CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
LONG BEACH

IB

ENGR 350: Computers, Ethics & Society
Dave Winter, Lecturer
Fall 2022 - Virtual
Computer Engineering and Computer Science

Class Sections:	Section 1 (3114)	TuTh 5:30-6:45p	Sec 1 Zoom
	Section 2 (5069)	MoWe 5:00-6:15p	Sec 2 Zoom
	Section 3 (5502)	TuTh 12:30-1:45p	Sec 3 Zoom
	Section 4 (6330)	TuTh 9:30-10:45a	Sec 4 Zoom
	Section 5 (8481)	MoWe 3:30-4:45p	Sec 5 Zoom

Office Hours Link: **https://csulb.zoom.us/my/winter.is.here**   Password: 692178

Office Hours: Tu 3:00, 3:15, 3:30, 3:45, 4:00, 4:15, 4:30, 4:45
We 1:30, 1:45, 2:00, 2:15, 2:30, 2:45
Th 3:00, 3:15, 3:30, 3:45, 4:00, 4:15, 4:30, 4:45

Professor Email: dave.winter@csulb.edu – most emails answered within 1 class day

Canvas   Discord

Required Reading

Williams, J. (2018). *Stand out of our Light: Freedom and Resistance in the Attention Economy*.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 9781108453004

Tavani, H.T. (2016). *Ethics and technology: controversies, questions, and strategies for ethical computing*. Fourth Edition. 9781119256816

Digital versions (sanctioned by the publishers) provided by the professor at no cost

Course Required Reading Materials

Description

This is a course that explores widely accepted ethical concepts and applies them to the field of computing technology. We look at philosophical theories, guidelines for ethical development and rights/responsibility foundations in an effort to explore how we, as computer science professionals, might leave the world a better place than we found it.
The overall goal is to provide students with a foundational understanding of key ethical theories and to help students evaluate their personal ethical development before beginning their careers in computer science.

This class will require you to write short reflection papers, contribute to online discussions and actively participate in class lectures, held synchronously twice a week on Zoom. You will be challenged to draw your own ethical conclusions based on class lectures and in-class discussion, weekly readings and self-reflection.

Course Objectives

This class will serve as a forum in which to evaluate the ethical pros and cons of data technology and explore the social impacts we might have throughout our careers in tech. Students are encouraged to discuss all ethical questions raised by the class both respectfully and open-mindedly. Students are also encouraged to examine both sides of controversial issues, and even to play 'devil's advocate' once in a while (that's right – I'll probably do it a bit, too). Above all, students should respectfully treat conversation and online discussion in a professional manner. Non-professional exchange and unrespectful dialogue will not be tolerated. At all. We'll go over this on the first day.

Think of this class as a "Philosophical Computer Science" course. While we won't be covering code or engineering mechanics, we will be discussing the impact those things have on others. We'll also be examining the mechanics of the decision-making process through the lens of established ethical theories. The overall goal is not to all agree on all ethical issues; it is to more fully understand how our decisions, as the creators of new technology, might impact our future users, co-workers, employees and consultants.

Topics Explored

A full class schedule, including topics, has been posted to the calendar on Canvas, and is subject to change. Topics include, but may not be limited to the following:

How We Make Ethical Choices, Applied Ethics, Privacy and Personal Data, Hacktivism & Security, Freedom of Speech and Censorship, Intellectual Property, Copyright Violation and DRM practices, Professional Ethics, Consumer Data, Autonomous Vehicles, Regulation, The Digital Divide, Network Neutrality, Blockchain and Cryptocurrencies, The Dark Web, GDPR and Internet Laws, International Companies and local business practices, Disinformation and Social Media, the Global Impact of tech

companies, Special Cases in Technology Ethics.

Obviously, many of these topics have recently become overly politicized. We'll be taking a step back from all that in an effort to attempt to identify the fundamental reasoning behind these issues. That's the space where ethical reflection occurs. So, that's the space we'll be exploring together. I will make this very clear – the reason these things have become politicized is not because they are political topics… its because politicians of all types have unfairly focused on only a few of these issues in order to route support for themselves. We'll be taking a deep dive into the actual data and issues that drive these topics, so you can make your own decisions about them. Let's leave the politics for the politicians.

Learning Outcomes

Examine, define and recognize philosophical theories, guidelines for ethical development and rights/responsibility foundations to explore data/computing technology through the lenses of professionals, lawmakers and users.

Demonstrate how Applied Ethics allows insight into how users, employees, governments, manufacturers, educational institutions and societies at large are affected by our own professional decisions. Identify major ethical issues in the field of data technology and demonstrate our responsibilities as ethical human beings to more fully understand our impact on the world. Identify how major philosophical, social and ethical concepts that have informed moral decision-making process of humans throughout history.

Recognition and understanding of professional, ethical, legal, security and social issues and responsibilities.

Examine and analyze the local and global impact of computing on individuals, organizations and society.

Recognize the need for and ability to engage in continuing professional development.

Course Structure & Delivery Mode

This course is fully certified for online delivery and will be conducted virtually for the entire semester. Students will access all lectures, class discussions and workshops through bi-weekly synchronous class meetings via Zoom. We will be using Discord to aid in organization and community interaction throughout the semester.

Students may attend any section that corresponds to a synchronous meeting day, with prior instructor approval, except for exams and specially announced meetings.

Zoom recordings will be provided only for the section in which you are enrolled, and will be accessible for 5 days after a class meeting has ended. These recordings will be available to stream only, and may not be downloaded or distributed.

Access to Zoom Recordings

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course, or need to report a problem with Zoom or Canvas, contact the Technology Help Desk using their online form, or by phone at (562) 985-4959.
If you need technical assistance with Discord, or have any concerns with the technology used for this course, please make an office hours appointment with your professor.

Grading & Assignments

I reserve the right to slightly modify the frequency of assignments to better facilitate the topics we discuss, upon student approval.

We will have 12 weekly Quizzes (10 pts each), 6 Reflection Study papers (15-20 pts each) and 4 Online Discussions (20 pts each), all accessed and turned in through Canvas. Prompts and deadlines can be found on Canvas.

Yes, there will be a lot of writing in this course. No, I do not deduct points for poor grammar, punctuation or other technical writing issues. I'm all about the content, not the vessel. You will be graded on your understanding of and reflection on class topics. The goal of this course is to get you to think about the possibilities and opportunities that your chosen career will present to the world around you. You will get out of this course what you put into it.

We will have 3 online exams (75 pts each).

The Ethical Project occurs at the culmination of our semester, where students will have the opportunity to explore, in depth, an ethical topic of their choosing via an individual research paper and short, fun presentation to the class. (100pts).

This course is currently poised to have 600 total points. This may change to reflect updates to assignments and point values during our semester.

Attendance for this course is mandatory, except for specially marked meetings, clearly defined in Canvas. I only allow one unexcused absence all semester, without grade penalty. After that first absence, you'll lose 4 percent off your final grade for each successive unexcused absence.

> 2 absences = best grade 96%
> 3 absences = best grade 92%, and so forth…
> 6 absences = withdrawal from course

Participation in this course matters, both for your understanding of the material and for your grade. My policy on participation and a detailed outline of how participation will be graded can be found on the

Participation Guidelines & Attendance Policy module in Canvas, accessible at any time through the following link.

Participation Guidelines & Attendance Policy

I'm serious about attendance. Please take it seriously. I teach 5 identical sections of this class, and will allow students to attend any section they wish, or multiple sections if they choose. There really is no reason for you to be missing more than one class meeting all semester. Of course, if you regularly attend a different section, you will find it more difficult to build a community with those in your enrolled section.

This course is designed to allow for many non-participation days. However, I am requiring each student to participate, in some way, in class at least twice per month. 4 consecutive days without participation will be replaced with an absence in the grade book. Seriously. Participation really does matter in this course.

My late assignment policy is clearly defined on the Reflection and Quiz Grading Guidelines module in Canvas, accessible at any time through the following link.

Reflection and Quiz Grading Guidelines

Late Reflection pater   ½ credit max   Only accepted for 3 days (72 hours) past the posted due date
Reflection papers will not be accepted after the 3 day late submission period.

Late Quizzes will not be accepted.
Late Discussions may not be posted.
Alternate Exam times must be arranged at least 48 hours in advance with your professor, through office hours.

A - > 90%
B - > 80%s
C - > 70%
D, F - < 69%

There will not be a grade curve at the end of our semester. Ever.

I take cheating very seriously, and *any* action determined as such will result in a zero for that graded assessment, and a minimum 15 point deduction from your final grade. Any instance(s) of cheating that cumulatively amounts to 10% or more of the final grade in this course will result in a failing grade in the course. After a first offense, any second instance of cheating in this course will result in a failing grade in the course. No exceptions. This is an ethics class. Cheating will only hurt you in the future. I also sit on the department's Cheating and Plagiarism Advisory Board. Do not cheat. It will not end well for you.

All instances of cheating will be reported to the CSULB Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development, as well as directly to the active Chair of the Computer Science department. This will label

you as a high-risk student, and I will be recommending academic probation for all those reported. It is a big deal.

Academic Honesty Agreement

CSULB Official Statements

Plagiarism & Academic Integrity

There is zero tolerance for cheating, plagiarism, or any other act of violation of Academic Integrity Policy. Work that you submit is assumed to be original unless your source material is documented appropriately, using proper citation. Using the ideas or words of another person, even a peer, or a web site, as if it were your own, is plagiarism. Any individual or group caught cheating on homework, lab assignments, or any exam/quiz will be subjected to full extent of academic actions allowed under University regulations. At a minimum, any student caught violating Academic Integrity Policy will receive no credit for the work concerned and one grade lower letter grade.
The official CSULB Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism can be found at Cheating & Plagiarism.

University Withdrawal Policy

Class withdrawals during the final 3 weeks of instruction are not permitted except for a very serious and compelling reason such as accident or serious injury that is clearly beyond the student's control and the assignment of an Incomplete grade is inappropriate (see Grades). Application for withdrawal from CSULB or from a class must be filed by the student online whether the student has ever attended the class or not; otherwise, the student will receive a grade of "WU" (unauthorized withdrawal) in the course. More information regarding the University guidelines on Dropping and Withdrawing at:
Dropping and Withdrawal.

Special Needs & Basic Needs Accommodation

Online courses are required to meet ADA accessibility guidelines. Students with a disability or medical restriction who are requesting a classroom accommodation should contact the Bob Murphy Access Center (BMAC) and also notify the instructor. BMAC personnel will work with the student to identify a reasonable accommodation in partnership with appropriate academic offices and medical providers. Only approved BMAC petitions will be accommodated.

Any student who is facing academic or personal challenges due to difficulty in affording groceries/food and/or lacking a safe and stable living environment is urged to contact the CSULB Student Emergency Intervention & Wellness Program. Additional resources are available via Basic Needs Program. The students can also email supportingstudents@csulb.edu, call (562)985-2038, or if comfortable, reach out

to the instructors as they may be able to identify additional resources. For mental health assistance please check out CSULB Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).

To apply for emergency services such as meal assistance program, emergency grant, or emergency housing, complete the information at this link: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?CSULongBeach&layout_id=2.

The Basic Needs Program recognizes that not having your basic needs met can affect your performance in the classroom, and they are here to support you and help ensure you get to your graduation day. They look forward to being of service to you.

It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor of any upcoming excused absence, or for any other special accommodation, including any university verified disability.

Title IX

Title IX prohibits gender discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. If you have experienced sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, dating/domestic violence, or stalking, the campus confidential Victim's Advocate is available to help. Jaqueline Urtez (e: advocate@csulb.edu, p:(562) 985-2668) can provide free and confidential support, accommodations, and referrals for victims without having to report the assault to campus authorities. While students are welcome to discuss assaults with faculty, both faculty and teaching assistants are mandatory reporters who are required to report all incidents of sexual harassment/misconduct to the Title IX office for follow-up and possible investigation. Students who do wish to report the assault for possible investigation may contact the confidential victim's advocate, who can help them through the reporting process, or they can report the assault directly to the Title IX Office by completing an online reporting form at https://www.csulb.edu/equity-diversity/title-ix or contacting the Office of Equity & Diversity at OED@csulb.edu.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

Supporting Undocumented Students

Undocumented students are welcome in this class. If you are undocumented and need assistance with successfully completing courses or a degree at CSULB, the staff of the Dream Success Center can help you with advising, campus services, legal immigration support, and other university resources. Visit the Dream Success Center in the Student Success Center, room 290, contact them at (562) 985-5869 or via email at dream@csulb.edu. For more information, please visit https://csulb.edu/dream.

> **Note**: For all students addressing undocumented immigration as a category of analysis in class, do not use the word "illegal(s)" in a discussion. The term "illegal(s)" promotes a culture of intolerance and violence toward foreign nationals and undocumented immigrants. A more

accurate and non-offensive term is "undocumented immigrant(s)." The use of this language signifies respect to the population addressed and reflects our campus's most basic values of diversity and civility in academic discourse.

Eliminating Anti-Blackness

Faculty at CSULB strive to create an environment that supports meaningful dialogue grounded in research, academic inquiry, and mutually respectful relations. We also strive to remain conscious of and attentive to the damage that anti-Blackness does to the lives of our students, faculty, staff, administrators, and their related communities.

As such, faculty at CSULB denounce anti-Blackness and racial violence in all forms and stand in solidarity with Black communities in the fight for racial justice, equality, and equity. We pledge to remake our institution as one that values, honors, and supports Black lives. We recognize the impact of anti-Blackness on our students, and we invite them to dialogue with their professors as we work to make our classrooms anti-racist and dignity-affirming spaces.

CSULB's Department of Africana Studies, located at PSY 306, and OMA's Black Resource Center (contact Jeremy Scruggs in USU 224 for access) are available as resources for the cultural grounding, growth, and development of our students. Visit the Department of Africana Studies and the Office of Multicultural Affairs for more information.