every task.

If you can explain how to do it, AI can almost certainly do it.

Sometimes better (or at least no worse), and always much faster.

What I'm Showing You Today

Three tools. One subscription. Claude Max from Anthropic (\$100/mo).

Claude

The Conversation

Chat-based AI for drafting, analysis, brainstorming, and research. Similar to ChatGPT.

Cowork

The File Assistant

Desktop app that works with your files autonomously. Runs reusable “skills” you define in plain English.

Claude Code

The Developer

Command-line tool. Describe what you want built — working software appears. No coding required.

You Need to be Serious About Your Setup

There is absolutely some up-front cost (time, effort, hassle); but this is a professional obligation.

- Sign up for pro versions (ChatGPT EDU is a good start, also Harvey, probably Claude)
- Use the desktop apps, the mobile apps, the new tools.
- I strongly recommend putting together at least a basic coding system
 - Install python, various libraries
 - Tip: Claude etc can provide step-by-step instructions, troubleshooting, and even do it for you in most cases.

Cowork: Class Problem Revision

DEMO 1

AI as pedagogical assistant — applying your standards to your materials, autonomously.

- Reads the syllabus and assigned readings
- Evaluates the existing class problem
- Revises for adversarial framing and reading alignment
- **I wrote the instructions once — it applies them every time, even across 28 class sessions.**

Cowork: Lecture Slide Review

DEMO 2

Same concept, different workflow. Faculty can build these.

- Reads the slide deck and assigned readings
- Flags slides that reference material not in the readings
- Flags readings with no slide coverage
- Assesses pacing and density for a 45-minute class

Claude Code: Build a Tool Live

DEMO 3

*I will describe a problem in plain English.
Working software will appear. I will not write any code.*

```
$ Build a tool that splits a multi-question exam PDF into separate files,  
one per question. Test it using the sample exam files in this folder. Plan  
first, then build.
```

Beyond the Demos

Two larger projects I've built with these same tools.

Course Teaching Assistant

A Slack bot for my Intro to IP course

- Students ask questions in Slack; the bot answers using actual course materials
- Cites specific pages from the casebook, slides, class session transcripts
- Auto-syncs with Google Drive when I update the course materials
- Tracks what topics students ask about most
- Built with Claude Code; runs 24/7

Exam Grading Pipeline

Calibration-driven essay assessment

- Instructor provides a scoring rubric and grades ~5-10 calibration essays; system learns their standards
- Multi-pass scoring for consistency (3–5 independent evaluations per essay)
- Flags borderline or unusual cases for human review
- Must hit $r \geq 0.85$ correlation before finishing “grading”
- Designed and built entirely with Claude Code

What Does This Mean?

The future — for the law school, the profession, society — is very uncertain.

What we **do** know:

- this is real
- there will be job losses, restructuring, systemic changes in knowledge work — including in the legal profession
- we need to start now to prepare ourselves, our students, our institutions

What we **don't** know:

- The pace and timing. (Six months? Two years? Five?)
- What does a restructuring of the legal profession look like for Penn?
- What concrete steps we should take.

Some to-dos for now:

- We all must be using these tools; this is an absolute professional obligation.
- We must have conversations about the future — there is no steady state ahead.
- No panic, but we need to be very serious and open-eyed about this.

*“The future is already here.
It just hasn’t knocked
on your door yet.”*

— Matt Shumer

My door is open to anyone who wants to explore these tools.

... and to be continued.