Free Software licenses

Legal Aspects – Master on Free Software 2012-13

Miguel Vidal

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Hire an attorney if you need legal advice



Course Contents

- Lesson 0: Presentation of the Course
- Lesson 1: Intellectual Property: basic concepts and legal framework
- Lesson 2: Legal Aspects of Libre Software
- Lesson 3: Free Software licenses
- Lesson 4: Free licenses for other intellectual works
- Lesson 5: Case studies



Why Do I Need a License?

Why Do I Need a License?

If you don't license your code, it can't be used (legally) by other people.

FLOSS License Example

Implementing a basic free license is very easy:

Free Software License Example

Copyright (c) Year(s), Company or Person's Name <E-mail address>. All rights reserved.

Permission to use, copy, modify, and/or distribute this software for any purpose with or without fee is hereby granted, provided that the above copyright notice and this permission notice appear in all copies.

That's all!!



FLOSS Licensing

From least to greatest complexity (and liberal/control):

- Academic Licenses
- Permissive Licenses
- Partially Closable Licenses (weak copyleft)
- Reciprocal Licenses (strong copyleft)

Recommended licenses

- Academic/permissive
 - The Simplified ("2-clause") BSD License
 - The ISC License
 - The Apache License 2.0
- Weak copyleft
 - The Mozilla Public License (MPL)
 - The CDDL License (OpenSolaris)
 - The Lesser GPL (LGPL), version 2 or 3
- Strong copyleft
 - The GNU GPL, version 2 or 3
 - The Affero GPL, version 3



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BSD License. Origins

- BSD (Berkeley Software Distribution) is a Unix flavor developed by University of Berkeley (CA).
- BSD Unix was licensed under a "minimalistic" license which permits both source or binary redistribution; also modifications, but without any other restriction.
- Several revisions: it's a template.



Current BSD License

- Based in original BSD license.
- Very popular (BSD userland, PF, TCP/IP, OpenSSH, TCL/Tk...).
- You may redistribute the work, in any form (source or binary) but with all remaining copyright notes (authorship attribution).
- There is a "no warranty" clause.
- "Liberal (=libertarian) license": no control over software evolution.



BSD License. Advantages

- BSD license places minimal restrictions on future behavior.
- This allows BSD code to remain Open Source or become integrated into closed solutions.
- No legal complexity (unlike GPL or LGPL licenses).
- It allows developers and companies to spend their time creating and promoting good code rather than worrying if that code violates licensing.

Original BSD License (1988, 4.3BSD and Net/1)

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BSD-like licenses

- Internet Systems Consortium (ISC)
 - Equivalent to the 2-clause BSD license.
 - Language "made unnecessary by the Berne convention" removed
 - BIND, DHCP and preferred license of OpenBSD project.
- MIT License
 - Used graphical subsystem in Unix systems (X Window System), Symfony, RoR, Lua, Putty Mono, CakePHP...
 - Similar to the 2-clause BSD license.
 - It doesn't contain a notice prohibiting the use of the name of the copyright holder in promotion.



ISC: the shortest license

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• Preferred license in OpenBSD Project and ISC sw (bind, dhcp)

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It states more explicitly the rights given to the end-user

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- Zope Public License 2.0
 - Used by the Zope distribution (an application server) and some related products.
 - Near BSD license, also prohibits the use of Zope Corporation trademarks.
- WTFPL ("Do What The Fuck You Want To Public License")
 - Licensees are encouraged to do what they want to.
 - Approved as a GPL-compatible by the FSF.
 - Examples: WindowMaker artwork and Potlatch (the online editor of the OpenStreetMap).



WTFPL: The most permissive and irreverent license

DO WHAT THE FUCK YOU WANT TO PUBLIC LICENSE Version 2, December 2004

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Public Domain

- An intellectual work in the Public Domain is neither under any IP law nor a license.
- Most public domain works retains the authorship.
- With source code available, it's (functionally) very similar placing the program under a BSD license.

Public Domain: No Copyright



Sample Public Domain Dedication

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In case this is not legally possible, I grant any entity the right to use this work for any purpose, without any conditions, unless such conditions are required by law.''

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* Copyright (C) 1993-2000 by Darren Reed.

Exercise: ipfilter license (2000)

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* This program is distributed in the hope that it will be useful,

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* MERCHANTABILITY or FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE.
```

* I hate legaleese, don't you?

*/

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/*

ipfilter license "Clarification" (2001)

/* Copyright (C) 1993-2001 by Darren Reed.

/*

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* warrantv.

```
*

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Theo de Raadt announces that IPFilter will be replaced

Date: Tue, 29 May 2001 19:13:11 -0600

From: Theo de Raadt <deraadt@cvs.openbsd.org>

Subject: ipf

sometime in the next 20 hours, i will be removing ipf from the source tree since it does not meet our freedom requirements, as have been outlined in policy.html and goals.html since the start of our project.

we will have to work on an alternative.



Be careful with grants!

The 2-clause BSD License

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- Redistributions of source code must retain the above copyright notice, this list of conditions and the following disclaimer.
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ipfilter case

- The real problem is that code with a non-free license was incorporated into the core of a free operating system.
- Carelessness with licenses invites trouble.

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The Apache License

- Old versions: 1.0 (original) and 1.1 (ASF, 2000).
- An extension of the 3-clause BSD license.
- Permits to be integrated into closed source projects.
- Apache License 2.0 (January 2004): permissive license.
 - Make the license easier for non-ASF projects to use.
 - Explicitly grants patent rights where necessary to operate, modify and distribute the software (sect. 3).
 - Patent retaliation (terminating the license upon the initiation of a lawsuit)



The Apache License v2

- Over 5000 non-ASF projects located at SourceForge are available under Apache License (2009).
- 25% from Google Code (including Android).
- Compatibility with GPLv3 (only one-way).
- Incompatible with GPLv2.

Apache License: Grant of Patent

3. Grant of Patent License

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The Mozilla Public License

- It keeps the covered code itself open source.
- Code under the MPL may be combined with proprietary files in one program ("Larger Work").
- Explicitly grants patent rights where necessary to operate the software.
- A module covered by the GPL and a module covered by the MPL 1.1. cannot legally be linked together.
- For this reason, Firefox have been relicensed under multiple licenses (MPL, GPL, LGPL).
- MPL 1.1 can be specifically amended to allow combining with GPL and others (sect. 13, "Multiple-licensed code").



MPL 1.1 Exception — Dual Licensing

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The MPL version 2

- MPL 2.0: released in Jan 2012 after more than a decade.
- Grant of Patent (section 2.1).
- MPL v2.0 is compatible with the Apache License and GPL.

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The CDDL License

- The Common Development and Distribution License is a based work of the MPI
- Produced by Sun Microsystems for OpenSolaris projects (kernel, userland, ZFS, DTrace, NetBeans, GlassFish...).
- OSI-compliant (2004) and one of nine OSI preferred licenses (also OSSCC reco.
- It fixes some smaller problems in the MPL 1.1.
- Such as some non-copliances with European law system in the MPI that have been corrected in the CDDI.
- GPL-incompatible.



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The GNU LGPL v2.1

LGPL = Lesser GPL

- LGPL started as "Library GPL". Later renamed to "Lesser GPL".
- LGPL maintain all GPL provisions, but with one exception:
 - "Works that use the library" can be licensed any way (including proprietary software).
 - Not only libraries: OpenOffice, Mozilla.



LGPL linking exception

LGPL linking exception

"A program that contains no derivative of any portion of the Library, but is designed to work with the Library by being compiled or linked with it, is called a "work that uses the Library". Such a work, in isolation, is not a derivative work of the Library, and therefore falls outside the scope of this License."

Why LGPL?

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- Created for promoting the use of free software libraries (ex: GNU libc –glibc–).
- Later, FSF checked that LGPL was very used, so they decided to rename it to "lesser" and discourage its use (v2.1, 1999).

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GNU GPL License

GPL = GNU General Public License.

GPL Concepts:

- Created by FSF for the GNU Project.
- Very often used in non-GNU free software.
- Probably, the most popular Free Software license: around 70% Freshmeat projects licensed under GPL.
- Some popular software licensed under GPL: Linux, GNOME, Emacs. GCC...



The GNU GPL

What makes the GPL so special?



The GNU GPL

What makes the GPL so special?

- It was the first license to outline the copyleft principle.
- All copyleft licenses have been based on the GPL, including the Wikipedia license.
- Without the GPL, copyleft would be just an idea.
- Designed to prevent the proprietary commercialization of free software code.
- The GPL is a "viral" copyleft license: not business friendly?



GNU GPL. Characteristics

- This license guarantees the four FLOSS freedoms.
- "Copyleft" clause: all derivative works should be licensed also under the same license.
- Since in USA software patents are admissible, GPL includes a clause for avoiding GPL licensing of patented software or algorithms.
- GPL code can not be mixed with other code under "GPL-incompatible" license.



GPLv2. Copyleft clause

Section 2 (Copyleft clause)

You may modify your copy or copies of the Program or any portion of it, thus forming a work based on the Program, and copy and distribute such modifications or work [...] provided that you also meet all of these conditions:

- a) You must cause the modified files to carry prominent notices stating that you changed the files and the date of any change.
- b) You must cause any work that you distribute or publish, that in whole or in part contains or is derived from the Program or any part thereof, to be licensed as a whole at no charge to all third parties under the terms of this License.

GPL. EULA is not necessary

GPLv2. Section 5

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GPL versions

- Based in Emacs license, first copyleft license (1986).
- GPL version 1 (1989). Generics, program-independent, "version 1 or later".
- GPL version 2 (1991). "Liberty or dead" clause (it prevents from patents threats).
- GPL version 3 (2007). Tivoization, patents and DRMs. Community discuss.

The most known is GPI Version 2 because has been on the market for more than 15 years.



GPL, version 2 (GPLv2)

- Written by Richard Stallman and the FSF. It was published in 1991.
- The most popular free software license: It covers 50-70 % of all free software.
- It's more than a software license: it is a social contract.

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Why does it update it?



GPL, version 2 (GPLv2)

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- The most popular free software license: It covers 50-70 % of all free software.
- It's more than a software license: it is a social contract.

Why does it update it?

After 15 years, needed updating in order to remain effective against the technological challenges.



GPLv3 elaboration process

Public consultation process:

- It lasted eighteen months: from January 16, 2006 (first draft) to June 29, 2007 (final version).
- Four drafts.
- Five International Conferences (Boston, Porto Alegre, Barcelona, Tokyo and Brussels)

GPLv3 elaboration process

Public consultation process:

- It lasted eighteen months: from January 16, 2006 (first draft) to June 29, 2007 (final version).
- Four drafts.
- Five International Conferences (Boston, Porto Alegre, Barcelona, Tokyo and Brussels)

The most important change, compared to previous versions, was the re-elaboration of the license, since it was discussed and agreed by the community.



Changes in GPLv3

The newest GPL version does not invalidate previous versions or requires software to be licensed under the new version.

- Major changes
 - It DOES NOT prevent DRM implementations with GPL software, but it DOES allow interoperable software to be written with it.
 - More protection related to software patents
 - It neutralizes WIPO (anti-circumvention) laws which ban libre software (DMCA and EUCD).
 - It clarifies license compatibility (additional permissions)
- Minor changes
 - Adaptation to technological innovations.
 - Clarifications to make it easier to use and understand.
 - Better internationalization (convey/distribution)



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 - It clarifies license compatibility (additional permissions)
- Minor changes
 - Adaptation to technological innovations.
 - Clarifications to make it easier to use and understand.
 - Better internationalization (convey/distribution)

Many changes, but fundamental principles remain.





How GPLv3 works: Digital Rights Management (DRM)

- Section 3 neutralize laws that prohibit (write or share) free software (such as DMCA, EUCD)
- But not forbidding DRM with GPLed software.
- It's always possible to use GPLed code to write software that implements DRM
- But it's possible write interoperable software and bypass restrictions.
- Neutralize tivoization: require to provide with information or necessary data to install modified software on the embedded device.

"GNU GPL does not restrict what people do in software; it just stops them from restricting others."





GPLv3: Software Patents

Protection against patent threats is implemented in GPLv2 through clause "Liberty or Death" (sec. 7).

- If GPLed code includes patents with incompatible restrictions, can't be distributed.
- Avoid "zombie" free software (software would be free if patents won't exist anymore).

This clause remains in GPI v3.



GPLv3: Protecting From Anti-Circumvention Law

Protecting Users' Legal Rights From Anti-Circumvention Law (sec. 3):

GPLv3, Section 3. Protecting From Anti-Circumvention

No covered work shall be deemed part of an effective technological measure. [...] When you convey a covered work, you waive any legal power to forbid circumvention of technological measures to the extent such circumvention is effected by exercising rights under this License

Software Patents

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GPLv3 adds stronger protection against patent threats through legal-engineering:

- Who distribute GPLed software must provide any patent rights to exercise the freedoms that the GPL grants him.
- If anyone intends to exercise a patent, your license is finished.
- Users and developers can work with GPLv3 software without worrying about anybody can sue for patent infringement.

Compatibility

Compatibility == merge source code from different libre software licenses.

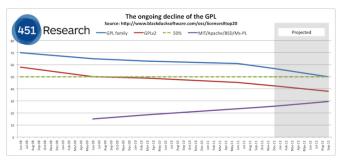
- GPLv3 increases compatibility with several free licenses (Apache, Affero).
- Allow additional requirements:
 - Responsibility: Allows add disclaimers or warranty notes.
 - Allows add restrictions about trademarks.

GPLv3 is more modular, more compatible, and will be compatible with different copyleft licenses.



The ongoing decline of the GPL

The GPLv2 is in decline relative to permissive licenses:

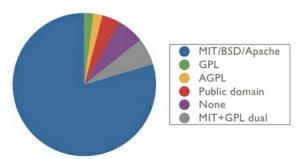


Since this analysis, the decline has accelerated: GPLv2 is now at 36,65% (November 2012)



The Top Licenses on Github

The 50 most watched Github projects shows an acute decline in the GPL relative to permissive licenses:



Source: http://ostatic.com/blog/the-top-licenses-on-github



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Other reciprocal licenses: Affero GPL (AGPL)

- It is a derived license from GPL.
- Published by the Free Software Foundation (version 3: 2007).
- It contains a clause requiring distribution of any modified source code of applications running over a network (SaaS).
- It aims to cover the case of modified GPL software which is not distributed because the GPL license does not require to do so (web services or online applications).
- Criticism (ex. Bryan Cantrill): based in a "absurdly broad definition of derived work".





Affero Clause

AGPL. Section 13. Affero Clause

If you modify the Program, your modified version must prominently offer all users interacting with it remotely through a computer network (if your version supports such interaction) an opportunity to receive the Corresponding Source of your version by providing access to the Corresponding Source from a network server at no charge [...].

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GPL caveats (FSF doctrine)

- The GPL does require that incompatible (OSS or not) and GPL'ed programs "are not combined in a way that would make them effectively a single program."
- If GPL source is required for a program to compile, the program must be under the GPL.
- Linking to a GPL library requires a program to be under the GPL.
- Simply aggregating software together (i.e. distros) doesn't count as including GPLed programs in non-GPLed programs.



GPL caveats (FSF doctrine)

- Output of a program does not count as a derivative work.
 This enables the gcc compiler to be used in commercial environments without legal problems.
- Since the Linux kernel is under the GPL, any code statically linked with the Linux kernel must be GPLed.
- This requirement can be circumvented by distributing and dynamically linking loadable kernel modules.

FSF doctrine about linking: remarks and inconsistencies

- Linking has a specific meaning in computer programming but not referred in copyright law.
- What about linking in web pages?
- Translate, modify, revisions... are (according to laws) derivative works. But it's not linking that made the derivative difference!
- Scripting: "pipes" (not derivative) vs. include code (derivative) work)
- Compiling (not derivative) vs. code language translation
- If in doubt: valid meaning (interpretation) is above all judge and copyright-holder / licensor (not FSF)





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Lawrence Rosen: critical views

- Lawrence Rosen (OSI) claims that a GPLd library may be used from any program as long as the library code is not modified.
- A program under GPL may link against non-GPL libraries (dynamic linking) as this action is not considered to create a derivative work but a collective work.
- The FSF claims that this is not permitted.
 - but the claim from the FSF is in conflict with the Copyright law.
 - No GPL code copied, modified, translated or changed... no copyleft obligations (according to Rosen)

Important issue because the FSF insists that the GPL has to be interpreted as a US license instead of being a contract!



The US Copyright Act. Derivative Works

The Copyright Act, at 17 U.S.C. §101

A "derivative work" is a work based upon one or more pre-existing works, such as a translation, musical arrangement, dramatization, fictionalization, motion picture version, sound recording, art reproduction, abridgment, condensation or any other form in which a work may be recast, transformed or adapted. A work consisting of editorial revisions, annotations, elaborations or other modifications which, as a whole, represent an original work of authorship, is a "derivative work".

It is a little vague and doesn't say anything at all about software.



When is one program a "derivative work" of another?

(cc) BY

When is one program a "derivative work" of another?

- A work based upon a preexisting work.
- The preexisting work is modified, translated, recasted, transformed, adapted so to create an improved (or different) work.
- Linking is not referred.
- Substantial similarity: it's not enough to identify a derivated software work.
- Complex problem... only related to copyleft?



What is a derivative work?

- Is Linux a derivative work of Unix?
- Is implementation of a industry standard a derivative work of that specification?
- How much copying of source code is required to create a derivative work?
- Does linking create a derivative work?

Controversial interpretations



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- Academic licenses
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- Weak copyleft licenses
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Top 20 OSS Licenses (Black Duck Software)

Top 20 Most Commonly Used Licenses in **Open Source Projects**

The table below illustrates the top 20 licenses that are used in open source projects, according to the KnowledgeBase. This data is updated

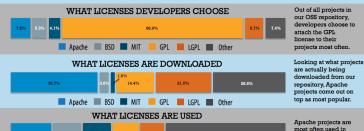
Please click on a license name for more information.

Rank	License	%
1.	GNU General Public License (GPL) 2.0	32.65%
2.	Apache License 2.0	12.84%
3.	GNU General Public License (GPL) 3.0	11.62%
4.	MIT License	11.28%
5.	BSD License 2.0	6.83%
6.	Artistic License (Perl)	6.27%
7.	GNU Lesser General Public License (LGPL) 2.1	6.19%
8.	GNU Lesser General Public License (LGPL) 3.0	2.62%
9.	Eclipse Public License (EPL)	1.61%
10.	Code Project Open 1.02 License	1.33%
11.	Microsoft Public License	1.32%
12.	Mozilla Public License (MPL) 1.1	1.08%
13.	Common Development and Distribution License (CDDL)	0.31%
14.	BSD 2-clause "Simplified" or "FreeBSD" License	0.30%
15.	Common Public License (CPL)	0.26%
16.	zlib/libpng License	0.23%
17.	Academic Free License	0.20%
18.	GNU Affero GPL v3	0.16%
19.	Microsoft Reciprocal License (Ms-RL)	0.14%
20.	Open Software License (OSL)	0.14%

MOST POPULAR LICENSES WHAT LICENSES DEVELOPERS CHOOSE Out of all projects in our OSS repository. developers choose to 4.1% 68.9% attach the GPL license to their Apache BSD MIT GPL projects most often. Looking at what projects WHAT LICENSES ARE DOWNLOADED are actually being downloaded from our 21.0% 26.5% repository, Apache projects come out on top as most popular. Apache MIT GPL GPL LGPL Other WHAT LICENSES ARE USED Apache projects are most often used in 0.894 10.8% 8.9% applications (based on scanning results). Apache BSD MIT IGPI Other what does it *Source: DpenLogic Data, 2011

MOST POPULAR LICENSES

IN THE ENTERPRISE



what does it ?

10.8%

Apache BSD MIT

(cc) BY

9.8%

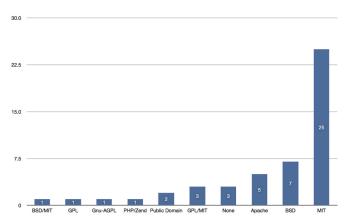
Projects most often downloaded and used in applications have more liberal licenses attached to them, even though developers are more likely to attach GPL to their code. Don't completely dismiss GPL projects, though – if GPL is a concern in your organization, delve down and create a policy!

IGPI Other

*Source: DenLogic Data, 2011

applications (based on scanning results).

The Top Licenses on Github



Source: http://ostatic.com/blog/the-top-licenses-on-github

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Free Licenses Comparison

License name	Can give my name for derived work?	Should derived work remains open source?	Can change license type for derived work?	Can sell derived work?
Apache License 2.0	yes	no	yes	yes
Common Development and Distribution License (CDDL)	yes	no	yes to compatible	yes
GNU General Public License 2.0 (GPLv2)	yes, but should mark changes	yes, only if published	yes to compatible or by owner agreement	yes
GNU Library General Public License (LGPL)	yes	same as in GPL, but can link compiled libraries as-is into non- open source software (please reference for more info)	yes for compatible	yes
Microsoft Public License (Ms-PL)	yes, but cannot use owner's trademarks	no	no	yes
Microsoft Reciprocal License (Ms-RL)	yes, same as for Ms-PL	yes	no	yes
Mozilla Public License 1.1 (MPL)	yes	no	no	yes
BSD License	yes	no	yes	yes
MIT License	yes	no	yes	yes

Free Licenses Comparison (OSSCC)

License	OSSCC recommended	License type	Link against a library under a different license	Link code under different license against library under this license	Merge code into a work under a different license	Patent grants to any code using code under this license	Patent protection
Apache License 2.0	Yes	Academic	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Yes	Yes
New BSD License	Yes	Academic	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	X [1]	No
CDDL	Yes	Reciprocal	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed [2]	Yes	Yes
CPL	No [10] [11]	Reciprocal	Allowed	Allowed	No [3]	No [4]	Yes
Eclipse Public License	No [10] [11]	Reciprocal	Allowed	Allowed	No [3]	No [4]	Yes
<u>GPL</u>	No [9]	Reciprocal	Allowed [5]	No [6]	No [7]	Yes	No
<u>LGPL</u>	No [9]	Reciprocal	Allowed	Allowed	No [7]	Yes	No
MIT license	Yes	Academic	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	X [1]	No
MPL	Yes [8]	Reciprocal	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed [2]	Yes	Yes

http://www.osscc.net/en/licenses.html



Discussion: GPL vs BSD

• "BSD code is free, but GPL code stays free."

Discussion: GPL vs BSD

- "BSD code is free, but GPL code stays free."
- Copyleftism: (Not) business friendly?

References

- ROSE, LAWRENCE: Open Source Licensing, Prentice Hall, July 2004
- FSFE: "Working Paper on the legal implication of certain forms of Software Interactions (aka linking)", July 2010.
- BAIN, MALCOLM: "Software Interactions and the GNU General Public License", IFOSS L.Rev, 2(2), 2010.
- ROSE, LAWRENCE: "Derivative Works", Linux Journal, June 1, 2003.



Free Software licenses

Legal Aspects – Master on Free Software 2012-13

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