



SE-4831: Software Quality Assurance

Lab 9: Legal Studies

1. Introduction

One of the worst things to end up involved in in the area of software engineering is a lawsuit. Lawsuits take up an extensive amount of time for engineers.

Recently, there was a major trial verdict rendered against Toyota in which software was found responsible for causing cases of unintended acceleration. This is a major occurrence, for it is one of the first cases where software has been found legally responsible for the death of a human being, and the ramifications may be extreme to the field.

2. Lab Activity

In this lab, you will be working as teams for the first 70 minutes. There will be three roles randomly assigned to teams.

The first role would be to serve as a potential auditor. As a team, you are to go through the testimony and take a look at the best practices which should be part of a software development process which were not followed and contributed to the failure of the software.

The second role is to act as an SQA expert and make suggestions on how the SQA process could be improved to ensure that the problems were found prior to the release of the software.

In the third role, you are to act as a defense witness. You have read the testimony from Mr. Barr, and you are tasked with arguing that to the best of your knowledge, the best practices were being followed in software development.

3. Lab Schedule

You are to work in your teams for the first 80 minutes of lab. During this time, as a team you will read through the materials and make your analysis.

When this time is finished, we will gather together in the front of the lab for mini-presentations. Depending on your role, you should be prepared to defend your findings and present to the class. DO not worry about a formal presentation. Rather, put your materials into some form of bulleted lists which reference the testimony and / or presentation slides.

4. Deliverables

By the end of lab, each team is to upload a document expressing their views toward the Barr materials. The document should include:

- The names of the team members



The key findings from their review

References to the testimony and slides supporting their view

A summary of what was learned from the exercise

A summary of what went right and what went wrong with the exercise.