Intellectual property issues began to crop up more and more as we delved more into our project. The nature of our project has us treading a lot of borders of plagiarism. Google Maps location services is the crux of our project, and seeing as we are doing an android app, there are a lot of other location based apps out there that try to achieve a similar goal to us, one such app is Google Latitude. Especially since we are using the same location based services as Google Latitude is using, we need to pay extra attention as we continue creating an app based around an open source software. Even though it is open source, and provided for free, we still need to tread carefully.

Since a lot of the work done by our app will be done on the back end, where the user will not be able to see it, it brings into question a lot of the boundaries that we may overstep while making this app. A big ethical issue that comes up is privacy. Since we are doing a location based service, which may or may not end up running in the background, the question becomes how liberal can we be with being able to use peoples’ locations. If we constantly ping without letting the user know, that is a huge invasion of privacy, and if we make it so as long as the app is open, everyone and anyone can see that person’s location, that would also be morally questionable. Although just leaving it so that we can use the location freely will be the most convenient for us as developers, we need to account for exactly how far we can go without stepping over the line. We will probably have to implement settings that the user can control that will let them know exactly how freely we will be using their location (for example let them be able to toggle who they are visible to and such). On top of that, using Android 6.0 and up, it is required to ask the user before accessing the location of their phone. Also since our app will be account based, handling private information such as passwords will also be a big issue. If we do it incorrectly we may unintentionally leak peoples’ private information.