Course description and objectives:
Issues of intellectual property are becoming increasingly important as a global phenomenon and are reaching deep into people’s day-to-day life. Knowledge of copyright, trademark and related matters is no longer relevant only to legal and business professionals but central to communication practices and research.

This class has two goals. First, it provides students with practical advice regarding possible intellectual property issues in media production and prepares them for encounters with the law and with legal professionals in future careers. Second, it introduces critical studies of intellectual property in the context of transforming global political economy of communications in order to help students to engage with on-going debates, to gain critical insights, and to develop related research projects.

Required readings:
The Creative Artist’s Legal Guide: Copyright, Trademark, and Contracts in Film and Digital Media Production
by Bill Seiter and Ellen Seiter
Yale University Press, 2012

Copyrighting Culture: The Political Economy of Intellectual Property
by Ronald Bettig
Westview Press, 1996

Digital Copyright
by Jessica Litman
Prometheus Books, 2006

Creativity and Its Discontents: China’s Creative Industries and Intellectual Property Rights Offenses
by Laikwan Pang
Requirements and evaluation
Writing assignments: 80%
Attendance and class participation: 20%

Writing assignments:
Students have two options:
1) A 15-page research project. Student picks a topic in relation to class content and conducts independent research and writing. The finished project should have two parts. Part 1 needs to discuss the importance of your research, locate existing scholarship, and explain how your work will contribute to our knowledge in these areas. You answer needs to include, but not limited to, how and/or why current literature does not sufficiently address or solve the issue, and how your work may fill in the gap. Part 2 needs to be a thorough discussion on how you will gather data and information for your research. It should discuss what data and information you will need and also detailed plans on how to gather them. You will also need to provide critical evaluation of your research methods, discussing possible alternatives and the reason(s) you pick yours.

An informal, one-page proposal, including the topic and the research plan, will need to be submitted to the instructor by week 8 (Oct 12), after which the instructor will meet one-to-one with students to discuss the research topic.

The mid-term proposal is due on Nov 9. The mid-term proposal will include a preliminary literature review and plans for further literature review and research. It needs to incorporate responses to the instructor’s previous comments, and set forth a detailed work plan for the second half of the semester. The length of the mid-term proposal will be around 6 pages.

The final project is due Dec 12 at 5pm. It needs to include a thorough literature review and a detailed, feasible research plan.

2) Pick three books – one from class readings, and two from the reading list provided by the instructor – and write one 6-page response paper for each book. A response paper will discuss the main arguments in the book and provide the student’s analysis and comments, e.g., whether you agree with the book, what are evidences that can support/counter the argument, what are the loopholes in the book’s analysis, how the findings in the book contribute to our knowledge and understanding of intellectual property and communication, etc.

The mid-term and final research proposal, as well as response papers, must be double-spaced, 12-font, and with one-inch margins. Any citation style is acceptable, provided it is clear and consistent.

Attendance and class participation:
Attendance and participation are required. The class will be organized as a seminar. Students are required to read assigned readings before class meetings and to write a 200-word response/comment and post it on D2L before 10am on the day of the class meeting. Each class meeting will begin with students discussing their understandings and comments regarding the readings. The teacher will lead the discussion to help students to develop arguments and viewpoints of their own.

**Class schedule**

Week 1 (Aug 24) – Getting started


Week 3 (Sep 7) – *The Creative Artist’s Legal Guide*. Chap 2.


Week 5 (Sep 21) – *The Creative Artist’s Legal Guide*. Chap 5-6 & Epilogue.

Week 6 (Sep 28) – *Copyrighting Culture*. Chap 1-3.

Week 7 (Oct 5) – *Copyrighting Culture*. Chap 4-5.

Week 8 (Oct 12) – *Copyrighting Culture*. Chap 6-8. (One-page research proposal due before class, or notify the instructor that you will write response papers.)

Week 9 (Oct 19) – *Digital Copyright*. Intro & Chap 1-4.

Week 10 (Oct 26) – *Digital Copyright*. Chap 5-9.

Week 11 (Nov 2) – *Digital Copyright*. Chap 10-13 & Afterword.

Week 12 (Nov 9) – *Creativity and Its Discontents*. Intro & Chap 1-3. (Mid-term research proposal or 1st response paper due before class)

Week 13 (Nov 16) – *Creativity and Its Discontents*. Chap 4-6.

Week 14 (Nov 23) – Thanksgiving break.


Week 16 (Dec 7) – Discussion: research papers, response papers, and general issues.
Week 17 – Final research project (or 2nd & 3rd response papers) due Dec 12 at 5pm (email to donghan@siu.edu).