

IOWA MEDICAL INNOVATION GROUP

Law 091:667

2016 – 2017 Academic Year

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Course Synopsis

The Iowa Medical Innovation Group is an interdisciplinary seminar taught by faculty members from the Colleges of Law, Medicine, Engineering, and Business. It is intended to simulate the experience of product development, including the business and legal issues that arise in that context. Over the course of the year, a team of students from these four colleges, with at least one law student on each team, will originate an idea for a medical device; design it and produce figures or, if possible, a prototype; design a business model for marketing it; and evaluate legal issues and, if possible, prepare draft legal documents. Students will be expected to participate to some degree in all aspects of project development, although the principal obligation of law students will be to analyze and counsel team members on intellectual property and business law issues and prepare draft contracts, licensing agreements and materials for procuring intellectual property rights.¹

In the 2016-17 version of IMIG, law students will assume the role of in-house counsel. In this role, students are expected to provide a variety of legal support to their assigned teams while at the same time working with each other as a group.

This course is a 6-credit course spread across two semesters. Students are eligible for up to 2 writing and one professional skills credit for this course, as discussed below.

Course meetings:

- **Twice-monthly lectures** (*All students*): These lectures will address topics relating to medical device and technology development. Topics will include idea generation, legal protections for creative intangibles, prototyping, business plan development, and fundamentals of business law.
- **Twice-monthly meetings** (*Law students*): These meetings will provide an opportunity for law students to discuss issues they are facing. In addition, periodic guest speakers will talk about issues specific to lawyers the law, including the role of in-house counsel, healthcare regulations, and the specifics of patent protection.

¹ As a reminder, the IMIG course is intended to simulate, not be, the real world. To the extent teams contemplate taking real-world steps, they must consult with a licensed attorney.

- **Regular team meetings (Teams):** Individual team meetings will be attended by law students as necessary.
- **Capstone presentations (All students):** Presentations summarizing the teams' new device and business/commercialization plan will be given at the end of the semester.

Work Product:

- **Training presentations:** Each law student will prepare one 15-minute training presentation for the class as a whole. These presentations will focus on a subject relevant to medical device and technology development and commercialization. Examples include confidentiality issues, a (very) brief overview of intellectual property protections, a general overview of business associations, and an overview of the major regulatory issues that relate to medical devices.
- **Resource materials:** Law students will be responsible for preparing a set of shared resource materials that address common issues that arise in the IMIG course. Each student will be expected to contribute approximately five pages of work product to the shared reference.
- **Monthly status reports:** Law students will prepare one-page status reports on their projects, including any legal issues that they are addressing. These status reports are due at the end of each month.
- **Memoranda:** At the end of October, December, and February, law students are required to submit a memorandum of no less than ten double-spaced pages describing the legal problems that they have identified, their approach to resolving those legal issues, what answers they have found, and what counsel they have given to their team. The focus of these memoranda can vary depending on the students' own substantive framework. For example, students interested in patent law might focus more on prior art searches and patentability analyses while students interested in medical device regulation might focus more on regulatory compliance issues. We will discuss possible foci for these memoranda at our first meeting.
- **Participation in group presentations:** To the extent necessary, law students will participate in team presentations to the class as a whole.
- **Additional documents:** Students may need to prepare additional documents as necessary. The above describe the minimum work product to be prepared by law students enrolled in the course.

Writing and Professional Skills Credit:

Students enrolled in this course are eligible for up to two writing credits and one professional skills credit. The primary basis for the writing credit are the bi-monthly memoranda. The primary bases for the professional skills credit are the training presentations, development of a shared resource, and counseling of students' assigned team.

Grading

Grading in this class will be based on attendance at scheduled class meetings, written work product, training presentations, and ability to work with the group of law students as a whole.

Reuse of work product/plagiarism

Unlike almost all other classes, students are expressly permitted to reuse their own work product generated for this class within reason. When writing monthly status reports, it is not necessary for students to develop creative new ways to express the substance of their bi-monthly memoranda; a modest degree of copying is permitted. In addition, if students have the opportunity to prepare a provisional patent application, they may reuse language from their previously-generated work product to the extent relevant. So that there is no misunderstanding, bi-monthly memoranda should be substantively distinct from each other.

Please note that permission to recycle work product does not mean that you should—and you should never do so blindly. Rewrite as necessary for the task at hand.

To the extent you encounter other plagiarism-related issues, please discuss the issue with me before engaging in questionable behavior.

In addition, note that by taking this course you agree that any work product you generate in connection with this class may be freely reproduced by others.

Assigned readings:

Relevant readings will be assigned as necessary.

Course Schedule and Office Hours

The full IMIG class meets from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. twice a month. Meetings are usually held in the Pappajohn Biomedical Building. The law students will meet as a group from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. on the remaining Wednesdays of each month.

My regular office hours this semester are Wednesdays from 2-4 p.m. I am also available most times outside of class if you make an appointment in advance. Please use the Outlook meeting notice system to set up appointments.