INFO 102 – Social and Ethical Aspects of Informatics, 3 Credit Hours

South Dakota State University
Semester: Spring 2018
Meets: Tuesday 2 – 3:15pm, Avera 0380 /Thursdays are online.

Instructor: Dr. George Tsakiridis
Office: West Hall 114
Office Hours: Tuesday 3:30-4:30pm/Wednesday 10am-12pm (Do make an appointment if you plan to stop by, though I should be in my office during these times most days.) If there are changes in office hours, it will be announced in class.
Email: george.tsakiridis@sdstate.edu

[This syllabus is subject to revision, but if so, it will be announced in class by email or on the news feed.]

Course Description (Per the SDSU Catalog):
A study of the social, political, economic and ethical implications of information and informatics on business and society. Other topics include information ownership, intellectual property and the social construction of information. Notes: * Course meets System Goal #3: Social Sciences/Diversity.
Course Prerequisites: None.

Philosophy of Learning: The course is structured to both objectively test the class material, while also allowing for critical and creative engagement, which is a necessity in ethical thought. Each week dispersed lectures will complement discussion and readings. It is my belief that students learn more by engaging in conversation with both classmates and the instructor. This is true both in person and online. Hence, the student's grade will be determined by both objective testing and critical/creative engagement in class discussion work.

Course Etiquette: Because of the nature of this course, it is discussion based, and the course will intersperse lecture with discussion (both in groups and as a class). Due to the topics we discuss, there will be a healthy amount of disagreement and debate. While this is welcomed and encouraged, all members of the class must remain respectful at all times of both classmates and the instructor. **In the spirit of fostering this respect, and a classroom focused on learning, cellphones must be turned off and laptops/tablets may only be used for appropriate activities**. In other words, no phone calls, alerts, texting, etc. Last spring I did have some issues with classroom respect, and these guidelines will help in fostering the type of environment we all desire. I know that most of you are computer scientists and technology is a part of how you engage the classroom, so I am understanding, but do use good judgment. Let's all work hard to make this a welcoming learning environment for building relationships and educational pursuits. Because this is a course with a technological topic, we may use technology in class and since the course is hybrid, we will have a good portion of the discussion online.

Course Objectives/Goals

Instructor Objectives:

1 – The student will become familiar with the major ethical theories.
2 – The student will work with ethical dilemmas in the informational realm.
3 – The student will learn to think critically on ethical issues.
4 – The student will connect ethical theory with relevant events requiring ethical examination dealing with technology, the internet, and informatics.
5 – The student will demonstrate knowledge of ethical theory and dilemmas through discussion and testing.

Required Textbook:

Reynolds, George W. *Ethics in Information Technology, 5th Edition*. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2015.

Online versus In-Classroom Dynamic

Because this is a Tuesday/Thursday class that is hybrid, the Tuesday portion of the class will be in the classroom and typically will consist of lecture, discussion, and short videos. Sometimes you will need to read an article for class or in the classroom as a part of this discussion. The Thursday meeting time, since it is online will be dedicated to online discussions as well as another short assignment (in some weeks). This might include watching a short video (usually 15 minutes or so) or reading an article/preparing something for class discussion. Typically, I will announce assignments in class, but you can see the schedule below for the online portion of discussions. The videos/articles will be announced in class if not found in the syllabus.

Requirements and Grading:

Exams: There will be two examinations (these may be online through d2L and will use a webcam proctor) on material from lectures/discussions, videos, and the textbook. It may consist of True/False, Multiple Choice, Short Answer, and possibly essay questions. **40% of grade (20% each exam – 80 points each)**
        Make-up exams: If at all possible do not miss an examination. If you will miss an exam you must **notify the instructor in advance** and arrange for a make-up exam, which may be a different, essay test. Only valid excuses are acceptable and should constitute an emergency or severe illness.

Ethical Discussion Assignments: A key component of learning in this class will be through class discussions online. Participation in discussions (or potential group work) is a part of this grade. Typically, there will be 10 points allotted per week. This will usually be done online (the "Thursday" portion of the class), but sometimes will be half online and half in the classroom, and you will turn in something individually or as a group. If you happen to miss an assignment or discussion, unless excused, you may not make up

these points. Since this is a hybrid course, much or all of this grade will be found in online discussions where you will post and then respond to classmates. I will discuss this more in class, but typically you will respond to questions or make a 300-word post and then reply to 3 of your classmates. To get full credit you will need to do a thorough job on this portion of the grade. **30% of grade (120 points)**

Final Exam: There will be a final exam consisting of True/False, Multiple Choice, Short Answer, and possibly short essay questions. It is a comprehensive exam. Part of this exam may be completed in advance as a part of a group project, but this will be announced in class if this is the case. **30% of grade (120 points)**

Proposed Grading Scale:

90-100%   A: 360-400 points
80-89%   B: 320-359 points
70-79%   C: 280-319 points
60-69%   D: 240-279 points
0-59%   F: 0-239 points
(The instructor reserves the right to change this scale, but only to the student's benefit.)

Criteria for quality written work: Students must show a grasp of the general concepts related to their topic as it connects to class material. Written work will not be graded predominately on grammar and structure, although an excess of spelling errors, poor grammar (and overly poor structure) will result in a lower grade as this will diminish the meaning of the paper in the eyes of the reader. In other words, writing is not the focus, but it matters. Students must appropriately reference and cite their homework where necessary. I prefer Turabian: footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical citation. I know this is tricky with online discussion work, but basically if you use other sources, cite them. Do not cut and paste answers from a website as your answer, especially when they are not related to the question (yes, this happens ☺).

Late Work Policy: Late work is frowned upon, but sometimes life issues come up and cause one to be forced to turn work in late. If you know in advance that you will need to turn in something late, please contact the instructor ASAP. Late work will lose 10% of the possible grade per class period late, starting after class begins on the day it is due if there is an appropriate reason. Late work will not be accepted without a proper reason due to the nature of the course assignments. In general, this policy will be rarely visited in this particular course because discussions cannot be turned in late without an excused reason and exams may apply here, but in rare instances.

Attendance/Participation Policy: Attendance is expected, but optional, though you are responsible for the material/assignments in class. You will not be allowed to make up these points if you are not present. I may or may not take attendance every period, so it may be randomly taken.

Communication/Work Handed Back Policy: Tests and discussion homework will typically be graded within one week of being turned in, and email or notes sent to the instructor will be replied to within 2 weekdays in most cases.

Cheating, Plagiarism and Integrity:

If you are found to cheat or plagiarize you will receive a zero on the assignment/exam in question and possibly be failed in the course. The new university language on academic integrity is as follows:

"Student Academic Integrity and Appeals: The University has a clear expectation for academic integrity and does not tolerate academic dishonesty. University Policy 2.4 sets forth the definitions of academic dishonesty, which includes but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, misrepresentation, and other forms of dishonesty relating to academics. The Policy and its Procedures also set forth how charges of academic dishonesty are handled at the University. Academic Dishonesty is strictly proscribed and if found may result in student discipline up to and including dismissal from the University."

ADA Statement:

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact Nancy Hartenoff-Crooks, Coordinator of Disability Services (605-688-4504 or Fax, 605-688-4987) to privately to discuss your specific needs. The Office of Disability Services is located in room 125, the Wintrode Student Success Center.

Board of Regents' Statement on Freedom in Learning:

Freedom in Learning. Students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study in which they are enrolled. Under Board of Regents and University policy, student academic performance shall be evaluated solely on an academic basis and students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any courses of study. Students who believe that an academic evaluation is unrelated to academic standards but is related instead to judgment of their personal opinion or conduct should first contact the instructor of the course. If the student remains unsatisfied, the student may contact the department head and/or dean of the college which offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

Tentative Course Schedule:

Assignments/exams are in BOLD lettering and are due the day listed (if not otherwise announced). Readings in Reynolds are listed for the day they are due, and there also may be handouts and short readings throughout the semester in addition to the textbook. Readings may not correspond to class discussion exactly, but if you are keeping

up with your readings you should be prepared for class. The titles below correspond to the book chapters in most cases.

Class will be a combination of lecture and discussion, with the possibility that the instructor introducing some short texts or questions that students will work on in groups. Connections to popular/current culture and relevant themes are important to this class and that should be kept in mind with discussion and or use of materials, especially for the latter part of the course.

Because of the nature of ethics, a discussion based approach is valuable for actually working through the values and arguments of ethics. The learning will be quite collaborative in this class, so do not come to class merely as a passive participant, but come to be involved.

In addition, you will note there are a number of supportive links in the content section of your d2L shell. I do not necessarily agree with everything presented, but it is there to give you information and to help round out the course. I may add materials as the semester progresses.

1) January 9 – Course Introduction: Review the Syllabus

   Introduction to Ethics

   January 11 – Unit 1 Discussion Online

2) January 16 – Consequentialism and Nonconsequentialism; Read Appendix A (there may possibly be a handout also)

   January 18 – Unit 2 Discussion Online

3) January 23 – Nonconsequentialism and Virtue Ethics

   Ethical Overview in Information Technology; Read Chapter 1

   January 25 – Unit 3 Discussion Online

4) January 30 – Ethical Overview in Information Technology

   Ethics for IT Workers and IT Users; Read Chapter 2

   February 1 – Unit 4 Discussion Online

5) February 6 – Ethics for IT Workers and IT Users

   Computer and Internet Crime; Read Chapter 3

   February 8 – Unit 5 Discussion Online

6) February 13 - Computer and Internet Crime/Privacy; Read Chapter 4

   February 15 – Exam 1 (Online) – On Units 1-5 (May cover through Feb. 13 material – I will announce in class)

7) February 20 – Privacy; Read Chapter 4

   February 22 – Unit 6 Discussion Online

8) February 27 – Freedom of Expression; Read Chapter 5

   March 1 – Unit 7 Discussion Online

Week of March 5-9: SPRING BREAK!!!!!

9) March 13 – Freedom of Expression/Intellectual Property; Read Chapter 6

   March 15 - Unit 8 Discussion Online

10) March 20 – Intellectual Property/Software Development

   March 22 – Online Assignment TBA

11) March 27 – Software Development; Read Chapter 7

   March 28 - Unit 9 Discussion Online

12) April 3 – The Impact of Information Technology; Read Chapter 8

   April 5 – Exam 2 (Online) – On Units 6-11

13) April 10 – Social Networking; Read Chapter 9

   April 12 – Unit 10 Discussion Online

14) April 17 – Ethics of IT Organization; Read Chapter 10

   April 19 – Unit 11 Online Discussion

15) April 24 – Popular Culture and Information Ethics; Reading TBA

   April 26 - Unit 12 Discussion Online

   April 30 - May 4 – Finals Week (The final exam may be online. This will be announced in class.)

Feel free to bring up additional questions with the instructor in class or by email. Dr. George will be happy to clarify the discussion assignments or questions related to course material.