What exactly is an invention?

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Abstract: This Seminar will present a brief summary of what an “invention” is according to United States patent law. Everybody knows intuitively what an invention is, but the law provides a detailed definition that includes four main requirements: (i) proper subject matter (not an abstract idea, or a law or nature, etc.); (ii) novelty (something not done before); (iii) non-obviousness (not a trivial improvement); (iv) written description (adequate disclosure of the invention to the public). Some examples will be provided for each of these requirements.

Andrea Pacelli is a Counsel with the law firm of Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr LLP (“WilmerHale”) in New York City. He received a PhD in electrical engineering from the Polytechnic Institute of Milan, Italy, in 1998, and a law degree from Fordham University, magna cum laude, in 2008. He is a member of the New York and New Jersey bars, and is admitted to practice before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Since 2004 he has been involved in patent litigation, licensing and prosecution, with a particular emphasis on the semiconductor industry. Prior to his legal career, Dr. Pacelli held technical and academic positions at Stony Brook University, Bell Laboratories, and Tower Semiconductor, Israel.