

Fall Term 2000 - Introduction to Copyright

Copyright law has become increasingly important as the U.S. has shifted from a predominantly manufacturing economy to an information economy and as such products as software, recorded music, movies, and TV have grown to major importance as exports. Because of the explosive growth of the Internet and other forms of digital distribution copyright law has become a field resonating with critical policy debates and the target of many proposed changes.

The course provides a comprehensive overview of U.S. copyright law. It begins with the substantive and procedural requirements that surround copyright protection. It proceeds to survey the rights granted copyright holders and important limits on those rights such as "fair use." How infringement is established, what remedies are available, and other important features of copyright litigation are covered. Issues raised by new information technologies and recent the amendments and proposed changes dealing with them receive special attention. Finally because of the growing importance of the global market for copyright-based products, the international copyright system is also surveyed.

All instruction, including course discussions, will take place via the Internet.

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Spring Term 2000 - Social Security Law

This course covers issues of entitlement and benefit calculation arising out of the set of programs popularly referred to as Social Security. The law of these programs touches the lives of well over 90 percent of all persons living or working in the United States and provides critical income to those who have retired or ceased working due to severe physical or mental disability and members of their families.

Both individually and collectively the amounts are very large. For a majority of those receiving Social Security, the benefits represent at least half their total income. Total payments amount to more than \$380 billion a year.

The law directing these payments and setting their amount is complex. Questions about proper application of this law are raised in thousands of administrative hearings and federal court proceedings each year. Learning about that law is important, however, not only to those who must resolve questions of Social Security law as judges or who represent individuals and families seeking Social Security benefits, but to all individuals, family members, and organizations seeking a clearer understanding of how this program affects their lives and plans. Since these benefits are so important to individuals at critical points in their lives, knowing under what circumstances Social Security benefits are available and how much they will be is essential for effective financial planning. Decisions about when to retire, how much to save and in what form, and

even whether to marry or divorce should in many cases involve consideration of Social Security.

All instruction, including course discussions, will take place via the Internet.

If you want to say more about the nature of the Internet instruction, here is some additional text. In addition, I have prepared an on-line introduction so that students can actually experience the principal technologies with which the courses will be conducted.

Students interested in the course should be directed to:

<http://wwwsecure.law.cornell.edu/background/distance/distance00.htm>

[additional text about the Net features]

About the Internet instruction in Introduction to Copyright and Social Security Law:

The basic components of this course include the following:

- All course materials will be on the Web.
- Background and introductory material, points about the readings, problems, and the opening portion of class discussion will all presented by Professor Martin using Web-linked streaming audio.
- Web-based tutorials and exercises tightly integrated with the readings and presentations will provide a regular means for each student to gauge the level of his or her understanding of each topic in preparation for class discussion.
- Class discussions will take place using written exchange within a Web conference environment.
- Evenly spaced through the term there will be several short writing assignments and problem-solving assignments to be submitted via the Net for teacher evaluation and feedback, followed by class discussion.
- While all students in the course will have to keep pace with the scheduled progression through the topics, readings, discussion, and problems, none of the above elements needs be done at a specifically scheduled time of day or day of the week.
- There will be a final exam, a "take-home."