



CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF LAW AND SOCIETY  
BERKELEY LAW

## **CSLS SPEAKER SERIES**

Monday, October 9, 2017

### **ADAM BADAWI**

Professor of Law, UC Berkeley School of Law

## **“Lawyers, Law Firms, and the Production of Legal Information”**

Legal language is a prominent constraint on firm behavior. While some of this language is statutory or regulatory in origin, much of it is produced by the lawyers and law firms that draft the contracts that firms enter into and the public documents that they file. Despite the importance of this lever of corporate governance, there has been relatively little research on the role that lawyers and law firms play in the generation and evolution of this language. This paper addresses this gap in the literature by conducting a large scale word content analysis of fifteen years worth of offering prospectuses filed with the SEC by firms that seek to make an initial or seasoned public offering. Extracting the names of the lawyers and law firms that produce these documents allows for an analysis of the similarity of documents produced by the same lawyers, the same law firms, the same industries, and by proximate law firms. By identifying lawyers that switch law firms, the analysis can assess the amount of similarity that is attributable to the lawyers themselves and how much is associated with the lawyers working at a specific law firms. The law firm effect is larger than the lawyer effect across multiple specifications of the model. This result suggests that if lawyers leave their law firms, the subsequent work product of those lawyers will look quite different. This effect implies that there are important organizational effects associated with the production of this sort of legal language. In addition to this result, the analysis also shows substantial similarity effects associated with issuer industry, law firm proximity, and documents drafted after a law firm has merged.

Professor Badawi’s paper is available online on our website and in hard copy at the Center.

**PLACE** Selznick Seminar Room, 2240 Piedmont Avenue  
**TIME** **12:45 – 2:00pm.** Coffee and water provided. Bag lunches welcome.  
**INFO** <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/centers/center-for-the-study-of-law-society/>  
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