Seminar «KI»

Seminar HS 2025 | Institute for Civil Law

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1 Introduction

The language of the seminar will be English, but participants may submit their written work in German.

In recent years, large language models (LLMs), AI agents, and related artificial intelligence technologies have moved rapidly from the realm of technical research into widespread use across multiple sectors of society. Their ubiquity presents complex and pressing legal challenges that demand critical attention not only from technologists, but especially from legal scholars and practitioners. As these systems evolve and their influence grows, understanding the legal implications of their deployment has become a central issue for regulators, policymakers, and society at large.

To address these questions, the Law Faculty will host a seminar in Fall 2025 focused on the legal problems arising from the development and use of LLMs, AI agents, and similar technologies. This seminar will operate at the intersection of law, computer science, and public policy. Our principal aim is to equip participants with the analytical tools necessary to engage critically with both the capabilities and the limitations of these technologies, and to thoughtfully address the legal and regulatory challenges they raise.

The seminar will begin with an overview of the selected technical foundations of LLMs and AI agents, such as their architecture, operational mechanisms, and common modes of deployment and failure. A special focus will be placed on identifying and understanding current and emerging legal issues – such as liability, privacy, intellectual property, algorithmic bias and discrimination, transparency, accountability, and the implications for professional responsibility in the legal field.

Following the introductory sessions, seminar participants will choose – or be assigned – current legal questions that involve or are affected by LLMs or AI agents, with the problems specifically drawn from companies, products, or services presently facing these issues or public scrutiny. Students will then prepare a research paper that critically analyzes their assigned problem.

The findings and arguments developed in the course of this research will be presented in the second half of the seminar, followed by open discussion and peer feedback. In this way, the seminar seeks to foster an informed and nuanced understanding of the rapidly shifting landscape of "AI law".

2 Topics

The topics examined in greater detail within the framework of the seminar pertain to legal issues arising in connection with the deployment of AI in business contexts. Examples include matters such as the liability and exoneration of providers of AI applications, as well as the use of interactive agents in the health care, transportation or public sector.

A list of topics will be distributed to participants at least one week prior to the first day of the seminar. Final allocation of topics will occur on the first seminar day. Participants are welcome to indicate their preferred topic, although it cannot be guaranteed that all will be assigned their chosen subject, particularly in instances where multiple students express interest in the same topic. Proposals for original topics are very welcome, and may be submitted via email up until the first day of the seminar.

3   Dates

Attendance is compulsory throughout the seminar. In addition to the scheduled sessions, students are also expected to attend individual or group sessions between the first and final session as agreed upon. The following schedule applies:

Date	Time	Note
15.07.2025	09:00	Start of registration
02.10.2025	09:00-12:00	**Introductory Session**
01.12.2025	12:00	Submission of presentation (PDF)
02.12.2025	08:00-18:00	**Final Presentation**
09.12.2025	12:00	Submission of final work

4   Final Submission of Course Work

The participants are required to compose a written paper of 10 to 15 pages on the topic assigned to them. With regard to formal requirements and evaluation criteria, reference may be made to the applicable guidelines and regulations[1] of the Faculty, as well as to the materials distributed during the seminar. Further information concerning the exact procedure for preparing the paper will be provided during the seminar.

The seminar paper, including all literature used (either in full or as relevant excerpts, compressed in PNG or PDF format), must be submitted electronically in PDF format by the specified deadline via email.

5   Final Presentation

On the seminar day indicated above ("Final presentation"), participants shall deliver a final presentation regarding the insights they have obtained in their written work. The duration of each presentation shall be 20-25 minutes. This will be followed by a discussion session among the seminar participants, during which active participation is expected. Engagement in these discussions will be taken into account in the assessment of seminar performance. Participants are required to prepare a presentation in advance for their talk, and to submit said presentation in PDF form by the indicated date via email.

6   Terms of Participation and Registration

The seminar will be conducted in English; however, submission of the final written paper in German is permitted.

Due to the nature of the topics to be examined, which may pertain to various areas of law, priority in registration will be accorded to master's students. Definitive registration for both master's and bachelor's students is possible as of July 15, 2025. The number of participants is limited to eight students.

Upon acceptance of participation, withdrawal is no longer possible. Both the confirmation of participation and all further important communications and information will be sent via email. Students are therefore required to check their email accounts regularly.

Registration: via email to: christian.sillaber@unibe.ch

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[1]https://www.rechtswissenschaft.unibe.ch/studium/studienprogramme/bachelor_rechtswissenschaft/index_ger.html