



CAREER DEVELOPMENT OFFICE JOB GUIDE

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Description

Intellectual property law involves securing and protecting legal rights to products of the human intellect, such as inventions, ideas, works of art and discoveries. Its principal branches are patents, copyrights and trademarks, and it encompasses allied rights such as trade secret protection and the right of publicity. It also has substantial overlaps with internet law, information privacy law, and technology law. In addition, it touches upon a number of other areas of law, including antitrust, computer crimes, corporate law, international trade and telecommunications law.

Qualifications

Many employers in this practice area look for lawyers with science or engineering backgrounds, although neither is required unless you want to practice patent law before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). In order to sit for the Patent Bar exam, you must have a qualifying science background (i.e., an undergraduate or graduate degree in a scientific discipline such as electrical engineering). For details about requirements and timing of taking the Patent Bar exam, see <http://www.uspto.gov/learning-and-resources/ip-policy/becoming-practitioner/registration-examination>.

Types of Employers

Law Firms:

Large Law Firms. Most large law firms have IP practices, usually divided into three core practice areas: litigation, transactions and patent/trademark/copyright prosecution. Within these three core areas,

firms often have a more specialized focus, such as privacy and cyber security. A hard science background can be helpful in any of these areas. Some firms will establish that background as a minimum requirement for their jobs, but it is only *required* for patent prosecution work. Most large firms require grades in the top 20% or better. Most of the big law firms in the Southeast recruit on-campus at UGA, and your CDO Counselor can give you more information about this process.

IP Boutique Firms. There are a number of law firms that practice only IP law, referred to as IP boutiques. A few of these are large (e.g., Fish & Richardson with over 400 lawyers) and will likely be looking for students in the top 20% of the class. But most are small and may be focused more on your science or technology background and your knowledge and experience of IP law gained during law school. The best way to find jobs with small IP boutiques is by networking. Participating in activities of the IP sections of bar associations and professional organizations can be a good way to meet these lawyers. You may also find it effective to reach out with unsolicited letters, emails or phone calls. You can find lists of IP boutiques at Martindale.com (sorted by city and state), the State Bar of Georgia Directory, the Association of Intellectual Property Firms, and Lawyers.com. We have also listed below some of the IP boutiques of which we are aware.

Corporations:

In-House IP Counsel. Almost every business has IP law matters, regardless of the kind of business or industry. In-house legal departments often have lawyers with IP law practice experience, and other departments in the company may hire that expertise as well (e.g., contract procurement departments, compliance departments). Many corporations prefer to hire lawyers with several years of experience, so you may find more opportunities by working for a law

firm for a few years and then applying for the in-house positions.

Government Agencies:

Government agencies are another excellent place to practice IP law. The USPTO employs lawyers as patent examiners and in other roles. In addition, as with corporations, almost all federal, state and local government agencies have IP law matters. Some of the federal agencies that deal significantly with IP law include:

U.S. International Trade Commission
Federal Communications Commission
Food & Drug Administration
U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Department of Defense
National Security Agency
Department of Homeland Security
White House Office of Science and Technology Policy

Many federal agencies hire graduates and student interns by participating in the Government Honors Program. You can learn more about the requirements of that Program from your CDO Counselor or the Arizona Government Honors & Internship Handbook (password: lawdawg). In addition, each agency's website will typically include a page devoted to the Program and that agency's hiring process. Deadlines to apply through the Program often occur far in advance of hiring.

Job Search Strategy

As you plan your path to a career in IP law, consider the following advice:

- If you have a qualifying science or technology background, take the Patent Bar as soon as you are able. This opens opportunities for you in patent prosecution, and it shows employers your level of commitment to the practice area.
- Even if you have not yet passed the Patent Bar, if applicable put "Patent Bar Eligible" somewhere on your resume.
- Look for summer positions that will give you relevant experience. IP boutique firms, corporations in an IP-heavy business (like ones that have significant patents or trademarks), and government agencies focused on IP are ideal. If you are going to a big law firm or to any in-house legal department, ask for IP-related assignments.

- Look for summer positions on Symplicity or at external job posting sites listed below. You should also talk with your CDO Counselor and 2Ls and 3Ls who had IP-related summer jobs in the past. You can get a list of 2L summer jobs held by our students during the most recent summer from your CDO Counselor.
- Consider spending a semester in Washington D.C. through the Law School's Semester in D.C. Program. There are a number of externship placements that provide IP experience (e.g., the International Trade Commission and the Copyright Alliance).
- Consider enrolling in the Corporate Counsel Externship program or the Business Law Clinic, discussed below.
- Consider enrolling in the Civil Externship program, if there is a placement that will give you relevant experience. For example, the Georgia Lawyers for the Arts now offers the Georgia PATENTS program, which allows volunteers to provide pro bono legal services to solo inventors, non-profits and small businesses.
- Entry-level jobs, primarily patent examiners, are available with the USPTO. These jobs may be anywhere in the country. To find current openings, see USAJobs.gov. For an explanation of the USPTO's process for hiring patent examiners, see their website.
- Participate in extracurricular activities and professional organizations. You can network with helpful people at meetings, and it helps to have these affiliations on your resume.

Relevant Courses

The Law School's Course Offerings page provides a list of courses considered to be an excellent concentration for students interested in IP law. In addition, it can be helpful to take courses in areas that overlap with IP, including antitrust and telecommunications. If you are interested in working with IP law in a litigation context (e.g., patent litigation), you will also want to focus on courses relating to that skill set. Similarly, if you are aiming for a career in transactional IP law (e.g., negotiating software contracts), you will find it helpful to take business law courses. For additional information about relevant courses, the following video provides helpful guidance from Georgia Law Professor Joe Miller.



Experiential Learning Opportunities

There are no clinics specifically geared towards intellectual property, but the [Corporate Counsel Externship](#) and the [Business Law Clinic](#) both offer intellectual property experience. In particular, the Corporate Counsel Externship includes several placements involving significant IP work. Examples of these placements are listed in the “Recent Jobs” table below. In the Business Law Clinic, every student has the opportunity to work on a project that involves IP, and if a student has a particular interest in IP, then they can do more in that area. For example, during the Fall 2014 semester, every student in that clinic worked on some part of the patent process, and then two teams with a particular interest in IP worked on copyright and trademark issues.

Relevant Law School Activities

[Journal of Intellectual Property Law](#)

[Intellectual Property Law Society](#)

[IP Inn of Court](#)

Bar and Professional Organizations

[Intellectual Property Section of the State Bar of Georgia](#)

[The Intellectual Property Section of the Atlanta Bar Association](#)

[American Bar Association Section of Intellectual Property Law – Law Student Action Group](#)

[American Intellectual Property Law Association](#)

[Association of Intellectual Property Firms](#)

[International Trade Commission Trial Lawyers Association](#)

[The Federal Circuit Bar Association](#)

Job Fairs

[Loyola Patent Law Interview Program \(Summer\)](#)

- Takes place in Chicago
- This year, it will include over 120 employers from across the country
- Registration period this year was February 9–March 9, 2015, and the job fair will take place July 30-31, 2015

[Southeast Intellectual Property Job Fair \(Summer\)](#)

- Takes place in Atlanta at Georgia State University
- This year, it will include over 40 employers
- Focuses on IP employers in the Southeast
- Registration period this year was April 29–May 20, 2015, and the job fair will take place July 28, 2015

External Job Posting Sites

[American Intellectual Property Law Education Foundation Sidney B. Williams, Jr. Scholarships](#)

[American Intellectual Property Law Education Foundation – Jan Jancin Award](#)

[Federal Circuit Bar Association Scholarships](#)

[Google Policy Fellowships](#)

[New York University Engelberg Center on Innovation and Law Policy Research Fellowships](#)

[Indeed.com](#)

[USAJobs.gov](#)

[American Intellectual Property Law Association](#)

[GoInHouse.com](#)

[Patently Jobs](#)

[Glassdoor.com](#)

Recent Jobs

It is often difficult for CDO to track our students and graduates who are engaged in IP practices within large firms and corporations. We have listed below employment that we know to be IP-related. For confidentiality reasons, we do not publish the names of specific students; however, CDO may have contacts at these employers who can help you.

Name	Location	Type of Employer	Type of Job
US Patent & Trademark Office	Washington, DC	Government	Post-Grad
Condo Roccia Koptiw	Philadelphia, PA	Law Firm	Post-Grad
Davis Wright & Tremaine, LLP	Seattle, WA	Law Firm	Post-Grad
Dority & Manning	Greenville, NC	Law Firm	Summer
Eastman Chemical Co.	Kingsport, TN	Business	Summer
Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP	Atlanta, GA	Law Firm	Post-Grad, Summer
Fish & Richardson, PC	Atlanta, GA	Law Firm	Post-Grad, Summer
Georgia Regents University	Augusta, GA	Academic	Corporate Counsel Externship
Imerys	Roswell, GA	Business	Corporate Counsel Externship
Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton, LLP	Atlanta, GA	Law Firm	Post-Grad, Summer
King & Spalding	Atlanta, GA	Law Firm	Post-Grad, Summer
Alston & Bird	Atlanta, GA	Law firm	Post-Grad, Summer
Marshall, Gerstein & Borun, LLP	Chicago, IL	Law Firm	Summer
NCR Corporation	Duluth, GA	Business	Corporate Counsel Externship
Niro, Haller & Niro, Ltd.	Chicago, IL	Law Firm	Post-Grad
Oliff & Berridge, PLC	Alexandria, VA	Law Firm	Summer
Panasonic Automotive Systems of America	Peachtree City, GA	Business	Summer
Patterson Intellectual Property Law, P.C.	Nashville, TN	Law Firm	Summer
Quinn Emanuel	New York, NY	Law Firm	Post-Grad
Troutman Sanders	Atlanta, GA	Law Firm	Post-Grad, Summer
International Trade Commission	Washington, DC	Government	Semester in D.C. Externship
UPtv/ASPIRE	Atlanta, GA	Business	Corporate Counsel Externship

Other Resources

- *The OPIA Insider's Guide to Intellectual Property and Cyberlaw*, Harvard Law School, 2013
- *Intellectual Property Lib Guide*, UGA King Library
- USPTO [Directory of Registered Patent Attorneys and Agents](#)