

**Annual Report**  
**Committee on Intellectual Property, Patents & Copyright (IPPC)**  
Academic Year 2024 – 2025

## **1. Executive Summary**

Over the past year the IPPC advanced three inter-related initiatives that support the university.

### **1.1. Entrepreneurship Road map & OIED Customer Experience**

Completed baseline Net Promoter Score (NPS) analysis, piloted an updated disclosure feedback survey, and identified process bottlenecks affecting faculty start-ups.

### **1.2. Clarifying “Scope of Employment” in the IP Policy**

Conducted a comprehensive SWOT analysis and reviewed peer institution practices to inform eventual policy language; drafting will continue in Fall 2025.

### **1.3. AI & Intellectual Property Guidance**

Partnered with University Libraries’ Patent & Trademark Resource Center (PTRC) and ERIK to curate resources explaining how generative AI intersects with copyright and patent ownership; a public landing page is scheduled for Summer 2025.

### **1.4. Outcomes**

While no formal memos or red-line revisions were issued this year, foundational research and stakeholder engagement set the stage for policy recommendations in the coming academic cycle.

## **2. Committee Membership & Sub-Committees**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Term Ends</b>	<b>Sub-committee</b>
<b>Ash Faulkner</b>	Faculty Council	2025	Scope of Employment ( <i>chair</i> )
<b>Tracy Owens</b>	Faculty Council	2025	Road-map ( <i>chair</i> )
<b>Luiz Meirelles</b>	Faculty Council	2027	Scope
<b>Wolfgang Windl</b>	Faculty Council	2027	Road-map
<b>Katelyn Swindle-Reilly</b>	Faculty Council	2027	Road-map
<b>Mara Frazier</b>	Presidential	2025	Road-map
<b>Michael Freitas</b>	Presidential	2026	Scope ( <i>IPPC chair</i> )
<b>Anand Mhatre</b>	Presidential	2026	Scope
<b>Brian Rocha</b>	CGS (Grad Stu.)	2025	Road-map
<b>Kevin Taylor</b>	ERIK CIO	—	ERIK
<b>David Mess</b>	OIED Licensing Dir.	—	ERIK appointed
<b>Becky Kaufmann</b>	Sr. Assoc. General Council	—	Observer

(The committee meets Rule 3335-5-48 membership requirements.)

### 3. Key Activities & Interim Outcomes

#### 1.5. Entrepreneurship Roadmap

- **Objective(s)**
  - Improve faculty/start-up satisfaction with disclosure and licensing processes.
- **Progress**
  - Baseline NPS evaluated; response-rate gaps identified.
  - Beta survey testing proposed with faculty inventors.
  - Process-improvement ideas compiled: scripted follow-ups for detractors, enhanced coaching resources, and a proposed “visual tracker” for disclosure status.

#### **Entrepreneurship Road-map Sub-committee**

Chaired by **Tracy Owens**, the Roadmap subcommittee spent the year taking a deep dive into how faculty and student innovators experience technology commercialization. Early in the autumn term, the group requested—and received—three years of Net Promoter Score (NPS) data from ERIK/OIED. A close reading of the free-text comments revealed two recurring pain points: silence after an invention disclosure and limited guidance on market fit. The subcommittee examined survey data to identify and suggest quick-win improvements. Overall survey response rates remain low—22 % for contracts and 27 % for licenses—even though the NPS scores themselves are strong (68–76). Surveys look nearly identical at three trigger points (post-disclosure, post-filing, post-agreement), causing many recipients to ignore them. The team has proposed drafting a shorter, event-specific survey and is working with ERIK/OIED to test wording and distribution tactics. The group also discussed launching coaching touchpoints—partnering with Rev 1 Ventures and ERIK to offer early, lightweight market-fit consultations. ERIK/OIED leadership has welcomed the effort, noting that even the strongest technical fixes will only succeed if inventors and staff see tangible benefits—underscoring the Roadmap team’s emphasis on communication and change management from the outset.

#### 1.6. Scope of Employment Policy Clarification

- **Objective(s)**
  - Examine ambiguity in the IP policy regarding “scope of work” that generates inconsistent IP ownership decisions.
- **Progress**
  - Benchmarked ten AAU institutions; preliminary findings indicate broad adoption of agency-law tests.
  - SWOT completed (strengths: predictability; weaknesses: administrative burden; opportunities: venture growth; threats: legal pushback & AI disruption).
  - Drafting of a three-part agency-law definition and a transparent waiver pathway will continue in 2025-26.

Led by **Ash Faulkner** with support from Luiz Meirelles, Anand Mhatre, and IPPC chair **Michael Freitas**, the Scope-of-Employment group tackled an ambiguity that surfaced in a 2024 appeal: when does an invention created off campus—and with little or no university resource use—still fall under university ownership? The team concluded that a clearer definition would strengthen faculty trust and reduce case-by-case determinations. To inform its work, the sub-committee benchmarked several peers. Many have already codified some version of the agency-law test that asks whether the activity was the kind the employee was hired to perform, took place during authorized time and space, and was motivated, at least in part, by a purpose to serve the employer. MIT has a process to grant a waiver in cases where IP does not meet the agency-law test and is owned solely by the inventor and not the university. The subcommittee will continue work in the following academic year to review prior legacy agreements to see how they fit with a three part test, and draft a policy updated that includes: a formal adoption of the three part test, a transparent advance-ruling process that faculty can invoke before engaging in outside work, and an explicit waiver pathway when an invention is demonstrably outside university scope. The work will pick up in September, with the goal to circulate a red-lined policy for broader comment by winter.

### **1.7. AI & Intellectual-Property Resources**

- **Objective(s)**
  - Provide a single, authoritative hub on AI's impact on copyright, patents, and publication rights.
- **Progress**
  - Confirmed Libraries' PTRC as content hub; ERIK committed to host a redirect page.
  - FAQ and resource list under joint review; launch expected Fall 2025.

Although not a standing sub-committee, the full committee responded to Senate Cabinet's call for guidance on generative AI. The group discovered that the University Libraries' Patent & Trademark Resource Center (PTRC) already curates federal and professional-society statements on AI. Rather than reinvent the wheel, the working group brokered an agreement: Libraries will maintain the technical content; ERIK will stand up a complementary web page that routes users to those materials and highlights OSU-specific compliance tips.

### **1.8. Consultations & Appeals**

- **No consultations or appeals were adjudicated during AY 2024-25.**

## **4. Priorities for AY 2025-26**

- **Continue evaluating and drafting** a clear definition and application framework for "Scope of Employment," including potential amendments to the IP policy.

- **Collaborate with ERIK and OIED** to streamline entrepreneurship resources and guidance, aiming to boost faculty engagement in start-ups and licensing.
- **Finalize and launch** the AI-and-IP resource page in partnership with Libraries' PTRC, then monitor usage and update content as norms evolve.

*Prepared on behalf of the IPPC by*  
**Michael Freitas, Ph.D.**  
Chair, IPPC 2024-25