

CSCI 4600: Senior Seminar Spring 2025 Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Vincent A. Cicirello

E-mail (course related): Use course Blackboard Course Messages tool.

E-mail (other than this course): See campus directory for address.

Office: G116

Phone (office): x3526

Course Time and Location:

- Wednesdays, 3:35pm-5:25pm, B010 (attendance is mandatory).
- Take note of the portion of your overall grade that comes from participation and attendance. If you don't attend a class session, you will lose part of your participation/attendance grade.
- Also note that the course is 2-credits, which is why it meets only 2 hours per week.

Office Hours:

- Wednesdays 12:45pm – 2:00pm (G116)
- Other times (on campus in G116) on Mondays/Wednesdays by appointment.
- Other times (virtual via Zoom) on Tuesdays/Thursdays by appointment.
- You can also just drop by my office, and if I'm there I'm happy to assist you.

Pre-reqs: Minimum grade of C in the following CSCI 3103, CSCI 3250, CSCI 2226, and MATH 2216.

Restrictions: Juniors/Seniors only, and Computer Science majors

Number of Credits: 2

Course Description: In this seminar, computer science majors learn to evaluate the impact of current computing practice and trends; and gain an understanding of professional, ethical, and legal responsibilities. Students read and report on articles from the computing literature, and also develop a professional resume.

This course fulfills Stockton University's Values/Ethics (V) requirement.

Core Course: This course is a core required course for the B.S. in Computer Science, and must be passed with at least a C to count toward your degree requirements.

Required Readings:

- ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
(<https://www.acm.org/binaries/content/assets/about/acm-code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct.pdf>)
- Journal articles and conference papers; and Computing ethics case studies

Computer Science Student Outcomes: This course supports students in their development of the following Computer Science student outcomes:

- Outcome 3: An ability to communicate effectively in a variety of professional contexts.
 - 3.b: Students will create and present oral technical presentations.
 - 3.c: Students will write technical reports on a current computing topic.
- Outcome 4: An ability to recognize professional responsibilities and make informed judgments in computing practice based on legal and ethical principles.
 - 4.a: Students will know the ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
 - 4.b: Students will evaluate case studies of ethical dilemmas in computing.
 - 4.c: Students will demonstrate understanding of intellectual property issues.

Course IDEA Objectives: The IDEA objectives of this course include:

- Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., ACM Code of Ethics, introduction to intellectual property laws and issues, etc).
- Developing skill in expressing myself orally or in writing (e.g., writing and presenting on a current computing topic).
- Learning how to find, evaluate, and use resources to explore a topic in depth.
- Developing ethical reasoning and/or ethical decision making.
- Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.

Grading:	Attendance / participation:	15%
	Exam (ethics, intellectual property, license agreements, etc)	25%
	Annotated bibliography:	25%
	Presentation:	20%
	Professional resume:	15%

Grading Scale:

A: at least 90.00	A-: at least 89.50	B+: at least 89.00
B: at least 80.00	B-: at least 79.50	C+: at least 79.00
C: at least 70.00	D: at least 60.00	F: less than 60.00

Note: The chart above deliberately does not include C-, D+, or D-. Those grades are not used in this course.

Another note: I reserve the right to adjust the scale at the end of the semester. Such adjustments are rare, but will only be in your favor; and are highly unlikely to occur at the C/D or D/F boundaries. Note the 2 decimal places in the chart above (i.e., I do not round to the nearest whole number): e.g., unless I adjust the grade scale, an 89.99 is an A-, etc. If I adjust the scale, it is done using a semi-automated approach involving clustering (i.e., “automated” == a program I wrote suggests a new scale based on all of the grades of the class; “semi-” == if that program’s output is crazy, I ignore it and leave the scale alone; and “clustering” == a statistical technique). I never simply add a constant number of points to everyone’s overall course score. What is clustering? For a non-technical explanation, consider the hypothetical question, “Are the grades of this student, who is currently in the B range, more like the grades of the A students, more like the grades of the rest of the B students, or somewhere in between the two?” Clustering may take a student in the B range from the scale above (at least 80.00), and either keep them in the B range if their grades are more like the rest of the B students, or bump them all the way up to the A range if their grades are more like the A students, or bump them partially up to either B+ or A- if they are somewhere in between.

Attendance and Participation: This portion of your grade is not free points. Attendance is mandatory. Participation includes interacting with student speakers and any guest speakers, as well as participating in all in-class activities, which may include peer-review/peer-editing of resumes, annotated bibliographies, etc. Participation also includes interacting with student presenters (asking questions, etc). If you miss class due to illness, please document when you are able to return to your classes to avoid losing attendance/participation points. Provide the documentation of your illness to Stockton’s Wellness Center and ask them to contact your instructors. Likewise, if you will miss class due to a religious holiday, you must inform me of the dates of those absences in writing (e.g., message in Blackboard is fine) within the first 10 business days of the semester per Stockton procedure: <https://stockton.edu/policy-procedure/documents/procedures/2030.pdf>.

Minimum Effect of Unexcused Absence: The participation points are equally distributed across days when the class meets. Each unexcused absence on a day when students are presenting or on a day when students peer-review assignment drafts results in a loss of the points for **two (2)** class days. Arriving late enough on the day of a guest speaker to miss most of their presentation, results in losing the points for a full class period. Unexcused absences on other class days result in a loss of the points for one (1) class day.

Exam on Ethics and Intellectual Property: There will be one exam in the course that will cover computing ethics, including specifically the ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, as well as Intellectual Property, including licensing agreements. **The exam is closed book and closed notes. You are not allowed to use any resources during the exam.** The majority of the exam is multiple choice, true/false, short answer type questions (which is why you are not allowed notes---it would be far too easy with notes). However, there is one essay question involving an ethics case study. That essay question involves reading a short case study involving an ethical dilemma, and writing a 3 to 5 paragraph essay in response to a question about that case study. In your response to that essay question, you should utilize the ACM Code of Ethics, wherever appropriate, in support of your analysis.

Make-Up Exam: Make-up exams will not be given (i.e., missed exam = 0), with the following exceptions:

1. Medical excuse: Provide documentation to the Wellness Center who will then contact all of the instructors of your courses.
2. Based on University policy (<https://stockton.edu/policy-procedure/documents/procedures/2030.pdf>), if you are to be absent for a religious holiday on the date of an exam, you must notify me of that planned absence during the first 10 business days of the semester.

Annotated Bibliography: During the semester, you will write an annotated bibliography, including summaries and your analysis of a minimum of 5 technical articles (from journals or peer-reviewed conferences) from any topic of computing of your choosing. Your analysis of the articles you read should include a discussion of the potential impact that the research has on individuals, organizations, or society as a whole. The ACM Digital Library, available through the Stockton University library website, is an excellent source of articles, although you are not limited to what is contained there.

Presentation: During the last several weeks of the semester, each student will give a presentation (approximately 13 minutes) discussing one or more of the articles that you read. Your presentation should make appropriate use of PowerPoint and/or other relevant presentation materials. Shortly after the drop-add period is over, I will enable a signup page in Blackboard where you will get to choose the date of your presentation on a first come first served basis. You will lose substantial attendance/participation points if you do not attend on days when students are presenting (you will lose more points on such a day than if you miss class on another day). You will have the opportunity to ask each other questions about your presentations, so make sure you are also prepared to answer each other's questions.

Professional Resume: You will develop (or revise, if you already have one) a professional resume. You can find detailed expectations in Blackboard.

Limited Use of Generative A.I. (read carefully before using Generative A.I.): Generative artificial intelligence (AI) programs, such as ChatGPT, may be used in this course to brainstorm or learn more about a topic, draft an outline or organize thoughts, check grammar, or improve writing style, with appropriate citation complying with Stockton's Student Academic Honesty Procedure. You are responsible for fact checking statements composed by generative AI models and respecting intellectual property. Generative AI may not be used for writing your annotated bibliography or portions of it, or for creating your presentation. If you are uncertain about the appropriate use of generative AI in this course, you are encouraged to contact your instructor for clarification. Inappropriate use of generative AI programs is not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism as defined in Stockton's Student Academic Honesty Procedure and handled in accordance with that Procedure and the course's Academic Honesty Procedure (see below).

Late Policy: Assignments are graded on a 100 point scale. Penalty is 1 point for each hour (or part of an hour) late. For example, submit 10 hours late and lose 10 points. Submit 1.25 hours late, and lose 2 points. Submit an assignment a full day late and lose 24 points off the assignment's grade.

Incomplete Policy: In general, no grades of incomplete will be given. The only exception to this rule is an institutionally documented medical emergency that necessitates your complete absence from Stockton for at least two continuous semester weeks. Additionally, you must be caught up on all work up to the point where your medical emergency began and currently in the “C” range or better overall at the point where the emergency began.

Academic Honesty: Please familiarize yourself with Stockton’s Student Academic Honesty Procedure. Each violation is penalized by a 0 on the relevant assignment/exam/etc, plus a 10 point penalty on your overall course grade. For example, if you have one violation, you’ll have a 0 on that assignment or exam plus 10 points off your overall average, but if you have two violations, you’ll have grades of 0 on the two assignments/exams/etc and 20 points off your overall average. Example violations include, but are not limited to: (a) any form of cheating on an exam or assignment, (b) passing off the work of another as your own (including other students, former students, websites, ChatGPT and other Generative A.I.), (c) assisting someone in violating the academic honesty procedure, (d) asking someone to assist you in cheating or other academic honesty violations (even if they refuse to help you cheat), etc. [Yes, I encountered that last one once in a General Studies course.] **Reminder from earlier in syllabus: the exam is closed notes, and you are not allowed any resources during the exam.**

Timeline: The following chart indicates approximately what we will be doing during each class meeting. The 3rd column also lists when assignments are due. This timeline is subject to change based on unforeseen circumstances that may arise during the semester.

Date	Topic	Assignments Due
January 22	Course overview	
January 29	Computing ethics	
February 5	Computing ethics	
February 12	Intellectual property	
February 19	Intellectual property	
February 26	Peer review and feedback on annotated bibliography drafts. See Blackboard for expectations on draft.	Draft 1 of annotated bibliography, by the start of class, bring 3 paper copies to class, and submit electronically.
March 5	Exam: Computing Ethics and Intellectual Property	
March 12	SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS	
March 19	Tips on Resume Writing	Annotated Bibliography final version (March 21, 11:59pm)
March 26	Student presentations	Slides of presenters due 11:59pm
April 2	Student presentations (* see note)	Slides of presenters due 11:59pm
April 9	Student presentations	Slides of presenters due 11:59pm
April 16	Student presentations	Slides of presenters due 11:59pm
April 23	Student presentations	Slides of presenters due 11:59pm
April 30	Student presentations	Slides of presenters due 11:59pm
May 7	Work on resume (if not complete) during class time	Resume due (May 7, 11:59pm)

***Note about April 2:** The number of class sessions that we need for the presentations depends upon how many students are enrolled in the class; and won't be known definitively until the end of the drop-add week on January 27. We will need at most 6 weeks for presentations (the 6 listed in the table above). At the end of the drop-add week, I will determine whether or not all 6 of these are needed for presentations. If we only need 5 of them, then you will have the class time of April 2 to work on whatever you have remaining for this course (e.g., your resume), rather than a normal class meeting. April 2 is one of the two precepting days this semester, however, classes from 3:35 onward (such as this one) still have meetings scheduled. Thus, my choice of this particular day for presentations (only if needed) is not entirely random.