**Housing Justice Chatbot Building Clinic**

**Application for Spring 2020 course**

Due no later than noon on Monday, November4, 2019 [the day before registration for blended only begins.]

3 credit course, fully online, letter graded.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Affordable housing issues are proliferating across the nation. Yet lawyers who help moderate and low-income tenants are few and far between. Chatbots--simple question-answer flowcharts--are emerging as a way of delivering essential legal information. In this course, students will identify and research a pressing housing issue facing a community—if possible, their local community—and will find and collaborate with an organization that is trying to address that issue. Then each student will construct a chatbot that addresses the issue. To build this tool, students will need to learn the law governing their rental housing issue, e.g., remedies for needed repairs, laws governing tenant application fees, return of security deposit, expungement of eviction court records, and the like. Students also will research resources—including, especially, human helpers—for tenants experiencing that housing challenge in the chosen locale.

Students will begin by creating a flowchart reflecting the logic of the law governing the matter before using the software application FlowXO to develop a chatbot that addresses the housing law concern they have chosen. The final phase of the course will be to vet the chatbot each student has developed with the coaching of faculty. We anticipate that each student will post a chatbot on Canvas, which will allow it to be seen, used as an example, and tested by students, faculty and staff. Some may be deployed on the website of the organization with which they have partnered in identifying the housing topic for the chatbot. The ethics, limits, and possibilities of legal information chatbots will be included in the course readings and discussions.

**APPLICATION: Please return your application to Prof. Juergens and/or Prof. Needham no later than Monday, November 4 at noon. We will notify you the next day whether we are able to enroll you in the course so that you can register for it in the day or so following.** **Ann.juergens@mitchellhamline.edu** **and** **lisa.needham@mitchellhamline.edu****.**

**Name**:

**Home address** (include county or borough at end):

**Email**:

**Number of credits completed** at the end of Fall semester 2019: \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Name and briefly describe community-based resources and an organization**—whether a

non-profit, social benefit corporation, government office or other—that might be appropriate as a sponsor of the housing justice chatbot that you will build for this course. [This question does not require that you first speak with the organization, rather that you do a bit of research for potential beneficiaries of or collaborators on the chatbot that you will build in this course.]

**Name and web address of organization:**

Brief--no more than 30 words--**description of the organization**:

1. In no more than 100 words, **outline a** **housing-related justice issue** in your community or in a community with which you are familiar. Include a sentence or two describing the people who are affected by this housing justice issue and also a sentence or two about possible cause(s) of the justice issue.
2. **Statement of interest**: In no more than 50 words, tell us why you are interested in taking

this course.

1. **What in your background would help us** decide to choose you for participation in this

course? Include a few words about your facility with technology. No more than 50 words please.

**NOTE:**

Clear writing, good grammar and syntax are important for every lawyer. We of course will take writing skills into account in deciding who is most prepared for the work in this course.

**Ann Juergens’ office is in Room 334. Lisa Needham’s office is next door in Room 336**. Feel free to stop by to ask questions or to meet us when you are in town. An appointment is optional, but wise. We happily field questions via email as well, of course.