# Syllabus CS 8803 Summer 2024
## Computer Law
## Professors Laura Huffman and Olufisayo Omojokun

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## General Course Overview:  Learning Objectives

An understanding of certain aspects of the law can help computer scientists contribute more to their enterprise.  We will learn about the various types of law that computer scientists may encounter.  Students will be exposed to the United States legal system, intellectual property, licensing and contracts, and data privacy.  Students will analyze code written by someone else as a technical expert might do to support a litigation. Students will propose and analyze an acquisition in the computer science field. At the end of the course students should be aware of basic legal issues in the computer field and understand when they need advice from a lawyer.

Course requirements include class discussion, tests on each module, an acquisition analysis, and a code analysis project.  Students should have some experience with the Java language and an integrated development environment for the code analysis project. If you wish to learn Java or refresh your skills, you may do so using the following free online course: https://www.edx.org/professional-certificate/gtx-introduction-to-object-oriented-programming-with-java.

## Course Materials:

Legal Aspects of Managing Technology, 5th Ed. (**Optional**)

By Lee B. Burgunder

The course materials will make references to this textbook, and it is a good source for further explanation and context, **but it is not required** to successfully complete the course. All assignments, quizzes, and discussions can be completed with the content in the course lectures and slides.

Because the law changes over time, do not use an earlier edition of the textbook, as it will contain incorrect information.  Other class materials will be posted on Canvas.  If there is a conflict

between the class materials provided by the instructors and the textbook, the materials provided by the instructors govern.

**Due Dates:**

Due dates for all assignments and quizzes will be posted on the course website on Canvas, and can be found in the **Semester Schedule** document in the course files. Assignment due dates can also be found in the **Grading** section below.

Assignments will be due at 11:59PM Anywhere on Earth Time. Canvas will display them in your local timezone.

Late Policy:

The late policy is as follows:

- Quizzes will not allow late submissions.
- Non-quiz assignments will incur a 10% late penalty per day late.
  - For example, if an assignment is due at 11:59PM on Monday, any submission after that time but before 11:59PM on Tuesday will be docked 10%, and then another 10% after 11:59PM Tuesday, and so forth.

If you would like to request an extension to a due date for personal reasons, please do so in a private message on the Ed Discussions platform.

Disclaimer – Not Legal Advice:

All papers, handouts, lecture material, lectures, analysis, and/or research are not to be considered legal advice. They are academic and intended to generate discussion for educational and informational purposes. Such materials do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of Georgia Tech or any entity affiliated with the instructors. Do not rely on any of the statements herein as legal advice, or for purposes of giving legal advice.

| Honor Code: | Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity and honor.  Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. The Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code applies to all aspects of this course. Plagiarism is a violation of the Academic Honor code. To plagiarize is defined by Webster's as "to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own; use (another's production) without crediting the source." Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations. For any questions involving these or any other Academic Honor Code issues, |

please consult us or http://catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/.

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Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

If you have learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at 404-894-2563 or http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/ as soon as possible to make an appointment and discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also talk with us to discuss your learning needs.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement:

At Georgia Tech, it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty member and the student body. Please see http://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/ for an articulation of some basic expectations that you can have of us and that we have of you. These were adopted by both the faculty senate and the student government. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, we encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class, especially during class discussion.

Inclusion:

The Georgia Institute of Technology is committed to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society.

**Weekly Discussions**

Discussion participation is 10% of the grade. The rules are as follows:

- Discussion posts will be created throughout the semester in the Ed Discussions platform (which will be linked to from Canvas).
- There are 10 discussion topics. To get full credit a student should meaningfully participate in at least 8 of them.

- o "Meaningful" participation is a comment or reply that drives the discussion forward. This can be either a comment replying to the prompt, or a reply to a classmate's comment.
  - o Students are encouraged to create their own discussion posts based on topics related to the course. The TAs will occasionally select one or more of these posts and compile them into an official discussion topic, meaning participation in that post counts towards a student's discussion grade. In this case, the student that created the post will receive 2 discussion points.
- Discussion replies should be limited to the topics in the prompt, questions about material should be done in a new post on Ed.
  - o This **does not** mean tangents should not spring from discussions, in fact that is encouraged! Meaningful contributions to a tangential discussion still count towards your participation grade
- After they are opened, discussions stay open for two weeks.
- All rules about respectful discussion apply (see "Online Conduct and (N)etiquette" below)
- Extra points can be awarded on a discussion post for multiple high-quality discussion replies or replies that are extremely well thought-out.

## If you have questions

We'll be using Ed Discussions in this course.  Please use that forum to post questions and comments.   The instructional staff and other students will be of assistance there.  The instructors may offer live office hours at certain milestones during the semester.

## Usage of Generative AI in Assignments

While we encourage the use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT as a sounding board and planning tool for your assignments, the substance of your content must be coming from you, a human. As a rule of thumb, if you are copying from a tool and pasting it into your assignment (even if you then make edits), then you are out of bounds. If we believe any portion of your assignment or discussion post was significantly driven by an AI tool, we will document our evidence for this belief and will not award any points for that portion. Egregious overuse of these tools may result in no points granted for the assignment or the entire participation portion of your grade.

## Online Conduct and (N)etiquette

Communicating appropriately on an online learning platform can be challenging. In order to minimize this challenge, it is important to remember several points of **"internet etiquette"** that will smooth communication for both students and instructors:

- Read first, write later. Read the ENTIRE set of posts/comments on a discussion board before posting your reply, in order to prevent repeating commentary or asking questions that have already been answered.
- Avoid language that may come across as strong or offensive. Language can be easily misinterpreted in written electronic communication. Review email and discussion board posts BEFORE submitting. Humor and sarcasm may be easily misinterpreted by your reader(s). Try to be as matter-of-fact and professional as possible.
- Follow the language rules of the Internet. Do not write using all capital letters, because it will appear as shouting. Also, the use of emoticons can be helpful when used to convey nonverbal feelings. ☺
- Consider the privacy of others. Ask permission prior to giving out a classmate's email address or other information.
- No inappropriate material. Do not forward virus warnings, chain letters, inappropriate jokes, etc. to classmates or instructors. The sharing of pornographic material is forbidden.

*NOTE:* The instructor will remove posts that are not collegial in nature and/or do not meet the Online Student Conduct and Etiquette guidelines listed above.  Point deductions will apply for repeat offenders.

**Course Outline:**

I.      Introduction and overview
- a.  Why does a computer scientist need to understand law?
- b.  United States Legal System
  - i.  Civil/criminal
- c.  Federal/state
- d.  Intellectual Property Overview
  - i.  Purpose and effect
  - ii.  Types of IP

II.    Acquisitions
- a.  Factors
- b.  Intellectual property specifics
- c.  Introduction to Acquisition Project

III.   Patents (pp. 61-171)
- a.  Patentable subject matter
  - i.  Hardware
  - ii.  Software
- b.  Patenting process
- c.  Infringement
- d.  The *Alice* case and its impact on software patentability

IV.   Copyrights (pp. 215-293)
- a.  Copyrightable subject matter
- b.  Ownership
- c.  Infringement and Remedies
- d.  Copyright of Computer Programs
- e.  Clean Room Techniques

V.    Trade Secrets (pp. 173 – 213)
- a.  Definition
- b.  Protection
- c.  Enforcement

VI.   Contract law/licensing (pp. 493-525)
- a.  Agreement
- b.  Implementation
- c.  Auditing
- d.  Open Source Software

VII.  Data Privacy
- a.  Definition
- b.  CCPA
- c.  Global issues – GDPR

**GRADING**

Class discussion: 10%

Topics of discussion will be posted on Ed. Student submissions will be reviewed. For full participation credit, each student must meaningfully participate in 10 discussions.

Post module quizzes: 30%

Quizzes are open book, open note. The format is short answer/multiple choice. The Georgia Tech honor code applies.

Code Analysis Project: 35%

      July 14th (Midnight): Final submission

Acquisition Project: 25%

      June 2nd (Midnight): Proposal for acquisition

      June 23rd (Midnight): Final submission