



# ***Computer Ethics***

***Presentations, papers and more***

**Viola Schiaffonati**

September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020



- Grading of this course is on the following basis
  - **50%** final project (**written paper or class presentation**)
  - **50% oral questions** concerning the topics presented in the course (during exam sessions)



- If you want to do the **presentation in class**, you must send me an **email** by Friday **October 16<sup>th</sup>**
- Schedule of the class presentations (**provisional**)
  - Tuesday **November 24<sup>th</sup>**
  - Thursday **November 26<sup>th</sup>**
  - Tuesday **December 1<sup>st</sup>**
  - Thursday **December 3<sup>rd</sup>**
  - Thursday **December 10<sup>th</sup>**
  - Tuesday **December 15<sup>th</sup>**



- Topics for the presentations/papers will be **proposed by you** and then discussed **individually** with the instructor/TA
- Schedule of supervisions (**in class**)
  - Supervision 1
    - Tuesday **September 29<sup>th</sup>** (TEAM 1)
    - Thursday **October 1<sup>st</sup>** (TEAM 2)
  - Supervision 2
    - Tuesday **October 27<sup>th</sup>** (TEAM 2)
    - Thursday **October 29<sup>th</sup>** (TEAM 1)
  - Supervision 3
    - Tuesday **November 10<sup>th</sup>** (TEAM 1)
    - Thursday **November 12<sup>th</sup>** (TEAM 2)
  - Supervision 4
    - Thursday **December 17<sup>th</sup>** (TEAM 1)
    - Tuesday **December 22<sup>nd</sup>** (TEAM 2)



- It's **not possible to change your team** and days for coming to classes
- It's a rule of the School: important for contact tracing in case of problems
- Check the timetable!
  - Team 1: some Tuesdays, some Thursdays
  - Team 2: some Tuesdays, some Thursdays
- Papers and presentations **supervisions** in class **are not recorded**: they are individual activities
- **Only in case of problems** to come to classes we can arrange **online supervisions** (during class hours!)
- Office hours by appointment



## How do supervisions work?

- You come to the physical class according to your team
- We'll set a **waiting list** and each of you will discuss with us ideas, issues, etc. of his/her presentation/paper
- Only if you have problems to come to the class, we can arrange an **online supervision** during class supervisions: **send me an email**
- You don't need to come to any supervision in class: you can **decide when you need** to have your work supervised



- Class **presentations** will be approximately between **20** to **25** minutes long (depending on their number) including **5** or **10** minutes for **Q&A**
- You can use slides or any other supports during your presentation
- Presentations must be in **English**
- In case of problems we can arrange **class presentations online** (it's better to be in class when presenting)
- These class **presentations** will be **recorded**
- It's up to you if you want to come to the class or if you want to follow these presentations remotely



- As an **alternative** to a class presentation you can write an **essay** on an original topic
- This **essay** constitutes **50%** of the grading of this course
- The other **50%** is constituted by **oral questions** about the topics presented in the course (papers on the course web page) and taking place the date of the exam
- Both paper and oral exam can be either in **English** or in **Italian**
  - Even mix options (paper in English and oral exam in Italian)





- Papers are due at least a **week before** the date of the exam (**no exceptions admitted**)
- You will **upload** your paper in the appropriate **folder on Beep**



- If you are not officially enrolled in this course, you **cannot** do the exam
- If you are not officially registered for an exam date, you **cannot** do the exam
- If you decide to reject your final grading, you are required to write **another paper** on a **different topic** (also if the paper was graded as sufficient or more)
- You can submit your paper for an exam date, and then decide that you will do the oral examination in another date (just let me know if you can)
- No restrictions are applied in the case you do not pass the exam (**only**: you have to rewrite the paper on a different topic)



- The paper is required to be around **3500 words**
- The paper must be written just by **one person** (no group)
- The topic of the paper must be **officially approved** by the course instructor
  - After you have selected it you are required to send an email to **viola.schiaffonati@polimi.it** and wait for approval



- These tips are valid also for **class presentation**
- The paper must offer an **argument**, so you have to defend the claims you present
- It can't consist in the **mere report** of your opinion, nor in the mere report of the opinions of others (even if these others can be considered authorities)
  - Yes: *'My view is that P. I believe this because ...' or 'I find that the following considerations ... provide a convincing argument for P.'*
  - No: *'My view is that P.'*
- You have to explicitly present **reasons** for the claims you are making



- Don't be over-ambitious: a good paper/presentation is modest and makes a **small point**, but it makes it **clearly** and **straightforwardly**, and it offers **good reasons** in support of it
- The aim of your paper/presentation is to show that you **understand** the material presented in this course and you're able to **critically think** about it
  - So your paper does have to show some **independent thinking**
  - No necessity to come up with your own theory, but **merely summarizing** what others have said **won't be enough**



## Don't focus on title but on content!

14

- Focus on what you want to state in the paper and on the way in which you will argue in favor of it
- The title will come ...



- Once you have selected the topic and defined the **provisional** title (remember you need the official approval of instructor) you can start to work at the paper/presentation
- Structuring the paper
- Stages of writing
- Bibliography



- Begin by formulating your **precise thesis**
  - State your thesis clearly and concisely in your introduction
  - Get the point quickly and without digression
  - Don't try to introduce your argument within a grand historical narrative





- **Define technical or ambiguous** terms used in your thesis or argument
  - Define for your reader any special or unclear terms
  - Think of an imaginary reader that has some knowledge on these topics, but she/he is not an expert (e.g. ,a colleague of you in this course)



- If necessary, **motivate** your thesis (explain to your reader why they should care about it)
  - Try to clarify why a reader would care about the truth of the claim you are arguing for
  - Try to explain why your thesis is interesting



- Explain briefly how you will argue in favor of your thesis
  - At the beginning **indicate how you will proceed** in claiming for your argument



- If necessary, explain the argument you will be critiquing
  - This means to explain the argument in **your own words** and according to your own understanding of the steps involved in it
  - You need to be very clear on the **precise logical** structure of an author's argument
  - Stick to explaining **only the details that are essential** to the author's argument for the particular thesis and for your own argument for your thesis
  - Take care to clearly indicate when you are speaking in your own voice and when you are explicating someone else's argument or point of view



- Make an argument to support your thesis
  - To make the strongest possible argument **do not skip any steps** and try not to rest your argument on any premises that your reader might not be willing to accept
  - In presenting your argument, be straightforward in your language and **say precisely what you mean**



- In order to strengthen your argument **anticipate** and **answer objections** to it
  - It helps support your main argument and makes it more compelling
  - When you present an objection, you must always present a reason or reasons for thinking it true
  - The simple negation of a thesis is not an objection to it



- Abstract
  - What you did in a nutshell
- Introduction (Section 1)
  - What your thesis is and why you are discussing it
- Sections (Sections 2-n)
  - All the necessary steps to support your thesis (arguments and counterarguments)
- Conclusions (Section  $n+1$ )
  - Summary and discussion of your result, and possible future directions
- References
  - Works you have referred to



- The abstract is **only** text
- Write your abstract using concise, but complete, sentences, and get to the point quickly
- Maximum length should be 200-300 words, usually in a single paragraph
- The abstract **should not** contain
  - lengthy background information
  - references to other literature
  - elliptical (i.e., ending with ...) or incomplete sentences
  - abbreviations or terms that may be confusing to readers
  - any sort of illustration, figure, or table, or references to them





- **Blueprint** for the entire paper
- Introductions usually have three parts
  - presentation of the problem or the research inquiry
  - purpose and focus of the current paper
  - summary or overview of the writer's position or arguments
- Introduction (Section 1)
  - What your thesis is and why you are discussing it
- Because introductions are so highly structured, you may actually write your introduction **last**



- A listing of the **sources** you used and consulted to write your paper
- Includes items such as: books, journal/magazine/newspaper articles, dissertations, theses, websites, book reviews, speeches, etc.
- It is located at the end of the paper
- It is arranged in alphabetical order - typically by the creator (such as author or editor)



- **Follow-up:** It allows readers to consult the sources you used to write your paper
- **Acknowledgement:** To give credit to ideas or works created by someone else. If you fail to do this you are plagiarizing - this is a reality whether you are doing this intentionally or unintentionally



- While it may be hard to believe, there are hundreds of different citation styles in existence!
- When you choose one style, be **coherent** and use it through the whole paper
- For your type of paper I suggest the following style: **(Author year)**
- Example
  - In the text: ... *as discussed in (Godfrey-Smith 2003)*
  - At the end: in the Bibliography/References section  
Godfrey-Smith, P. (2003), *Theory and Reality*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.



- If you use the **precise words of an author**, you have to add the page number in the text
  - In the text: "... *The short answer is that*" (Godfrey-Smith 2003, 76).



- Books
  - Hacking, I. (1983). *Representing and Intervening*, Cambridge University Press.
- Articles in journals
  - Lenhard, J. (2007). "Computer simulation: the cooperation between experimenting and modeling", *Philosophy of Science*, 74, 176-194.
- Articles in books
  - Hartmann, S. (1996). "The world as a process: simulations in the natural and social sciences" in Hegselmann, R. et al. (eds.) *Simulation and Modeling in the Social Sciences from the Philosophy of Science point of view*, Theory and Decision Library, Kluwer, 77-100.
- Articles in conference proceedings
  - Querrec, G., Rodin, V., Abgrall, J.F., Kerdelo, S., Tisseau, J. (2003) . "Uses of multi-agents systems for simulation of mapk pathway", *Proceedings of the Third IEEE Symposium on Bioinformatics and Bioengineering (BIBE03)*, 421-425.
- Websites
  - [www.harvard.edu](http://www.harvard.edu) (last access October 2016)



- Harvard College Writing Program, “A Brief Guide to Writing the Philosophy Paper”, Harvard College  
[www.fas.harvard.edu/~phildept/files/ShortGuidetoPhilosophicalWriting.pdf](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~phildept/files/ShortGuidetoPhilosophicalWriting.pdf)
- Prior, J. , “Guidelines for Writing a Philosophy Paper”,  
[www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html](http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html)