Fall 2016 – SOWK 305 – Outcome 3 – define examples of intellectual property

After this session, students will be able to define examples of intellectual property.

Directions

1. Working on your own, read the below background reading and answer the exercise questions.
2. Working as a group, discuss your answers and thoughts about the material.
3. Formulate a list of the most important points your group believes the rest of class should know.
4. Turn in your sheet at the end of class.

Background Reading

What is Intellectual Property?

Intellectual property (IP) refers to creations of the mind, such as inventions; literary and artistic works; designs; and symbols, names and images used in commerce.

IP is protected in law by, for example, patents, copyright and trademarks, which enable people to earn recognition or financial benefit from what they invent or create. By striking the right balance between the interests of innovators and the wider public interest, the IP system aims to foster an environment in which creativity and innovation can flourish.


Intellectual Property: Valuable to Every Discipline

By John Villasenor August 04, 2014
From: http://www.chronicle.com/article/Intellectual-Property-/147985

Intellectual property—patents, copyright, trademarks, trade secrets—plays a vital role in economic growth and prosperity. Yet outside of law schools, most American colleges provide little or no opportunity for students to receive any substantive instruction in it. As a result, students often graduate under the misimpression, no doubt shared by many of their professors, that IP is a topic of interest and relevance only to lawyers, with little connection to their own careers.

That couldn’t be more incorrect. Intellectual property, at the highest level, addresses the creations of the mind. It is why writers, architects, filmmakers, and musicians can pursue a living practicing their crafts. It provides protection for the individual entrepreneur who pours his or her life savings into developing an invention that could change the world. And it drives investments to develop the technologies and medicines that have improved the lives of billions of people.

In short, the very things that a college education is designed to cultivate, including the ability to innovate, to be creative, and to observe the world and come up with ways to make it better, are tied directly to intellectual-property rights.

Colleges owe it to their students to do a better job of offering courses that can provide at least a foundational level of awareness of the subject. Graduates who enter the job market without that awareness can make costly mistakes. One who starts a technology company without a basic understanding of how to handle patentable inventions could inadvertently take steps that would prevent her from patenting those
inventions. A graduate who accepts a job in a company involved in content creation or distribution, but who doesn’t understand the basics of copyright, could cause his employer to be dragged into a lawsuit. Proper handling of trade secrets, whether information about customers, computer code, or forthcoming product releases, is essential to the success of any enterprise.

In a world that is increasingly interconnected, and in which content and ideas can be generated, shared, and collaboratively enhanced ever faster, there are also broader societal benefits to creating a more IP-aware, innovation-capable work force. Every academic discipline is connected to innovation. Nearly every job to which graduates aspire involves some exercise of creativity, whether it is designing computer chips, cars, or buildings; writing songs, screenplays, articles, and books; teaching children, college students, or retirees; or founding a company. An understanding of intellectual-property rights has at least some potential relevance, and often vital relevance, in every discipline.

Against this backdrop, the good news is that students, at both the undergraduate and graduate level, are eager to learn about IP when given the opportunity. Recently I taught a new course at UCLA’s Anderson School of Management on “Intellectual Property for Technology Entrepreneurs and Managers.” I was amazed at the level of interest in the course, which attracted students not only from the M.B.A. program but also from engineering, political science, computer science, cellular pathology, and molecular biology, among other disciplines. Many more students expressed interest but couldn’t enroll because there weren’t enough seats in the classroom.

The bad news is that, with a few exceptions, the strong student demand for IP instruction has not generally been recognized by the faculty members who are in charge of curriculum. The vertical structure of academic departments can create a disincentive to truly interdisciplinary courses, including those addressing IP. An engineering professor who proposes an engineering course at a faculty meeting will very likely be met with nods of agreement. If that professor instead proposes a course on intellectual property, the reaction will often be much more mixed, and the course may never see the light of day.

Of course, it makes no sense for every academic department to develop its own IP course, but there is no need to do that. As I have witnessed in my own class, a single IP course can capture interest and engagement from those in a wide spectrum of disciplines.

Forcing all students to take a course in IP would be a mistake, adding to the already significant burden that students face in satisfying degree requirements. However, the status quo, in which most students, unless they are studying law, don’t even have the option of taking an IP course, is problematic. Most degree programs, at both undergraduate and graduate levels, allow students to choose from at least some elective courses. Ensuring that a course on intellectual property is among the choices would provide access to information that would be immensely valuable in enabling them to contribute to the innovation economy.

*John Villasenor teaches in the schools of engineering, public affairs, and management at the University of California at Los Angeles. He is also a nonresident senior fellow at the Brookings Institution.*
**Exercises**

**True | False**

Answer the following true or false questions and explain your answer.

1. Intellectual property only concerns people in law, business and technology fields.
   
   True or False
   
   Explain your answer:

2. Laws prevent the creators of intellectual property from earning recognition or financial benefit from what they invent or create.
   
   True or False
   
   Explain your answer:

3. Papers you write for your classes are your intellectual property.
   
   True or False
   
   Explain your answer:

4. Pictures you take are your intellectual property.
   
   True or False
   
   Explain your answer:

**Discussion Questions**

1. How do you think the idea of intellectual property relates to citations in research papers?

2. List specific examples of intellectual property you use daily.
What should the rest of class know?

Prepare a brief list of key points your group believes the rest of the class must know.

•
•
•
•
•

What do you still need?

After doing all of this, what do you still have questions about?
Notes for Group Presentations

Group 1 – define and detect plagiarism

Group 2 – define examples of intellectual property

Group 3 – describe copyright

Group 4 – describe why citing the work of others is important

Group 5 – identify the elements of citations for journal articles and books

Group 6 – construct citations

Group 7 – employ citations to locate a resource