Seminar (Master)

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

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Winter Term 2018 / 2019

Time & Location: Friday 8:15 am. – 11:45 am. (26.10.2018 - 15.02.2019); Campus Center - Room 1124 (Seminarraum 6).

6 Credits: a technology report based on patent data (4-5 page), including the chosen strategy and main findings; a fully commented R-Script; a short presentation (5-10 minutes).

Scope and Format:
In this master seminar, we will expand on the economic discussion of intellectual property rights. Intellectual property rights are widely considered as an effective instrument to foster innovation. For centuries, they are standard in modern economies’ legislation. Even though, among economists their appropriateness and usefulness is still discussed controversially. The “patent wars” of leading technological companies in the last decade, as well as new challenges arising out of the increasing digitalization have brought the discussion back on the agenda. The lecture will be based on a series of recently published research papers. Among other types of intellectual property right, we will pay some special interest in patents. The lectures content is completed by invited expert talks.

Credit requirements:
Instead of a seminar paper, students are required to write a data based technology report, based on patent data. In the seminar part, we provide all necessary data, as well as an introduction in basic analytical methods. Students will learn on how to work with complex data and how to structure the report. We will use the open source program R.

Background reading:


Outline

1. Repetition: knowledge, innovation and public goods
2. Introduction to intellectual property rights
   a. Knowledge dilemma
   b. Information paradox
   c. Patent controversy
3. Patents and other forms of IPR
   a. Overview
   b. History of the patent system
   c. Patents and the patent system
   d. Introduction to patent data
   e. Other types of IPR
      i. Copyright law
      ii. Trade secrets and trademarks
4. Why do firms patent?
   a. Patenting vs. secrecy
   b. Innovation surveys
   c. Appropriation of returns from R&D
   d. Patent races
5. Are patents (still) appropriate
   a. Innovation without patents?
   b. Markets for technology
   c. Patent thickets and trolls
6. IP in the digital economy
   a. Digitalization
   b. Open source
7. Industry standards and conflicts with competition law