Ethical Computing Systems

CS/PHIL 201, Summer 2022

Dr. Moti Gorin

Syllabus

Course Description

Survey of contemporary ethical issues in information technology and hardware and software development. Explore moral, social, and legal issues with information technology in the modern world. Construct arguments based on philosophical moral theories, and issues explored through science fiction.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, the successful student will be able to:
- Describe some moral theories, including their strengths and weaknesses.
- Describe how various moral theories apply to ethical challenges in the fields of information technology and software development.
- Apply basic logical concepts such as argument, validity, soundness, strength, and cogency to texts.
- Recognize informal fallacies.
- Describe some of the most pressing issues at the intersection of ethics and information technology.
- Participate in civil and reasonable discussion on controversial topics.

Contact

Moti Gorin:

mgorin@colostate.edu Office

hours: Zoom/Teams by

appointment

- Assignments (Weekly Online discussion & Quizzes)   50%
- Final Exam: **Available June 10**   25%
- Final Essay: **Due June 8**   25%

Readings
Course readings will be provided to you through Canvas. Some readings will be from the New York Times, which are news articles available online. CSU Students have access to these articles through the College Readership Program. Instructions to access them will be given in Canvas.

Canvas

We use Canvas for all assignments, posting of class materials, and communication. In particular, you need to submit your weekly group discussion in Canvas. It is your responsibility to make sure you receive and regularly check messages in Canvas.

Class Content and Schedule

First day of class: 5/16; last day of class: 6/10

Week 1	Content	Readings
Week 1	1. INTRODUCTION ETHICAL THEORY/ UTILITARIANISM • The Greatest Happiness Principle	• Mill Utilitarianism
	1. Ethical Theory/ Deontology • Categorical Imperative 2. Ethical Theory/ Virtue • Virtues & Vices	• Korsgaard/Groundwork • Hursthouse/ Virtue Theory & Abortion
	1. Informed Consent 2. Logic	• Various NYT Articles
Week 2	1. Privacy & Facial Recognition 2. Privacy & DNA	• Various Articles • Various Articles
	1. Data & The Web 2. Data, Location & Voice	• Various Articles • Various Articles
	1. Human Enhancement Part 1 2. Human Enhancement Part 2	• Savulescu/ Procreative Beneficence • Sparrow/ Enhanced Rat Race
	1. Ethical Machines Part 1 2. Ethical Machines Part 2	• Searle & Nagel • Dennett
Week 3	1. Just War Theory 2. Autonomous Machines	• The Conversation Article & NYT Article • Autonomous Weaponry

	1. Working For War	• No Readings
	2. Edward Snowden	• Guardian Article & Snowden/ Chomsky/Greenwald Debate
	1. Codes of Ethics & Codes of Conduct	• Various Codes of Ethics Readings
	2. Workplace Ethics & Boeing 737 Max	• Find readings
	1. Automation & Labor	• Forbes Article
	2. Sharing Economy	• Various Readings
	1. Ethics & Data Collection	• Tuskegee Study, Anonymization & Cambridge Analytica
	2. Health Care, E-Medicine, Robots & Social Media	• Gorin Interview, Gorin Social Media Costs
Week 4	1. Bias & Algorithms	• Various Articles
	2. Encryption Debate **Essay Due Friday 4/22**	• Chalmers Extended Mind
	1. Attention Economy	• Various Articles
	2. Intellectual Property	• Vaccine Wars
	1. Contemporary Issue lecture	• No Readings
	2. Review	• No Readings

Grading

We use a grading scheme by percentage. Assignments and quizzes will be weighted at 50%, and the final exam and final essay will be worth 25% each. The combined overall percentage in each category will correlate with the following letter grades:

A+ Not awarded	B+ 86.67-88.9%	C+ 76.67-79.9%		
A >93.33%	B 83.33-86.67%	C 70-76.66%	D 60-69.9%	F <59.9%
A- 90-93.32%	B- 80-83.32%			

Policy concerning missed requirements and deadlines

Only in the case of documented extraordinary circumstances, such as illness, will there be an option to extend deadlines. **Students must notify their instructor before the assignment dealine in order to be eligible for an assignment extension.** Requests for late submission after class has occurred will not be considered unless extraordinary circumstances have occurred.

Academic Integrity

This course will adhere to the CSU Academic Integrity Policy as found on the Student' Responsibilities page of the CSU General Catalog (http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/policies/students-responsibilities/#academic-integrity) and inthe Student Conduct Code. At a minimum, violations will result in a grading penalty in this course and a report to the Officeof Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services.

For writing assignments, We use the Turnitin anti-plagiarism tool in Canvas, which automatically checks papers forplagiarism.

Principles of Community

Everyone is expected to acknowledge and uphold the [CSU Principles of Community](#) in all class activities and interactions.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING/ACCOMMODATION OF NEEDS

We are committed to the principle of universal learning. This means that our classroom, our virtual spaces, our practices, and our interactions be as inclusive as possible. Mutual respect, civility, and the ability to listen and observe others carefully are crucial to universal learning.

If you are a student who will need accommodations in this class, please contact us to discuss your individual needs. Any accommodation must be discussed in a timely manner. A verifying memo from [The Student Disability Center](#) may be required before any accommodation is provided.

The Student Disability Center (SDC) has the authority to verify and confirm the eligibility of students with disabilities for the majority of accommodations. While some accommodations may be provided by other departments, a student is not automatically eligible for those accommodations unless their disability can be verified and the need for the accommodation confirmed, either through SDC or through acceptable means defined by the particular department. Faculty and staff may consult with the SDC staff whenever there is doubt as to the appropriateness of an accommodative request by a student with a disability.

The goal of SDC is to normalize disability as part of the culture of diversity at Colorado State University. The characteristic of having a disability simply provides the basis of the support that is available to students. The goal is to ensure students with disabilities have the opportunity to be as successful as they have the capability to be.

Support and services are offered to student with functional limitations due to visual, hearing, learning, or mobility disabilities as well as to students who have specific physical or mental health conditions due to epilepsy, diabetes, asthma, AIDS, psychiatric diagnoses, etc. Students who are temporarily disabled are also eligible for support and assistance.

Any student who is enrolled at CSU, and who self-identifies with SDC as having a disability, is eligible for support from SDC. Specific accommodations are determined individually for each student and must be supported by appropriate documentation and/or evaluation of needs consistent with a particular type of disability. SDC reserves the right to ask for any appropriate documentation of disability in order to determine a student's eligibility for accommodations as well as in support for specific accommodative requests. The accommodative process begins once a student meets with an accommodations specialist