Choose one of the following two topics on which to write a three-page essay.

1. Online music distribution
   The popular-music distribution business is widely believed to be in trouble. Traditional business models, most notably sales of CD albums, are not as profitable as they once were, and major-label record companies have not (yet) managed to build successful new business models using Internet-based distribution. The purpose of this assignment is for your to think constructively and/or analytically about popular-music distribution in the Internet age.
   Write a three-page essay in which you propose a "solution" to the ongoing troubles in the mainstream popular-music distribution business. Approaches that you may take in this essay include but are not limited to:

- o Propose a business model (or, more generally, a strategy) that existing major labels could use successfully given the current legal and technological infrastructure. Give an argument for why this approach would succeed. You may defend an approach that is already being tried (*e.g.,* iTunes), modify such an approach, or design your own.
- o Propose a change to existing copyright law that would enable more profitable popular-music distribution given the current technological infrastructure but would not destroy the basic goal of copyright law "to promote progress in science and the useful arts," *e.g.*, by promoting public access to cultural works.
- o Propose a change to the current technological infrastructure that would enable more profitable popular-music distribution given current copyright law but would not destroy the basic flexibility and usefulness of today's Internet.
- o Argue that popular-music distribution is inherently less profitable in the Internet age than it was in certain earlier periods (*e.g.,* "the CD age").

2. Full-text book search
   In his February 5, 2007 New Yorker article entitled "Google's Moon Shot," Jeffrey Toobin writes that "Google intends to scan every book ever published and to make the full texts searchable, in the same way that Web sites can be searched on the company's engine at google.com. ... No one really knows how many books there are. The [largest number of] volumes listed in any catalogue is thirty-two million ... Google aims to scan at least that many." Google vice-president Marissa Mayer has said that "It's mind-boggling to me, how close it is. I think of Google Books as our moon shot."
   This project led Google into conflict with (and a just-settled lawsuit by) authors and publishers. Moreover, concern about the project's potential effects on innovation and entrepreneurship in digital book distribution has been expressed by cyber-law scholars,

e.g., Lawrence Lessig of Stanford. The purpose of this assignment is for you to think constructively and/or analytically about book publishing, distribution, and use in the Internet age.

In a three-page essay (double-spaced), defend one of the following three positions:

- o The Google Books project is fine in its current state. There are no essential legal or technical barriers to its going forward; all that's needed is a negotiated business arrangement among Google, authors, and publishers. Lessig et al.'s concerns about the future of books are unwarranted.
- o Google's goal of making (almost?) all of the world's books full-text searchable is a good one, but there are currently legal and/or technical barriers to achieving it. If you choose to defend this position, then propose a solution to this problem. For example, propose a change to existing copyright law that would clear the way for online full-text searching of all books but would not destroy the basic goal of copyright law ("to promote progress in science and the useful arts") or be "myopic" in that it would only work in the current technological environment. Alternatively, propose a change to the current technological infrastructure that would make online full-text searching of all books easier under current copyright law but not destroy highly desirable properties of today's Internet.
- o The Google Books project is fundamentally flawed; it is not the best way to move forward on digital publishing, distribution, and use of books. If you choose to defend this position, then propose an alternative way to move forward and explain why it is better than Google Books.

References:
"Google's Moon Shot," by J. Toobin
http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/02/05/070205fa_fact_toobin

Brookings Institute panel session on Google Books
http://aei-brookings.org/admin/authorpdfs/redirect-safely.php?fname=../pdffiles/phpEn.pdf

"The Google Print Library Project: A Copyright Analysis," J. Band
http://www.policybandwidth.com/doc/googleprint.pdf