



# ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25

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# ABOUT US

The UCLA Institute for Technology, Law & Policy (ITLP) drives research and analysis of new and emerging technologies to ensure they are developed, implemented and regulated in socially beneficial, equitable, and accountable ways. Founded in 2020, ITLP is a collaboration between the UCLA School of Law and the Samueli School of Engineering. In 2024-25, it was led by Executive Director Michael Karanicolas and Faculty Co-Directors Mark McKenna and John Villesanor.

ITLP's three overarching goals:

1. Elevate academic inquiry and multidisciplinary research in works interconnecting technology and law.
2. Foster the next generation of scholars and policy-makers in the field through student enrichment and support.
3. Support faculty and staff at the vanguard of the intersection of technology and law to develop and offer courses.



LEFT: (Clockwise from top) Channing Hans, J.D. class of 2025, is among the pioneering cohort of UCLA students to graduate with a Technology Law specialization; Loyola Law School Professor Robert Kang, UCLA Professor Laura Pedraza-Farina, and University of Hong Kong Professor Haochen Sun are among the Tech Talk speakers for Spring 2025.

TOP RIGHT: PLSC Chair Professor Ari Waldman presents awards at this year's Privacy Law Scholars Conference

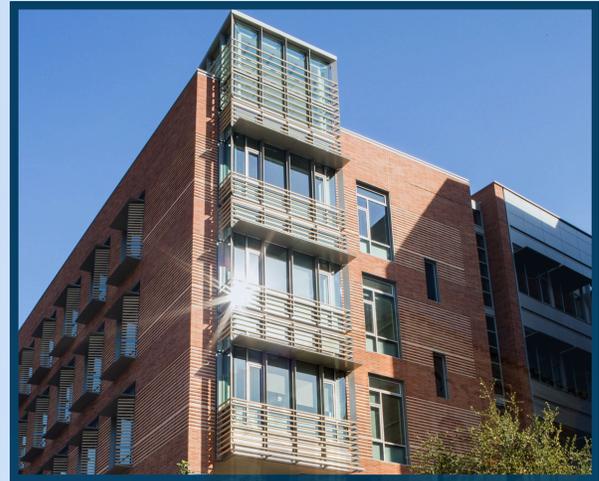
BOTTOM RIGHT: Professor Julia Powles joins ITLP as its new Executive Director

## RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Three hundred engineering students benefited from ITLP's bespoke new course Ethics for Computer Science, developed by Dr. Alessia Zornetta.
- The inaugural cohort in the multi-year Technology Law J.D. specialization graduated, bringing a surge of new legal talent into a high-demand sector.
- ITLP hosted the world's premier academic convening in the field of privacy and technology law, the Privacy Law Scholars Conference.
- The California legal sector supported ITLP's most successful Careers in Tech Day to date.
- ITLP bid farewell to inaugural Executive Director Michael Karanicolas, and welcomed new Executive Director Professor Julia Powles.

# EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION

ITLP advanced several curriculum initiatives in collaboration with affiliated faculty and doctoral students from both the law and engineering schools.



## *Information Policy Lab*

*As part of The Information Policy Lab, an experiential course offered to law students interested in gaining real-world skills in advocating for tech accountability through policy effort, Tech Justice Lawyer and ITLP Affiliated Fellow Melodi Dincer implemented a new course design to enhance expertise in specific areas of the modern data economy and further develop students' oral and written advocacy skills towards specific policy-based interventions.*

During the first half of the semester, students developed a foundational understanding of key privacy principles, explored the complex world of data brokers, the history of the Privacy Act of 1974 – just a few days before the federal executive branch tested its decades-old privacy protections through DOGE – and compared various state data privacy laws across the U.S. to gauge legislative strengths and weaknesses.

In the second half of the semester, students shifted their focus to three projects requiring deep dives into various aspects of data privacy and created policy recommendations for government and non-profit partners.

One group drafted a model bill banning the use of automated systems to determine worker pay and worked with their client to tailor legislative drafting and policy choices to the needs of the gig workers they advocate for.

Another group analyzed the California Delete Act, which requires the California Privacy Protection Agency to develop an opt-out tool where all Californians can opt-out of data brokers selling their data with a single “click.” The Lab recently filed a Comment before the Agency based on the students' excellent analysis and policy recommendations, including new language for the Agency's pending regulations.

The students developed their translation skills by taking these often complex topics and translating them into concise, compelling blog posts for general audiences. Several student pieces were published by the Tech Policy Press, ranging from the right to be forgotten in generative AI models, to excessive exceptions in state privacy laws swallowing the whole, to universal opt-out mechanisms creating a new digital divide.

### ***Artificial Intelligence Law***

Professor Andrew Selbst developed a new course in Artificial Intelligence Law and taught it for the first time in Spring 2025. This survey course covers the interactions between law and AI across many substantive legal topics, including tort law, employment discrimination, privacy law, First Amendment, and due process, among others.

The course seeks to interrogate the changes that AI brings to many areas of law, noting some similarities and asking why such similarities exist. It also examines the emerging law of AI, with most of the course leading up to the EU's AI Act and related questions about optimal regulatory design in the age of AI.

The course asks: What about AI is really new? Should AI even be its own topic of regulation? If so, why, and how should we regulate it? The Spring 2025 course also served as a road test of an in-progress casebook that he is developing with Professors Paul Ohm (Georgetown) and Margot Kaminski (Colorado), which will hopefully be ready for Spring 2026.

### ***Ethics for Computer Science***

In response to student demands for ethics education on the engineering side of campus, UCLA's School of Engineering approached ITLP to develop a new curriculum. Doctoral Student Alessia Zornetta developed a new curriculum for Ethics for Computer Science (ENGR 186W & ENGR 186), a course meant to address the growing need for an ethics class designed for computer science students to complement the broader ethics offering.

Working closely with UCLA's writing programs, Alessia created a second version of the course which also fulfills the writing requirements for engineering and computer science students, integrating academic writing with critical analysis of contemporary technology ethics.

The curriculum covers foundational ethical theories, bias and discrimination in technology, privacy and data ethics, responsible AI development, and emerging technologies, providing students with both theoretical frameworks and practical tools for ethical decision-making in their future careers.

Over three quarters, Alessia has supported two professors in preparing lecture materials, curating readings, and designing assignments including team-based AI ethics projects, individual research papers, structured debates, and essay writing. Alessia also taught discussion sections, helping students develop both their writing skills and ethical reasoning abilities. The course has seen a growing interest, expanding from 80 students in its inaugural quarter to 100 in the second quarter and 120 in the current iteration. This is reflective of the strong demand for ethics education in computer science.

# STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

## *Spring 2025 Technology Law Specializers*

The pioneering cohort of law students to graduate with a Technology Law specialization has graduated! This spring, 22 graduates earned their Technology Law specialization. Technology Law specializers were honored at a celebratory Graduate Breakfast in April. Faculty Co-Directors Mark McKenna and John Villasenor presented them with white commencement cords and encouraged feedback from the graduates on ITLP's offerings and the student experience.

## *Careers in Tech Day*

On February 26, 2025, in collaboration with the UCLA Journal of Law and Technology, ITLP hosted an in-person career networking event showcasing career options in the tech law space. The one-day event garnered a record sponsorship of \$28,000 from seven participating law firms, including Fenwick, White & Case, Irell & Manella, Goodwin, Kirkland & Ellis, Knobbe Martens, and Wilson Sonsini. The event featured a hosted reception and networking opportunity for students, as well as panel discussions on privacy, emerging companies/ venture capital, corporate, in-house, and IP Practice. Invited panelists included representatives from sponsoring law firms as well as Amos Hartston from the California Department of Justice and Lauren Robinette, Principal Counsel, Original Content, Legal and Studio Affairs – Apple TV+.

“Being part of the pioneering cohort of the Technology Law Specialization was one of the most rewarding aspects of my time at UCLA Law. From day one, the Institute for Technology, Law & Policy helped me find a community of peers equally passionate about the intersection of law and technology.”

- Cecilia Bain, J.D. '25

“Earning my specialization through ITLP gave me the foundational skills and confidence to pursue a degree in tech law. I’m especially grateful to the professors who made this possible.”

- Channing Hans, J.D. '25

## *Student Participation in ITLP*

In addition to the above, ITLP has a robust program of providing opportunities for students to get involved in ITLP activities. Example student activities include serving as a paid student researcher on tech/law research projects and volunteering to help organize and run ITLP events.

## Spring 2025 Tech Talks

ITLP continued its spring series of Tech Talks featuring experts in the tech and law space. Invited speakers engaged open-format discussions on relevant topics under the technology and policy umbrella. This Spring, the lunchtime series welcomed Professors of Law from UCLA, Loyola Law School, and the University of Hong Kong.

### AI Decoded: An Introductory Technical Primer and Legal Ethics Guide for Lawyers

*Professor Robert Kang, Loyola Law School, March 18, 2025*

### Efficiency vs. Dignity: The Utilitarian Foundation of Data Protection Laws in the US and China

*Professor Haochen Sun, University of Hong Kong, April 1, 2025*

### What is "Racial" Data and How Does the Law Regulate It?

*Professor Fanna Gamal, UCLA School of Law, April 15, 2025*

### What AI Still Can't Do: Problem Finding and the Future of Innovation

*Professor Laura Pedraza-Farina, UCLA School of Law, April 22, 2025*

UCLA Institute for Technology,  
Law & Policy

## TECH TALKS

WITH ROBERT KANG

AI DECODED:  
AN INTRODUCTORY TECHNICAL PRIMER  
AND LEGAL ETHICS GUIDE FOR LAWYERS



Professor Robert Kang holds adjunct faculty positions in cybersecurity and national security at Loyola Law School, Los Angeles, and at the George Washington University Law School. He also serves as a technology, security and AI consultant.

TUE, MAR 18TH 12:15 PM LS 1327



Register here by 3/12  
[bit.ly/3OPeikc](https://bit.ly/3OPeikc)

Lunch will be provided to those who register and attend.

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Law & Policy

## TECH TALKS

WITH LAURA PEDRAZA-FARIÑA

SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACHES  
TO INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY



Laura Pedraza-Farina is a Professor of Law at UCLA School of Law where she teaches patent law, international intellectual property law, and innovation theory. Her research falls into two main areas: innovation law and policy, and international organizations (IO) —with an emphasis on those organizations that address global health and intellectual property concerns.

WED, OCT 30TH 12:15 PM LS 1337



[bit.ly/4cXwPGR](https://bit.ly/4cXwPGR)

Lunch will be provided to those who register & attend.

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Law & Policy

## TECH TALKS

WITH HAOCHEN SUN

EFFICIENCY VS. DIGNITY:  
THE UTILITARIAN FOUNDATION OF DATA  
PROTECTION LAWS IN THE U.S. AND CHINA



Haochen Sun is Professor of Law and Director of the Program on Artificial Intelligence and the Law at the University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law. He is an expert on intellectual property, technology law, and Chinese law.

TUE, APR 1ST 12:15 PM LS 1327



Register here by 3/26  
[bit.ly/3OPeikc](https://bit.ly/3OPeikc)

Lunch will be provided to those who register and attend.

## 2024-2025 Courses Offered by ITLP Faculty & Staff

- Digital Technologies and the Constitution
- Artificial Intelligence Law
- Future Law: Legal & Governance Responses to Transformative Societal Trends
- Internet Law, Media & Society
- Privacy, Data, and Cyber Security Law
- The Information Policy Lab
- IP Without IP: Beyond the Borders of Intellectual Property
- Trademark Law

**Fall 2024 Tech Talks**

**Voters, Information, and the 2024 U.S. Elections**

*Professor Richard Hasen, UCLA School of Law, September 4, 2024*

**Enforcing Privacy Law: Using Technology to Automate Compliance**

*Michael Karanicolas and Associate Professor Yuan Tian, UCLA School of Law, September 18, 2024*

**Viral Rumors and Bespoke Realities: Propaganda in a Hyperconnected World**

*Professor Renee DiResta, Georgetown University, October 2, 2024*

**Project Liberty**

*Dr. Tomicah Tillemann, Project Liberty President, October 17, 2025*

**Sociological Approaches to Intellectual Property Law**

*Professor Laura Pedraza-Farina, UCLA School of Law, October 30, 2024*

**Shearing the Sheep Without Skinning It - Policy Options for Extracting Revenue**

*Dr. Alessia Zorretta, UCLA School of Law, November 13, 2024*



TOP: Tech Talk with ITLP Executive Director Michael Karanicolas and Associate Professor Yuan Tian.



RIGHT: Tech talk with Professor Richard Hasen moderated by Michael Karanicolas.

# EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

## ***Privacy Law Scholars Conference***

On May 29 and 30, 2025, ITLP hosted the annual Privacy Law Scholars Conference (PLSC), welcoming nearly 200 academics and law professionals to the world's premier academic conference of privacy, law, and technology scholars, researchers, and practitioners.

PLSC promotes scholarship in privacy, broadly defined, by providing workshop sessions and academic dialogue open to scholars in all disciplines from around the world. At PLSC's core is work related to privacy law, including in the humanities and social sciences, computer and data science, and other fields.

This year marked UCLA's first time hosting the conference, successfully representing the school as a viable west-coast host for future conferences and putting the law school and ITLP firmly on the map as a tech law powerhouse

## ***Public Policy***

In May 2025, Faculty Co-Director John Villasenor testified at "Protecting Our Edge: Trade Secrets and the Global AI Arms Race," a hearing on the intersection of trade secrets and AI held by the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and Artificial Intelligence.

In late June, John Villasenor is scheduled to speak on "Regulating in the Digital Age" at the National Governors Association's 2025 Governors Legal Counsel Convening.



TOP: PLSC Chair Ari Waldman at the 2025 Privacy Law Scholars Conference hosted by ITLP at UCLA School of Law.  
RIGHT: (From left) CalMatters Technology Reporter Khari Johnson, California Privacy Protection Agency Chair Jennifer Urban, California State Chief Technology Officer Jonathan Porat, and UCLA Professor of Law Andrew Selbst on the plenary panel about California Privacy Law panel at PLSC 2025.

privacy law scholars  
conference **PLSC**





## **ITLP Welcomes Julia Powles as Executive Director**

ITLP is thrilled to welcome a new Executive Director, Professor Julia Powles, who will join UCLA in July 2025.

A proven research leader and government advisor in law and technology, Powles is currently serving as the founding Director of the Tech & Policy Lab at the University of Western Australia. She is a first-rate legal scholar, educator, and entrepreneur in the areas of privacy, intellectual property, internet governance, and the law and politics of data, automation, and artificial intelligence.

Prior to joining UWA, Powles worked at Cornell Tech, New York University, the University of Cambridge, the Guardian, and the World Intellectual Property Organization. She studied Genetics, Biophysics, and Law in Australia, and received her Master's from Oxford and PhD from Cambridge.

Complementing her executive director role, Powles will be tech policy lead for UCLA DataX, a strategic initiative that is aimed at harnessing UCLA's full integrated capabilities in data science and data justice, in service of the public.

# ITLP EXEMPLARY PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH (2024-25)

## PUBLICATIONS FROM ITLP SCHOLARS

- Alessia Zornetta, *The DSA Database as a Tool for Platform Accountability*, University of Illinois Journal of Law, Technology & Policy (Fall 2025)
- Alessia Zornetta, *Clearing the Haze: Is the DSA forcing platforms to open up about content moderation?*, 6 Notre Dame Journal on Emerging Technology (2025)
- Alessia Zornetta, *Quantum-Safe Global Encryption Policy*, International Journal of Law and Information Technology (2024)
- Andrew Selbst, *Deconstructing design decisions: Why courts must interrogate machine learning and other technologies*, Ohio State Law Journal 85 (2024)
- Jerry Kang, *Communications Law & Policy Casebook - Version 8.0* (2024)
- Lixia Zhang, *On Empowering End Users in Future Networking*, Decentralization of the Internet Workshop at 2024 ACM CoNEXT Conference, with Tianyuan Yu and Xingyu Ma (2024)
- Lixia Zhang, *Towards a Decentralized Internet Namespace*, Decentralization of the Internet Workshop at 2024 ACM CoNEXT Conference, with Yekta Kocaoğullar and Eric Osterweil (2024)
- Lixia Zhang, *Secure Web Objects: Building Blocks for Metaverse Interoperability and Decentralization*, IEEE International Conference on Metaverse Computing, Networking, and Applications, with Tianyuan Yu, Xinyu Ma, Varun Patil, Yekta Kocaogullar, Yulong Zhang, Jeff Burke and Dirk Kutscher (2024)
- Mark McKenna, *Design Problems*, 103 Texas Law Review (forthcoming 2025)
- Mark McKenna, *Amazon's Quiet Overhaul of the Trademark System*, 113 California Law Review (forthcoming 2025)
- Neil Netanel, *Failing to Save the Press: What Should Be Next?*, 103 Texas Law Review (forthcoming 2025)
- Yuan Tian, *Towards Real-time Voice Interaction Data Collection Monitoring and Ambient Light Privacy Notification for Voice-controlled Services*, in Symposium on Usable Security and Privacy, with T. Le, Z. Wang, D. Huang, and Y. Yao (2024)
- Yuan Tian, *Where have you been? A Study of Privacy Risk for Point-of-Interest Recommendation*, ACM SIGKDD International Conference on Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining, with K. Cai, J. Zhang, W. Shand, Z. Hong, G. Wang, D. Zhang, and J. Chi (2024)
- Yuan Tian, *Breaking the Illusion: Automated Reasoning of GDPR Consent Violations*, with Y. Li, W. Qiu, F. Shezan, K. Cai, L. Austin, and D. Lie (under review, 2025)

# ITLP EXEMPLARY PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH (CONT'D)

In addition, while the following examples are not scholarly publications, they are publications on tech law topics in venues that are widely read in policy circles:

- Alessia Zornetta, *Is The Digital Services Act Truly A Transparency Machine?*, Tech Policy Press (2024)
- Alessia Zornetta, *Draft Feedback on the delegated act on researcher access to platform data under article 40(4) of the Digital Services Act*, European Commission (2024)
- Alessia Zornetta, *Is The Digital Services Act Truly A Transparency Machine?*, Tech Policy Press (2024)
- John Villasenor, *AI has rendered traditional writing skills obsolete. Education needs to adapt*, The Brookings Institution (2025)
- John Villasenor, *DeepSeek shows the limits of US export controls on AI chips*, The Brookings Institution, (2025)
- John Villasenor, *The new AI diffusion export control rule will undermine US AI leadership*, The Brookings Institution, (2025)
- John Villasenor, *AI policy directions in the new Trump administration*, The Brookings Institution, with Joshua Turner (2024)
- John Villasenor, *The tension between AI export control and U.S. AI innovation*, The Brookings Institution (2024)

# ITLP EXEMPLARY EVENTS & ENGAGEMENT

- **August 28, 2024:** ITLP Welcome Reception
- **October 15, 2024:** A.I., the FCC and the Future of Communications - A fireside chat with FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel
- **November 6, 2024:** AI and the Gaza War, a panel discussion with United Nations Special Rapporteur on Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights Ben Saul and Harvard Kennedy School Post-Doctoral Fellow Sophia Goodfriend
- **January 17, 2025:** Mark McKenna presents Design Problems, The Politics of IP Symposium (with Jessica Silbey), The University of Texas School of Law (virtual)
- **February 26, 2025:** Careers in Tech Day hosted by ITLP and The UCLA Journal of Law and Technology
- **February 26, 2025:** Mark McKenna serves as Panel Discussant, Fashion Law and Beyond: Cutting-Edge IP Cases—The Concepts Go Well Beyond Fashion, Los Angeles Intellectual Property Law Association
- **March 18, 2025:** Mark McKenna delivers the Trademark Year in Review, USC 2025 IP Institute
- **April 23, 2025:** ITLP Graduate Breakfast
- **May 29 & 30, 2025:** Privacy Law Scholars Conference, hosted by UCLA School of Law and ITLP in collaboration with Privacy Law Scholars Foundation
- **May 29, 2025:** Mark McKenna presents Taking Scale Seriously in Technology Law, Privacy Law Scholars Conference



## **UCLA** Institute for Technology, Law & Policy

FOUNDED IN 2020 as a collaboration between the UCLA School of Law and the Samueli School of Engineering.

LED BY Executive Director Julia Powles and Faculty Co-Directors Mark McKenna and John Villasenor, with many affiliated faculty across the Law and Engineering Schools.

AT THE VANGUARD of the intersection of technology and law –

- Innovative curricula at a top-ranked law school
- A multidisciplinary approach and community
- Focus on the next generation of legal experts, technologists, consumers and educators.

[itlp@law.ucla.edu](mailto:itlp@law.ucla.edu)

[law.ucla.edu/itlp](http://law.ucla.edu/itlp)

School of Law  
385 Charles Young Drive East  
Los Angeles, CA 90095



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