Patent Drafting Assignment

For this assignment (worth 30% of the course grade), you are to invent a solution to one of the three following problems and to draft a patent for submission to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

(1) Misinformation is everywhere. This includes misinformation about politics, science, and other domains of life. News networks and social media are avenues of spread. Invent something that will reduce your personal exposure to misinformation.

(2) The USPTO has issued over 4400 mousetrap patents, yet only about 20 of them have made any money. Some 400 people apply for mousetrap patents every year. More here. Invent a better mousetrap, one that you think will be profitable. Remember to check the prior art!

(3) Beau is a good dog, though he could be a better teaching assistant. That said, he HATES going out for a walk in the rain. Invent something that would improve his rain walk experience.

Some important points:

- Be creative! Invent something you will feel comfortable presenting to the class!

- Your invention need not solve the entire problem, but it must address an important aspect of the problem.

- Remember the novelty requirement! If you discover your invention is part of the prior art (including something in commercial use), you will need to invent a new solution.

- You will not be graded on the real-world functionality of your invention, nor on whether your invention is likely to survive scrutiny by the USPTO.

When preparing your submission:

- Focus more on basic elements of a patent and less on appearance/production.

- Drawings will be helpful, but you will not be graded on your artwork.

- Technical expertise may be required, which involves some background reading; explain what you understand from the prior art and do your best to use proper terminology.