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Stavroula Karapapa

Where Law Meets Technology

Understanding the changing landscape of Intellectual Property Law

Professor Stavroula Karapapa: Does new technology require new laws?

How should innovation and creativity be regulated? How can we preserve a rigorous public domain, whilst ensuring that intellectual property owners will be appropriately rewarded for their creative and innovative ideas? Does new technology require new laws? These are some of the questions that Professor Stavroula Karapapa addresses in her research and her classes on Intellectual Property Law.

Programme Director for the School's International Commercial Law studies, Stavroula teaches on the first and only LLM programme in intellectual property law in the UK offering an interdisciplinary approach by the School of Law and the renowned Henley Business School combining the study of business and related legal aspects.

Stavroula primarily carries out research in the area of copyright law but also actively studies European Union trade mark law, data protection, internet law, and law and the arts. She has published extensively in the area of copyright, including two monographs. Currently working on the third, her study focuses on defences to copyright infringement. She is looking into how copyright norms may impede innovation and creativity and argues for broader user freedom on the internet ensuring a rigorous public domain for users of copyright works and for companies using copy-reliant technologies, such as search engines, price comparison websites and news aggregators.

“Intellectual Property Law has been shaped by technological change. That's a fascinating interplay between law and technology and I am interested in exploring the way in which law evolves in order to address the challenges that emergent technologies represent.”

Research that feeds into teaching

The research Stavroula undertakes constantly feeds into the curriculum development and into her teaching at the School of Law. She teaches on the areas of her research expertise at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level, acting as module convenor for the Intellectual Property Law, Copyright and Designs, Patents and Trademarks, Internet Law, Privacy and Data Protection modules.

Having taught Intellectual Property Law since her appointment in Reading in 2012, she is currently awaiting the publication of her textbook on *Intellectual Property Law* (forthcoming with Oxford University Press), where she consolidates her knowledge on the topic area and experience in teaching the course.

getting students involved

Intellectual Property Law is a fascinating area of study for students. It covers artistic creations, films, music, literature, poetry and at the same time it addresses the protection offered to brands, trade secrets, inventions and innovation more broadly. As part of her scholarship, Stavroula has collected artefacts that have been involved in intellectual property dispute and litigation and she uses them as part of her teaching.

"At the postgraduate level, it is interesting to see students coming from diverse academic backgrounds, such as Film, Business or Chemistry, looking to study intellectual property law. It is an area of law with very broad appeal.”

It is important for students to be involved in research. Undergraduate students can write a dissertation on intellectual property law and postgraduate taught students can write an extended piece of research on related topics, whilst being involved in the activities of the Centre for Commercial Law and Financial Regulation that Stavroula directs.

making an impact

Stavroula's research work has given fresh insights on topics of modern Intellectual Property and Information Law. Her work has been cited by various governmental organisations and other authorities, including Opinions of the Advocate General, UK Intellectual Property Office draft legislation, EU Commission studies, the Canadian Privacy Commissioner and US Copyright Office reports. Having practiced law before joining the academia, Stavroula remains involved in practice by editing the 'European Trade Mark Reports (ETMR)', a journal sold worldwide to practitioners and academic institutions and cited frequently in court decisions. Working closely with the UK Intellectual Property Office, she was involved in the 2014 copyright reform and has been recently invited again to discuss possible changes to Intellectual Property Law in the light of Brexit.

Stavroula's research expertise and engagement with policy making informs her teaching of both final-year undergraduate and postgraduate students, who are taught break through developments and emergent trends in the niche areas of Intellectual Property and Information Law.

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