

Engineering & Computer Science 188: *Ethics in the Age of Technology*
Department of Engineering & Computer Science
University of California, Davis

Instructor: Chris Ganchoff, Ph.D. (c)
Time/Location: Tues/Thurs 9:00-10:20
Olson 117
Office Hrs: Tues/Thurs 3:00-4:00 and by appt.
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Course Description

This course is an introduction to the study of technology in/and society. One way of understanding this relationship has been through the field of ethics. Traditionally, ethics has been a domain of both moral philosophy (e.g., what is a good life?) and jurisprudence (what actions should be allowed or sanctioned?) In this course, we will take a broader view of ethics, and examine the ways technology has become part of everyday life, and the new problems this situation is provoking. We will examine technology broadly, as well as concerns specific to computers and information technology, as well as the impact of new technologies on economics, politics, and culture.

Course Structure

Participation: There will be in-class group work, and individual participation. Remember, class time is your time – the more questions you ask, the better the course will be for everybody. It is also important to realize that disagreement is OK! Be sure to have good arguments to back up your claims. Participation will count for **20%** of your final grade. Regular attendance is required. **Please let the instructor know about planned absences before hand.**

Quizzes: There will be short quizzes based on the reading assignments for that day. There are a total of six quizzes, each is worth 5%, for a total of **30%**. **There are no make up quizzes.**

Research Project: There will be a 10-page research paper, properly formatted: 12-point standard font (Times New Roman or Arial), double-spaced, standard margins (left/right 1.25”, top/bottom 1”), with page numbers, and name and date in the header. The project will be on a technology topic of your choice.

Statement on Plagiarism:

Cheating or plagiarism will automatically result in a grade of F. Plagiarism is a form of cheating or fraud; it occurs when a student misrepresents the work of another as his or her own. Plagiarism may consist of using the ideas, sentences, paragraphs, or the whole text of another without appropriate acknowledgment, but it also includes employing or allowing another person to write or substantially alter work that a student then submits as his or her own.

Consequences for violating the Code of Academic Conduct, including cases of plagiarism, range from disciplinary sanctions such as disciplinary probation, deferred separation, suspension, and dismissal to educational interventions such as attending a workshop or writing a paper. For more information on student discipline, see Student Responsibilities and Conduct Standards:

<http://sja.ucdavis.edu/scs.html>

Exam: There will be a final exam. It will count for **30%** of your final course grade. The exam will be comprised of one essay-style question (about 4 pages), a few short answer questions (1-2 pages), and 5-7 definitional questions (1 sentence to half a page).

Grading

Percent of Grade:

20% Class Participation/In-class assignments

30% Quizzes

20% Class Project

30% Final Exam

A=90-100%, B=80-89%, C=70-79%, D=60-69%, and below 60%=F.

Required texts

Harry Collins and Trevor Pinch. *The Golem at Large: What you should know about technology.*
ISBN: 0521012708

Adam Greenfield. *Everyware: The dawning of the age of ubiquitous computing.*
ISBN: 0321384016

Deborah Johnson. *Computer Ethics*
ISBN: 0130836990

Cass Sunstein. *Republic.com*
ISBN: 0691095892

Recommended texts

Richard Spinello. *Cyberethics: Morality and law in cyberspace*
ISBN: 0763737836

Reading schedule

Please read the assignment prior to coming to class that day.

3/29 Introduction to the Course

4/3 Johnson Chpt. 1
Greenfield Section 1 pp. 9-34

4/5 Discussion: what are computer ethics?

4/10 Collins and Pinch Introduction, Chpts. 1-2 pp. 1-56
Greenfield Section 2 pp. 35-88
Quiz

4/12 Discussion: what is technology?

4/17 Sunstein Chpts. 1-2 pp. 1-50
Greenfield Section 3 pp. 89-120
Quiz

- 4/19 Discussion: technology and public life.
- 4/24 Movie *Sound and Fury*
- 4/26 Collins and Pinch Chpts 3-4
- 5/1 Johnson Chpt. 2
Greenfield Section 4 pp. 121-158
Quiz
- 5/3 Discussion: philosophical ethics
- 5/8 Johnson Chpt. 4
Greenfield Section 5 pp. 159-174
Quiz
- 5/10 Discussion: internet ethics
- 5/15 Sunstein Chpts. 4-5 pp. 89-124
Quiz
- 5/17 Discussion: citizens and technology
- 5/22 Movie *Startup.com*
- 5/24 Collins and Pinch Chpts 6-7, Conclusion
Quiz
- 5/29 Discussion: what do we know about technology?
- 5/31 Class wrap-up
- 6/5 Class wrap-up