

CIS 490/590
Computer Ethics
Spring 2013
Exercise #4

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY: How can we own software ideas?

DUE on Thursday May 2, 2:00 p.m. (beginning of class)

This assignment is graded and will be handed in.

Deliverables: Bring two printed copies of your answers to class. You will hand in one and use one for discussion during class on Thursday.

The purpose of this exercise is to understand the concept of intellectual property, how it applies to patenting software, and how it should be regulated, if at all. We will practice on a particular case.

After reading and understanding the ideas presented in lecture and in the suggested readings, please read the case for this exercise called *Apple Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.* Here are some links to a general overview:

<<http://allthingsd.com/20120824/samsung-found-in-violation-of-apple-patents/>>

<<http://blog.seattlepi.com/timothymccormack/2012/08/27/apple-v-samsung-patent-infringement-what-it-means-for-seattle-businesses/>>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apple_Inc._v._Samsung_Electronics_Co.,_Ltd.>

We will focus in particular one of the patents, the “pinch-to-zoom”. You will find it useful to examine the actual patent document found on our class website under the READINGS page at the following URL:

<<http://www.cs.uoregon.edu/Classes/13S/cis490/READINGS/readings.html>>

You may freely search for any web sources that discuss this topic, but give citations if you use their ideas or quotes.

Please answer the following questions in ONE page maximum¹:

- 1) Describe in the first paragraph what Samsung did in its design to infringe the six Apple patents. Be specific about what each patent does.

¹ Paper format is single-spaced and with 1” margins, 12 point Times font. At the top, please state your name, the Exercise #, and the date. The paper must follow professional standards for format and citation. It must have excellent spelling and grammar.

2) Describe in a second paragraph what Samsung could have done to avoid this lawsuit.

3) In following paragraphs discuss the following:

Look at the pinch-to-zoom patent (on the READINGS website), do you think this should be patented?

Do you agree that Apple should have won this lawsuit against Samsung?

Should software ideas be patented? Should it be open-source?

Policy on Graduate Student Grading: Since this is a combined undergraduate/graduate class, graduate student answers on exercises and discussions will be held to higher expectations of quality.

Policy on Late Assignments: **All assignments are due** at the beginning of class on the date due. Since we will discuss the assignments at that time, you must be present in class to receive credit. Late assignments will not be accepted. If you think you have a legitimate reason to argue for an exception from this rule, make sure that you communicate it *prior* to the due date.

Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism: Assignments constitute a large part of evaluation; hence it is crucial that they reflect your individual or group work. Any traces of plagiarism, i.e. copying someone else's work, will be dealt with according to the University regulations. On the other hand, I encourage you to share ideas and discuss the material in the lectures and textbook with other members of the class.