

**ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE FUTURE OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION:
IMPLICATIONS FOR LEGAL EDUCATION IN VIETNAM**

**INTELIGÊNCIA ARTIFICIAL E O FUTURO DA PROFISSÃO JURÍDICA:
IMPLICAÇÕES PARA A FORMAÇÃO JURÍDICA NO VIETNÃ**

**LA INTELIGENCIA ARTIFICIAL Y EL FUTURO DE LA PROFESIÓN JURÍDICA:
IMPLICACIONES PARA LA FORMACIÓN JURÍDICA EN VIETNAM**



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ABSTRACT: The rapid development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is creating profound changes in many areas of socio-economic life, including the legal profession. AI not only automates many traditional legal activities, such as searching case law, analyzing legal texts, drafting contracts, and predicting dispute outcomes, but also changes the skill sets and professional roles of lawyers, judges, notaries, and other legal professionals. In this context, legal education needs appropriate adjustments to prepare learners to adapt to the new professional environment. This article analyzes the impact of AI on legal practice and identifies changing trends in the legal labor market. Based on this, the article assesses the challenges facing the traditional legal education model. It proposes several directions for innovation in legal education in Vietnam, including updating training programs, strengthening interdisciplinary skills, enhancing digital capabilities, and raising awareness of ethics and legal responsibility in the use of AI.

KEYWORDS: Artificial Intelligence. Legal education. Digital transformation. Legal training. Vietnam.

RESUMO: O rápido desenvolvimento da Inteligência Artificial (IA) está gerando mudanças profundas em muitas áreas da vida socioeconômica, incluindo a profissão jurídica. A IA não apenas automatiza muitas atividades jurídicas tradicionais, como a pesquisa de jurisprudência, a análise de textos jurídicos, a elaboração de contratos e a previsão de resultados de litígios, mas também altera o conjunto de competências e as funções profissionais de advogados, juízes, notários e outros profissionais do direito. Nesse contexto, a formação jurídica precisa de ajustes adequados para preparar os alunos para se adaptarem ao novo ambiente profissional. Este artigo analisa o impacto da IA na prática jurídica e identifica as tendências de transformação no mercado de trabalho jurídico. Com base nisso, o artigo avalia os desafios enfrentados pelo modelo tradicional de educação jurídica. Propõem-se várias direções para a inovação na educação jurídica no Vietnã, incluindo a atualização dos programas de formação, o fortalecimento das competências interdisciplinares, o aprimoramento das capacidades digitais e a conscientização sobre a ética e a responsabilidade jurídica no uso da IA.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Inteligência Artificial. Educação jurídica. Transformação digital. Formação jurídica. Vietnã.

RESUMEN: El rápido desarrollo de la Inteligencia Artificial (IA) está generando cambios profundos en muchas áreas de la vida socioeconómica, incluida la profesión jurídica. La IA no solo automatiza muchas actividades jurídicas tradicionales, como la búsqueda de jurisprudencia, el análisis de textos legales, la redacción de contratos y la predicción de los resultados de los litigios, sino que también transforma el conjunto de habilidades y las funciones profesionales de los abogados, jueces, notarios y otros profesionales del derecho. En este contexto, la educación jurídica necesita ajustes adecuados para preparar a los estudiantes para adaptarse al nuevo entorno profesional. Este artículo analiza el impacto de la IA en la práctica jurídica e identifica las tendencias de cambio en el mercado laboral jurídico. Con base en ello, el artículo evalúa los desafíos que enfrenta el modelo tradicional de educación jurídica. Propone varias líneas de innovación para la educación jurídica en Vietnam, entre ellas la actualización de los programas de capacitación, el fortalecimiento de las habilidades interdisciplinarias, la mejora de las capacidades digitales y la sensibilización sobre la ética y la responsabilidad jurídica en el uso de la IA.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Inteligencia Artificial. Educación jurídica. Transformación digital. Capacitación jurídica. Vietnam.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid and disruptive development of digital technology, especially AI, is creating tectonic disruptions in almost all economic and social sectors. AI is considered the “infrastructure of the new knowledge age,” with a profound impact on social, economic, and educational structures (OECD, 2021). The legal field, known for its highly conservative nature, emphasizing precedent, traditional norms, and absolute caution, cannot remain outside this transformation. In recent years, artificial intelligence has transcended the boundaries of science fiction or laboratory algorithms to become a powerful tool, increasingly applied directly to core activities of legal life. Modern AI systems are not limited to supporting administrative tasks. However, they are now capable of participating in complex legal research, analyzing and dissecting commercial contract terms, automating the production of legal documents, and even applying Big Data to predict the probability of success in legal battles or the outcome of court proceedings (Vanderbilt Law School, 2026).

The profound and comprehensive penetration of artificial intelligence is changing the very nature of the legal profession and the way legal services are delivered to clients. AI tools are gradually taking over tasks that require complex logical analysis, which were previously the exclusive prerogative of human intelligence. This shift poses a new and challenging proposition regarding the capabilities of modern jurists: excellence in legal doctrine and the ability to memorize legal rules are no longer sufficient for survival. Instead, the market demands multitasking and cross-functional skills, including mastery of legal technologies, in-depth data analysis capabilities, and, especially, keen sensitivity to ethical and information security risks posed by machine intervention (Richter, 2025).

In the context of a comprehensive restructuring of the legal profession ecosystem, legal education—as the cradle for training and supplying legal human resources for society—must make corresponding adjustments to avoid falling behind. AI is not simply a supporting tool but also a “cognitive agent,” powerful enough to reshape the relationship between legal knowledge and pedagogical methods (Balan, 2024). The development of artificial intelligence has inadvertently widened the gap between traditional legal training models and the practical needs of the modern legal services market (Nguyen, 2025). Law firms and businesses are no longer just looking for law graduates who can memorize laws; they crave “digital lawyers” capable of applying technology to optimize productivity and reduce costs. Lawyers of the future must be both legal thinkers and experts in technology and data systems (Susskind, 2022). This

necessitates a critical renewal of the philosophy, curriculum, and methods of legal education to train a generation of professionals suited to the technological era.

Although international academic and practical discussions on the impact of artificial intelligence on legal education have been extremely lively, with the emergence of interdisciplinary training models and Law-Technology research centers at many leading universities worldwide, research in this area in Vietnam remains relatively limited and fragmented. Currently, most law training institutions in Vietnam still operate according to the traditional model of academic knowledge transmission, while the national legal framework for technology is making strong strides, notably the official adoption of the Artificial Intelligence Law No. 134/2025/QH15 by the Vietnamese National Assembly (effective from March 1, 2026) and the issuance of Decision 678/QĐ-BGDĐT in 2025 by the Ministry of Education and Training on the Standards for undergraduate law training programs incorporating digital competency requirements (Tram, 2025).

Recognizing the urgency of the issue, this paper adopts an in-depth qualitative, bibliographic, and documentary research orientation to address four core objectives. The study examines academic literature, professional reports, institutional materials, and recent Vietnamese legal and educational documents related to artificial intelligence, legal practice, and legal education. The analysis was organized through a thematic reading of these sources, focusing on: (i) the transformation of legal work through AI; (ii) the new skills required of legal professionals; (iii) international trends in Law & Tech education; and (iv) implications for the reform of undergraduate legal education in Vietnam. The first objective focuses on a comprehensive analysis of the multifaceted impact of artificial intelligence on the transformation of the legal profession, from service delivery methods to business models. The second objective aims to identify and systematize the new requirements and skills for legal education in the AI era. The third objective evaluates the current state of the legal education system in Vietnam in comparison with global innovation trends. Finally, based on these foundational analyses, the paper proposes a set of highly feasible strategic implications for comprehensively reforming legal education in Vietnam, ensuring the flexible, sustainable adaptability of the national legal workforce in the future.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Artificial intelligence and the transformation of the legal profession: Applications of artificial intelligence in legal activities

The penetration of artificial intelligence into the modern legal services market has gone far beyond mere keyword search tools, moving toward deep cognitive interaction. Legal tech applications based on Machine Learning and Natural Language Processing (NLP) are disrupting and restructuring the traditional lawyer workflow across four core dimensions.

The first aspect lies in legal research and retrieval. In the past, traditional legal research platforms often required lawyers and legal assistants to spend hours grappling with complex Boolean search algorithms and using precise keywords to sift through massive databases. Now, artificial intelligence enables semantic search, allowing the system to accurately understand the specific context of a legal question and automatically extract the most relevant precedents and regulations. Global technology platforms like Bloomberg Law (n.d.) or advanced data systems not only search for documents but also analyze the evolution of precedents, automatically alerting users if a legal precedent has been overturned or modified. In Vietnam, the emergence of AI-powered legal lookup systems, backed by data from government agencies, has begun to demonstrate its superior capabilities, answering tens of thousands of questions from citizens and businesses in seconds, providing answers with specific and up-to-date legal citations. This application frees lawyers from mechanical search processes, allowing them to focus on constructing arguments.

The second aspect is the breakthrough in contract analysis and review. In corporate law and mergers and acquisitions (M&A), due diligence is often considered a workforce nightmare, requiring dozens of junior associates to work tirelessly in data rooms, reviewing thousands of contract pages for vulnerabilities. Now, specialized AI software for contract management (such as the Ironclad platform) can “read,” analyze, and extract contract data in seconds. AI systems can automatically identify unusual clauses (red flags), monitor changes and deviations in clauses from company standards, and provide compliance risk warnings (Miller, 2026). These tools drastically reduce review time and significantly eliminate inherent human biases, such as fatigue and reduced concentration, when reading repetitive texts.

The third aspect relates to the management and processing of legal documents and the automation of internal processes. The rapid rise of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in recent years has opened the possibility of automatically drafting preliminary legal documents, such as memoranda, advisory letters, risk reports, and even litigation documents, based on input

data and parameters established by lawyers (Vanderbilt Law School, 2026). Repetitive administrative legal tasks are being entirely delegated to AI. Large-scale surveys in 2025 indicate that AI is becoming a valuable partner for summarizing complex legal documents (74%), assisting with drafting legal summaries (59%), and managing law firms' internal knowledge bases (47%) (Richter, 2025).

The fourth aspect, and the area demonstrating the most outstanding capabilities of technology, is its ability to support dispute resolution and predict case outcomes. By exploiting and processing millions of past court judgments and decisions using big data and AI, systems can analyze a judge's habits, trends, and ruling rates for specific types of disputes. From there, AI can determine the probability of a case's success based on input variables (Miller, 2026). This ability to quantify legal risk fundamentally changes how litigation lawyers strategize, giving them a solid database to advise clients on whether to pursue a lawsuit to the end or accept an out-of-court settlement to optimize costs and benefits.

The Impact of AI on the Legal Profession

The deep integration of artificial intelligence tools into workflows is not merely an upgrade in supporting tools. However, it is actually creating structural transformations that are shaking up the entire legal profession's ecosystem on a global scale.

The first profound impact is the automation of work and unprecedented increases in productivity. According to in-depth reports surveying legal professionals in 2025, up to 80% of respondents expressed a firm belief that artificial intelligence will have a profound or very high transformative impact on their work within the next five years. The application of AI to routine tasks is not just theoretical. However, it has already yielded a real return on investment (ROI), with 53% of legal organizations reporting profits from investments in this technology. AI tools have been shown to save each lawyer approximately 240 working hours per year on procedural and research tasks. Notably, this automation does not lead to the feared scenario of AI stealing lawyers' jobs; rather, it serves as a productivity lever. Over 72% of legal professionals view AI as a force for good, helping them shed tedious tasks, significantly improving work-life balance, and freeing up time to invest in developing new, more strategic skills (Richter, 2025).

The second, and perhaps most disruptive, financial impact is the shift in the model of legal service delivery and pricing. The dramatic increase in AI productivity is severely undermining the billable hours model—considered the “golden goose” and the financial cornerstone of most traditional law firms for over a century. Clients are becoming increasingly

tech-savvy and AI-literate; they recognize that machines can complete a contract review in 5 minutes rather than 5 hours of human work, making time-based pricing unconvincing. This shift creates immense pressure on law firms to restructure. Reports indicate that approximately 45% of firms extensively using AI have had to adjust their pricing policies. Among these, the shift to value-based pricing, flat fees, or the addition of technology-specific fees (AI-specific fees) is becoming an inevitable trend. More than 43% of experts predict that the traditional hourly pricing model will decline irreversibly within the next 5 years (Richter, 2025).

The third impact manifests itself through the increasing role of technology, leading to the involvement of non-traditional entities and the democratization of law. Artificial intelligence is not limited to law firms but is empowering consumers with direct access to justice. Figures show that up to 14% of consumers have already confidently used AI to find answers to their basic legal questions, and a massive 43% are prepared to do so in the near future, particularly among Millennials and Gen Z (Clio, 2026). This process facilitates the growth of Legal Tech startups and Alternative Legal Service Providers (ALSPs) (Lander & Rogers, 2020). These entities, with their flexibility and low operating costs, are directly threatening and seizing market share from traditional law firms in the basic legal services segment, forcing the entire legal industry into a life-or-death technological race.

New skills for future lawyers

Faced with the transformative shift in the legal ecosystem, the ideal of an excellent lawyer is no longer defined solely by profound knowledge of legal doctrine or eloquent courtroom rhetoric. AI will not render lawyers obsolete, but those who use AI will replace and eliminate those who do not (Morris, 2025). To survive, adapt, and create value in the age of machines, future lawyers must equip themselves with a complex, multifaceted skill set.

The first skill is digital literacy and legal technology literacy. Lawyers do not necessarily need to be programmers, but they must understand the mechanisms, limitations, and potential of algorithmic systems. The ability to interact with AI-generated systems (such as ChatGPT, LawGPT, or e-Discovery tools) through efficient prompt engineering is transforming from a basic office skill into a fully professional one (Morris, 2025). Knowing how to formulate precise requests and provide sufficient context for AI to generate highly customized legal texts is an art that requires a deep understanding of both law and computer logic.

The second, crucial skill is critical thinking and the ability to analyze and process legal data (Critical Thinking & Data Analytics). It is essential to recognize a fundamental truth:

artificial intelligence provides vast amounts of knowledge but does not inherently possess absolute factual knowledge (Morris, 2025). Due to its algorithmic structure for predicting vocabulary, AI is highly susceptible to “hallucinations”—generating false information and fabricating precedents that do not exist but are presented in highly logical and persuasive language. It is at this technological blind spot that the role of lawyers shifts dramatically from “producers of documents” to “trusted advisors and strategic consultants.” Legal professionals need to possess sharp critical-thinking skills to question, cross-check, and assess the reliability, accuracy, and relevance of AI-generated results before advising clients (Moppett, 2025).

The third skill relates to a deep understanding of ethical risks and legal liability (Ethics & Compliance) in the digital environment. The application of technology is never a completely safe area from a legal standpoint. Uploading sensitive data and confidential client case files to cloud-based AI platforms poses serious information security risks. It threatens to violate the attorney-client privilege, a cornerstone of the legal profession (Bucher, 2025). According to recent surveys, 37% of lawyers express persistent concerns about data security when using AI. As many as 96% assert that allowing AI to represent clients in court crosses ethical boundaries. Therefore, future lawyers must understand these red lines, strictly apply data anonymization measures, and, especially, adhere to the principle of transparency: 78% of clients require lawyers to clearly inform them when their case is being processed using AI. However, currently 35% of legal professionals admit they rarely or never disclose this (Clio, 2026).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implications of Artificial Intelligence for Legal Education: The necessity of reforming legal education

The legal services market is shifting at rocket speed, supported by digital technology; however, a look back at the traditional legal education system reveals an alarming inertia (Nguyen, 2025). The legal training model in most educational institutions globally, including Vietnam, is designed and shaped by 20th-century thinking. The focus of this model is almost entirely on requiring students to memorize positive legal provisions, analyze past static judgments, and practice academic writing skills in accordance with traditional models.

Conservative education has created an increasingly widening and dangerous gap between the output of law schools and the practical needs of the job market. A modern, technology-driven law firm no longer wants to hire a graduate with an excellent academic

record, but who then spends months retraining to familiarize themselves with online legal document management software or automated contract management systems. The severe deficit in practical critical-thinking skills and the lack of digital-technology competence among students entering a practice environment that is heavily reliant on AI have created an emergency. It forces law schools to break free from their academic ivory tower and undertake a comprehensive restructuring of their training programs, or risk their graduates being obsolete immediately upon graduation (Moppett, 2025).

Trends in legal education innovation worldwide

Clearly aware of this disruptive wave of innovative technology, legal academia and a host of leading educational institutions worldwide have quickly established strategies to reshape teaching methods.

The first prominent trend is a strong shift towards new competency models, typically from the “I-shaped Lawyer” mindset (specialized but narrow) to the “T-shaped Lawyer” model, and, more advanced, the “Delta Model”. The T-shaped Lawyer model argues that a legal professional needs not only in-depth legal knowledge along the vertical axis, but also a broad knowledge base along the horizontal axis, including business, technology, design thinking, and project management, to be able to work effectively in an interdisciplinary environment (Eliadi, 2025). Furthermore, recent research has developed the Delta Model, outlining three essential competency pillars of the 21st century: (1) The Practice – core competency in legal analysis and research; (2) The Process – competency in process management, data analysis, and technology application; and (3) The People – emotional intelligence (EQ), empathy skills, communication and ethical problem-solving. International law schools are using the Delta Model as a compass for students to design their own career paths, recognizing that as AI is gradually doing well in “The Practice,” the survival of lawyers lies in mastering “The Process” and optimizing “The People” (Carrel, 2019).

The second trend is the integration of Law & Tech content into the main curriculum through specialized research institutes. In Asia, Singapore Management University (SMU) has taken a visionary step by establishing the Centre for AI and Data Governance within its Law School campus. This center not only serves as a research hub but also integrates policy, ethics, and legal framework issues related to AI directly into the curriculum, attracting global experts to teach (SMU, 2026).

The third trend is the enhancement of interdisciplinary practical training through courses in legal technology and business collaboration. Melbourne Law School in Australia is an excellent example of this trend. They offer highly practical courses such as “New Technology Law,” “Start-Up Law,” and especially “Law Apps” (Melbourne Law School, 2026). Within the framework of the innovative Law Tech Design Pop-Up course, law students not only attend lectures but also work directly with the Maddocks law firm and the Josef startup. In just four weeks, students successfully designed, programmed, and built legal chatbot applications to solve real-world problems such as advising on domestic violence intervention orders or assessing social welfare (Flynn, 2019). Project-based learning and the integration of fundamental coding skills into law school are setting a new gold standard on the global education map.

LEGAL EDUCATION IN VIETNAM IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Overview of the legal education system in Vietnam

Over the past two decades, the undergraduate law training system in Vietnam has witnessed significant expansion in both scale and type. The current landscape includes established specialized law training institutions such as Hanoi Law University and Ho Chi Minh City Law University; a system of member universities or law faculties affiliated with multidisciplinary universities and national universities (such as the University of Law - Vietnam National University, Hanoi; the National Economics University; and the Foreign Trade University); along with the participation of a range of private educational institutions.

In terms of curriculum structure and teaching methods, the vast majority of institutions still maintain an overwhelming allocation of time to interpreting positive legal norms (black-letter law), analyzing the theoretical basis of state and law, and traditional subjects (Civil, Criminal, Administrative, Commercial). While practical professional skills have been emphasized through mock trials (moot court) or skills-based courses, they generally still simulate traditional litigation processes, lacking a connection to modern professional tools (Tram & Pham, 2021).

However, a strategic turning point in legal education policy has just occurred with the issuance of Decision No. 678/QĐ-BGDĐT (dated March 14, 2025) by the Minister of Education and Training, stipulating the standards for university-level legal training programs. In practical terms, this decision defines minimum requirements for law programs at the higher

education level, including expected learning outcomes, program structure, quality assurance mechanisms, and the professional competencies that graduates must develop (Tran, 2025). A crucial and trend-aligned highlight is that Decision 678/QĐ-BGDĐT not only requires students to meet standards in legal and political knowledge but also clearly defines the need to meet digital competency requirements. Accordingly, graduates in law must possess the necessary skills and knowledge to use digital technology effectively in both their studies and work. The institutionalization of these digital competency output standards provides a solid legal foundation and impels universities to urgently implement reforms.

The level of integration of technology and AI in legal education

Faced with the explosive pressure of digital transformation and new regulations, the level of integration of technology and artificial intelligence into legal education in Vietnam is beginning to show positive changes. However, it remains in its early stages and exhibits clear differentiation across educational institutions.

In terms of incorporating technology content into the curriculum, several multidisciplinary higher education institutions have shown considerable flexibility. For example, the National Economics University (NEU) and the University of Economics Ho Chi Minh City have quickly introduced new courses, such as “Law and the Digital Economy” and the compulsory course “Application of Information Technology in Law.” At Hanoi Law University, the launch of new specialized Technology Law-oriented programs of high quality is also being promoted to anticipate market demand. In addition, advanced legal issues of the digital age, such as the law on non-fungible tokens (NFTs), AI liability, and the application of Blockchain in intellectual property, have gradually become popular topics at academic conferences, graduation theses, and expert forums organized by law training institutions.

Regarding the application of AI in practical learning, the biggest change is happening from the bottom up, meaning it originates from the learners themselves. Law students in Vietnam have quickly adopted and widely used large language models (LLMs), such as ChatGPT, to assist with translating complex legal terms, summarizing lengthy judgments, and reviewing reference materials (Ho, 2025). The emergence and widespread use of domestic search tools, such as AI Law Search (<https://aitracuuluat.vn/>), further increase the frequency of student interaction with technology.

Limitations and Challenges

The overall picture of legal education modernization in Vietnam in the context of artificial intelligence, alongside some bright spots, still faces a series of systemic barriers and challenges.

The biggest challenge stems from the outdated nature of training programs compared to the rapid pace of technological development. The evaluation process for opening a new academic program or updating the curriculum is often lengthy, resulting in the knowledge imparted in the classroom lagging behind practice by many years. Most courses still revolve around legal thinking from the pre-Internet era, lacking a connection between theoretical frameworks and issues arising in cyberspace and the vast data environment.

Secondly, there is a serious gap in subjects related to Legal Technology. At most law schools, students spend four years of their undergraduate studies with virtually no exposure to or guidance on the practical use of professional software (such as e-Discovery software and algorithmic contract risk management systems). The inevitable consequence is a widening gap between the quality of education and the needs of the legal services market; graduates possess academic knowledge but are largely “clueless” about the tools used in a digitized law office. Furthermore, the majority of faculty members remain familiar with traditional research methods, resulting in a serious shortage of qualified personnel to teach subjects that bridge the gap between law and computer science.

The third challenge, and one of the most urgent academic concerns, is the risk of violating educational integrity and ethics. The rapid growth of AI poses a significant risk that students will use it to mechanically complete assignments, essays, and dissertations, thereby neglecting critical thinking and cross-referencing (Ho, 2025). The lack of a unified and transparent code of conduct from universities regarding the limits of AI use not only erodes integrity in the academic environment but also stifles independent thinking—the sharpest weapon of legal professionals (Moppet, 2025).

A fourth challenge concerns regulation, data governance, and the structural biases embedded in AI systems. AI tools should not be treated as neutral or purely technical resources, because their outputs depend on training datasets, programming choices, platform design, commercial interests, and the infrastructure maintained by companies and data centers. In legal education, this issue is especially sensitive: students and professionals may process confidential client information, judicial documents, personal data, and institutional records through systems whose storage, reuse, and security conditions are not always transparent. Bias may also emerge

from the initial design of a tool or from the majoritarian patterns present in large-scale user data, producing outputs that reproduce social, linguistic, gender, racial, economic, or jurisdictional asymmetries. For this reason, any curriculum that incorporates AI must also incorporate regulatory literacy, data protection, algorithmic accountability, human oversight, and critical verification as central pedagogical objectives (Balan, 2024; UNESCO, 2021; Wachter, 2020).

IMPLICATIONS FOR REFORMING LEGAL EDUCATION IN VIETNAM

To keep pace with the national digital transformation and prepare a high-quality legal workforce ready to respond to global challenges, Vietnam's legal education system needs a comprehensive restructuring based on three strategic pillars: Updating the curriculum structure, developing practical digital skills, and creating a connected ecosystem based on real-world practices.

Updating the legal training program

Adjusting the structure of the training program requires a philosophical shift from a “purely legal training” model to an interdisciplinary training model (Law – Computer Science – Digital Economy). Specifically, educational institutions need to design and include the following three core content groups as mandatory or elective courses:

The first and most crucial component is “AI and Law”. This is no longer a theoretical issue, as Vietnam has officially joined the ranks of pioneering countries with a specialized legal framework, having enacted the Artificial Intelligence Act (Law No. 134/2025/QH15, effective from March 1, 2026). In general terms, this statute regulates the development, provision, deployment, and use of AI systems in Vietnam by establishing human-centered principles, risk-based governance, transparency obligations, and duties applicable to providers and users of AI systems (Le & Do, 2026). Therefore, law schools have a responsibility to equip students with a thorough understanding of these mechanisms immediately. The teaching content must encompass the core principles of Article 4 (AI must serve humanity, not replace human authority, and ensure fairness and transparency). Furthermore, students need to master the risk classification mechanism in Article 9, clearly distinguishing between risk groups (from unacceptable risks that are absolutely prohibited, high risks requiring rigorous verification in healthcare and education, to medium and low risks). In particular, compliance consulting skills

regarding transparency responsibilities under Article 11—requiring identification labels for AI-generated content to combat information manipulation—will be a booming area of legal services that students need to be prepared for (Le & Do, 2026).

The second group of content focuses on “Legal Technology.” Law schools need to move beyond theory to bring practical tools into the classroom. The program should guide students in exploiting large legal databases, using machine learning algorithms to study case law at an advanced level, and manipulating contract management software. Referencing and adapting models like the “Law Apps” of the University of Melbourne—where students learn to map legal regulations to mind maps to program automated legal applications—is a groundbreaking approach that helps transform students’ mindsets from consumers of legal documents to designers of legal solutions (legal designers).

The third content area is “Law in the Digital Economy.” The training program needs to delve into the legal frameworks for digital business models, including regulations on digital assets (tokenized assets, crypto), investment incentives for AI data centers, cross-border personal data security, and blockchain technology (Nguyen & Do, 2025). These are areas with phenomenal growth rates where commercial law firms in Vietnam are desperately in need of specialized personnel.

Developing new skills for law students

Changes in content must go hand in hand with skill-building methods, using the Delta Model and the digital competency output standards as outlined in Decision 678/QĐ-BGDĐT as the guiding framework.

Developing data analytics and tech literacy skills: Students need hands-on practice to master operations in the digital environment and learn how to organize and secure information on cloud platforms. Simultaneously, the ability to analyze massive amounts of data to identify legal trends (legal analytics) needs to be elevated to a core skill, complementing and strongly supporting traditional legal writing and argumentation skills. Developing the ability to collaborate across disciplines, especially communicating with software engineering experts, is a mandatory requirement of the “T-Lawyer” model.

Developing critical thinking and verification skills in an AI environment: Because AI-powered survival systems have an inherent weakness regarding “hallucination,” teaching and assessment methods in law schools must be redesigned. The focus of assessment must shift from “the ability to memorize and reproduce information” to “the ability to evaluate and

critically analyze information.” Students may be allowed, even encouraged, to use AI to generate initial drafts of legal advice. However, the exam will assess how students identify discrepancies in AI-generated legal precedent and refine and re-argue the draft to protect their client’s interests best. This process helps cultivate a habit of scientific skepticism and independent thinking.

Digital ethics education and professional integrity: Educational institutions need to proactively issue transparent and rigorous codes of conduct (guidelines) on the use of AI in academia, similar to the “DOs and DON’Ts” codes of advanced universities, including institutional guidance on generative AI use (SMU, 2026b). Students must be thoroughly trained on the principle of redacting customer data before providing input to public AI tools, understand the legal consequences of leaking trade secrets, and develop the habit of 100% cross-checking machine-generated results. UNESCO’s (2021) recommendation emphasizes that educational institutions can refer to values such as the protection of human rights and the ensuring of fairness in the application of AI. The application of AI should not completely replace traditional learning, but rather focus on fostering self-learning abilities. Over-reliance on AI tools can lead students to become lazy in thinking about assignments or to lose academic integrity. From a professional perspective, digital ethics is not just a matter of school regulations but a life-or-death issue related to a lawyer’s professional life and honor before clients and the law.

Strengthening the connection between legal training and practice

The gap between law school and the labor market is too large for universities to fill on their own without strategic collaboration from technology companies and professional organizations.

Promoting strategic cooperation between law schools and law firms: The model of signing cooperation agreements that brings lawyers and practical experts directly into the training process needs to be replicated. A typical example is the cooperation between the Faculty of Law – Foreign Trade University and KPMG Law Firm, where experts directly participate in teaching, provide career guidance, and offer practical insights to students in high-quality programs (Nguyen & Dinh, 2023). Law firms can provide materials to design case studies based on real data from high-tech mergers and acquisitions, helping students become familiar with the pressure of solving real-world problems.

Developing Digital Clinical Legal Education (CLE) models: Traditional community-based legal education (CLE) programs, where students travel to local communities to provide

legal assistance, need to be “digitized” to improve accessibility. Universities can collaborate with legal tech startups or organizations like the Vietnam Legaltech Foundation to guide students in programming and operating legal chatbot systems. Through these platforms, students can provide free and fast online legal advice to disadvantaged communities and small startups. Participating in these digital community projects helps universities fulfill their social responsibility while creating a perfect hands-on environment for students to gain experience in legal tech.

Building Augmented Reality (AR/VR) Simulation Spaces and Legal Technology Centers: To realize the digital vision, law training institutions need to invest adequate resources in building modern “LawTech Labs.” These spaces can utilize AR/VR simulation technology to organize digital mock trials, where electronic evidence data is presented and analyzed in real time. Furthermore, regularly organizing “Legal Hackathons”—in which law students collaborate with IT students to design software solutions that automate specific legal processes—will provide a strong impetus for creative thinking. In the long term, establishing Legal and Technology Research Centers within multidisciplinary universities, where the intellectual resources of legal experts, policymakers, and technology engineers converge, is an essential model that needs to be promoted.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Artificial intelligence is not a fleeting technological wave or a passing trend; it is a transformative shift that is fundamentally restructuring the cognitive foundation and operational ecosystem of the legal profession globally. The emergence of large language models (LLMs), AI-generated content, and sophisticated legal tech software is eroding the legal profession’s historical monopoly on accessing, analyzing, and storing information. However, from a more positive perspective, this displacement opens up a tremendous opportunity, a new horizon for a new generation of lawyers—those with the mindset and ability to harness the boundless power of technology to shed manual labor, thereby becoming superior strategists and legal advisors whom machines cannot replace.

For the legal education system in Vietnam, the explosion of artificial intelligence places universities before a pivotal moment of historical significance. The enactment of the Artificial Intelligence Law No. 134/2025/QH15, with its comprehensive risk management mechanism, and the Ministry of Education and Training’s Decision 678/QĐ-BGDĐT of 2025, which

establishes digital competency standards, are not merely state administrative documents. They are crucial legal stepping stones, sending a strong signal that paves the way and creates pressure for the modernization of the education system. To avoid being left behind in the global intellectual race, legal training institutions in Vietnam must decisively abandon the stagnation of the one-way theoretical transmission model. Universities need to bravely undertake major curriculum overhauls, placing subjects like artificial intelligence, data science, e-contract management, and legal tech operational skills at the heart of their teaching. Simultaneously, shifting the philosophy from training “law-learning machines” to cultivating “risk analysts and creative problem solvers based on emotional intelligence and ethics” (as envisioned in the Delta Model) must be considered the core educational philosophy of the new era.

This study also has limitations that must be acknowledged. It is an initial bibliographic and documentary analysis of a phenomenon that is still recent and in the process of implementation in Vietnam. The article does not rely on empirical data collected from law schools, faculty members, students, law firms, courts, or regulatory agencies. Consequently, its conclusions should be understood as analytical and prospective, not as a measurement of the current effectiveness of AI-related reforms in legal education. Future studies should include interviews, surveys, curriculum mapping, institutional case studies, and longitudinal monitoring of how Vietnamese law schools actually incorporate AI, digital competence, data protection, and legal technology into their programs.

This transformation is a long and arduous journey, fraught with challenges and requiring enormous resources. However, close, substantive collaboration among state management agencies, higher education institutions, leading law firms, and the legal technology business community will be the universal key to unlocking a superior training ecosystem. Only then can Vietnam proudly produce a generation of outstanding “digital lawyers”—individuals who are not only deeply knowledgeable in traditional legal doctrines but also proficient in technology, steadfast in professional ethics, ready to compete fairly and serve society in an increasingly digitized world. The future existence, prosperity, and sustainable development of the legal profession will undoubtedly belong to those who know how to perfectly and subtly combine the depth of human thought with the boundless computing power of artificial intelligence. It is time for law schools in Vietnam to step forward and become centers of innovation, the first laboratories of this historic combination.

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