

# Department of Computer Science

## Colloquium Lecture

### *Black Box or Sandbox: Computational Approaches to Interpreting Michigan's Clean Slate Law*

**November 10 • 3-4 pm • Rekhi 214 • Zoom**

**Presented by:** Ali Ebneenasir, Computer Science; Susanna Peters, Social Sciences; Charles Wallace, Computer Science; and graduate student Josh Alele-beals, Computer Science

**Lecture Abstract:** In this presentation, we articulate some of the confusion and disagreement over the interpretation of the Clean Slate statute through interviews with legal professionals. Next, we explain the operation of the Rules Engine, following the relatively sparse explanation available, and we discuss the consequences of this effective but inscrutable tool. Finally, we present our initial work on an alternative computational approach: a “digital sandbox” for legislators, lawyers, judges, and citizens to define and explore the consequences of legislation. The sandbox environment will allow

differing interpretations of statutory law, or various revisions to existing law, to be expressed formally and compared through automated analysis. We see computation as a way not only to expand the benefits of criminal justice reform but also to enhance individuals’ understanding and agency with regard to the law.



Read more and  
find the Zoom link.

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