

UNH Manchester  
Ethics and Law in the Digital Age  
Course Syllabus  
Comp 560  
Spring 2018

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**Course Dates:**

Text: TBD currently : Quinn, Michael J., Ethics for the Information Age 7th ed., Pearson - Addison Wesley, 2013

ISBN:

**Introduction**

We are asked daily to make choices in our lives. We are given almost limitless possibilities of choice from toothpaste to cars to career, and each choice we make has consequences. Our morals and values play a key role in those choices. We are often put in a position where we must make difficult choices, and be able to justify that choice to others. In order to clearly justify our actions, or choices, we must use reasonable means to evaluate and justify our acts as ethical, whether one is deciding between two job offers or as a judge how long to put someone in jail.

As technology and society's responses to it advance and encompasses a larger role in our day-to-day lives, law often has to catch up. In the meantime, "grey areas" emerge, and as citizens and future professionals, we must grapple with unsolved questions. What is right or best for a business? For society? For you? In this class we will try to determine our own answers by using traditional ethical constructs as our guides.

This course will examine the issues posed by society's growing and changing interaction with digital technology. Topics are to include basic rights of privacy in a world where every phone is a camera, changes to intellectual property rights and the ethics of certain employer and employee relationships. Students will also be expected to stay familiar with current topical issues and will be assigned additional current events reading accordingly.

The ultimate goal at the conclusion of Computer Law and Ethics is for each student to have the toolset to respond to any legal or ethical dilemma, in a clear and thoughtful manner. Through ethical evaluation tools, students will not only come to conclusions about these issues, but learn the methodology to approach any similar problem in the future. This course also encourages students to express their analysis clearly in oral and written forms.

**Grading**

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Exams                              | 40% ( midterm 15% and final 25%) |
| 2. Position Paper                     | 40%                              |
| 3. Class Writing Assignments?quizzes. | 10%                              |
| 4 Class Participation                 | 10%                              |

### **Class Participation**

Attendance, meaningful verbal contributions in class, preparation of written problem assignments, attitude, and overall attention to the subject of the course are factored into this grade component.

### **Exams**

The exams may include a combination of objective (multiple choice, true/false, etc.) and subjective (short answer, essay) questions. Material for the exams will come from the book, class notes and discussion topics. There will be a midterm and a final.

### **In-Class Assignments/Quizzes**

On a **weekly basis**, students will be required to come to class with an article that is germane to the study of ethics. Students will be required to provide a short but thorough position on the topic and also present it to the class. Students will debate, analyze, and defend various topics. There will be as needed random quizzes based on the assigned reading for that evening's class

### **Position Paper**

Each student will take a position on an ethical topic or dilemma, and discuss it through **two ethical constructs**. Each student will also give an in class presentation on their paper subject. You may choose any topic that relates to the field of ethics; please pick a topic that you are interested in, this can be technology related, law related, military or another topic of your choice subject to instructor approval. The final approved topic selection is due by week 3 of class, 2014. All topics are on a first-come, first-served basis - once a specific topic is selected, that topic will no longer be available to anyone else. You may not change your topic without consultation with the instructor.

Stage of paper preparation include:

1. Topic and thesis statement
2. Annotated bibliography, including two professional publication resources
3. An outline that indicates the major topics in the paper and argument you plan to develop
4. a rough draft
5. Final paper

The paper will be 10-15 pages, double spaced with 1" margins. In addition, please include a cover page with title, name, date and a bibliography page.

### **Homework and Reading for Class**

- Students shall read the assigned chapters or materials prior to the class for which the material is assigned. Students will be called randomly to discuss the assigned reading.

- Additional readings or Web research may be posted on Blackboard/Canvas and announced during the class meeting.
- Weekly writing assignments are used in class and contribute to the Class Participation grade and In-Class assignments grade.

### **Blackboard**

You are expected to check Blackboard course site each week for announcements. There may be a discussion forum for general sharing of questions and clarification. Feel free to post your questions, confusions, suggestions. All members of the seminar should feel welcome to reply to the posted material. Responses and documents may be required in the drop box. Please submit all documents in either Word (.doc/ .docx) or Rich Text File (.rtf). You are also expected to check your UNH email accounts in a timely manner.

### **Class Topics and Reading Schedule**

#### **Class Syllabus for "Ethics in the Digital Age"**

Topics and reading are subject to change to allow for topical discussion of current events or to maximize time for pertinent subject material.

| Class Meeting   | Topic   | Reading assignment/work due                                 |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Class 1<br>1/25 | Introduction<br>Course objectives<br>research plan<br>Ethics in society<br>research topic discussion    |   |
| Class 2<br>2/1  | Ethical Theories, historical perspective  | Chapter 2   |
| Class 3<br>2/8  | Research paper topic due in class and via e-mail<br>library workshop<br><br>Ethical theories continued. | Chapter 2   |
| Class 4<br>2/15 | Intellectual Property   | Chapter 4<br><br>Legal news topic<br>writing assignment due |

|                  |   |                                   |
|------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Class 5<br>2/22  | Intellectual property   | Chapter 4                         |
| Class 6<br>3/1   | IP Ownership and Users Rights<br><br>Annotated bibliography due                     | Chapter 4                         |
| Class 7<br>3/8   | <b>EXAM 1</b>   |                                   |
| Class 8<br>3/22  | Privacy/Free Speech<br><br>paper outline due  | Chapter 5                         |
| Class 9<br>3/29  | Privacy and Government issues / NSA / Social media<br><br>Security vs. rights       | Chapter 6                         |
| Class 10<br>4/5  | <b>Research Paper due in class or via e-mail</b><br>Topical Paper Discussions       | News - privacy writing assignment |
| Class 11<br>4/12 | Professional Ethics<br>jobs vs. professions<br>Whistle blowing                      | Chapter 9                         |
| Class 12<br>4/19 | Ethics in Business - employer practices, employee rights - Societal Choice and tech | Chapter 10                        |
| Class 13<br>4/26 | <b>FINAL EXAM</b>   |                                   |
| Class 14<br>5/3  | <b>Class Debate</b>   |                                   |
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**Disability statement**

The University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you must register with Disability Services for Students (DSS). Contact DSS at 603-862-2607 or visit them in 201 Smith Hall. If you have received Accommodation Letters for this course from DSS, please provide me with that information privately so that we can review those accommodations.

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