

Intellectual Property in the 21st Century

Synopsis

The field of intellectual property has become one of the hottest, most significant areas of the law today. No longer restricted to the realm of literary authors and inventors of mechanical applications, intellectual property law now touches the lives of everyone, if not life itself. Can life itself be patented? Who owns human genetic material? The individual? Or the scientist decoding that person's genetic composition? These pressing questions and numerous other related issues now occupy the scholars and practitioners of intellectual property law. In this program, we will explore these 'brave new world' developments and assess their current and future impacts on lawyers as they practice in the field, judges as they prepare for cases involving these issues, and librarians as they conduct research, provide reference assistance, and support patrons' information needs in this vital area.

In our first session, we will explore in depth the controversial issue of patenting life as a case example of the 'brave new world' confronting the field of intellectual property law. So that we appreciate just how 'brave' this new world indeed is, Professor Michael Meurer will first provide an historical backdrop for our current situation, briefly reviewing how policy and legal developments in the last ten to twenty years have created the context in which life itself can possibly be patented. With this historical survey in hand, we will navigate our way through the 'brave new world' itself. Thomas Meyers of Testa, Hurwitz & Thibault will detail, from his perspective of advising clients in the field, the significant

technological and scientific developments currently confronting and shaping the interface between intellectual property law and biotechnology.

Having assayed the current developments in this specific area, we will then investigate where technological, scientific, and legal developments will possibly take us in other areas of intellectual property in the next decade. Professor Maureen O'Rourke will look into her crystal ball and share her ideas on what intellectual property law will look like in 2010. Karen Hersey, Senior Counsel for Intellectual Property at MIT, will address what major intellectual property issues libraries and librarians will likely face in the next ten years.

In our afternoon sessions, we will explore the practical consequences these current and future developments are having, and will have, on lawyers, judges and librarians. Steven Bauer of Testa, Hurwitz & Thibault will address the challenges these developments are having, and will have, on lawyers engaged in intellectual property law practice. Next, the Honorable William G. Young will address how these developments are affecting, and will affect, judges as they prepare to adjudicate cases in these highly complex areas. Finally, Ruth Carter Armstrong of Goodwin Procter LLP will address how all of these developments, current and future, will impact advanced intellectual property legal research and what resources the intellectual property legal researcher needs, and will need, to keep pace with this ever-changing field.

Program Schedule

9:00 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.	Registration and Continental Breakfast
9:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Welcome & Introduction
10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	"Historical Overview: Policy and Legal Developments Shaping the Interface between Intellectual Property Law and Biotechnology," Prof. Michael Meurer, Boston University School of Law "Who Owns Your Genes? Can Your Life Be Patented?" Thomas Meyers, Partner, Testa, Hurwitz & Thibault
11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Mid-Morning Break
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	"Intellectual Property in 2010 and Major Issues for Libraries," Associate Dean Maureen O'Rourke, Boston University School of Law & Karen Hersey, Senior Counsel for Intellectual Property, MIT
12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	Lunch and LLNE Business Meeting
2:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.	"Intellectual Property Law Practice," Steven Bauer, Partner, Testa, Hurwitz & Thibault "IP in the Courts," The Honorable William G. Young, Chief Judge, United States District Court, District of Massachusetts
3:15 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.	Afternoon Break
3:45 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	"Advanced Intellectual Property Research and Resources," Ruth Carter Armstrong, Director of Information Services, Goodwin Procter LLP