

Energy and Mineral Engineering Departmental Seminar

**“Innovation and Intellectual Property: Applications to Patent Review,
Biofuels and University Technology Transfer”**

**Zhen Lei, Assistant Professor of Energy and Environmental Economics,
Department of Energy and Mineral Engineering**

Thursday, November 12, 1:00 pm

157 Hosler Building

Abstract: Zhen Lei’s research interests include technological innovation, technology transfer, intellectual property rights, and science and technology policy. In this talk, he will introduce several research projects he has been involved in. First, Zhen will present an empirical study of why the US Patent and Trademark Office issues so many “weak patents”, patents that do not meet the patentability criteria (mainly novelty and non-obviousness) but nevertheless are granted. The existence of weak patents can do significant harm to innovation. Second, Zhen will talk about some research projects related to IP and biofuels resulting from a partnership formed by UC Berkeley, UIUC and British Petroleum. These projects include patent landscape for second generation biofuel; intellectual property and contractual issues in public/industry collaborative institutions; and the impacts of such institutions and university patenting on university research. Third, Zhen will mention an empirical study of university technology transfer and utilization of university inventions, using data from Office of Technology Transfer at University of California.