

INFO 350

Spring Quarter 2019

Introductions

Policy, Law, and Ethics

- **Ethics:** **strategies** for choosing action based on **moral** reasoning.
- **Law & Policy:** formal rules that guide action...
 - & hopefully reflect moral reasoning
- We are concerned with approaching ethical decision making in general, and also in the context of information systems and technology businesses.

Why Study This?

Cambridge Analytica whistleblower to appear before Congress next week

Row over AI that 'identifies gay faces'

11 September 2017

f [messaging icon] [twitter icon] [email icon] Share

Composite heterosexual faces

Composite gay faces

Average facial landmarks

Streamed to Facebook, spread on YouTube: New Zealand shooting video circulates online despite takedowns

The video continues to spread across the internet, illustrating how difficult it is to keep graphically violent images away from the public.

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The study created composite faces judged most and least likely to belong to homosexuals

Biggest **DATA B**

Accounts
Compromised by the millions



You have a role to play

- “I am just an engineer” doesn’t cut it anymore.
 - The things we are making now have *real* consequences for *real* people.
 - Just because you can build it does not mean that you *should*.
- Examples of people like you standing up for *ethics*.
 - [Cambridge Analytica](#) (Facebook)
 - [Project Maven](#) (Google)
 - [Rekognition](#) (Amazon)
 - [AI Warfare](#) (Microsoft)
 - [Dragonfly](#) (Google)
 - [Sexual Harassment](#) (Google)

And now, a little business

- **Apologies!** The class is full and we cannot make it fuller.
 - I do not have add codes to give out and I cannot overload the class.
 - (and this is not up to me)
 - iSchool Student Services is your 'goto' for registration and program questions
 - **The class is offered again in the summer**
- **No lab sections this week.** Sections start *next* week.
 - **AE/AF – Room change**
- **Please arrive on time.**
 - Late arrivals are really disruptive. Really.

Introductions

- Mike Katell, M.S.
 - PhD Candidate in Information Science
 - Algorithmic decision making
 - Privacy
 - Autonomy
 - Justice
 - Two+ decades in tech business
 - Software companies, web startups
 - Information Technology, Management
 - Non-profit orgs

Introductions

- Mike Katell, M.S.
 - Musician (semi-retired)



Introductions

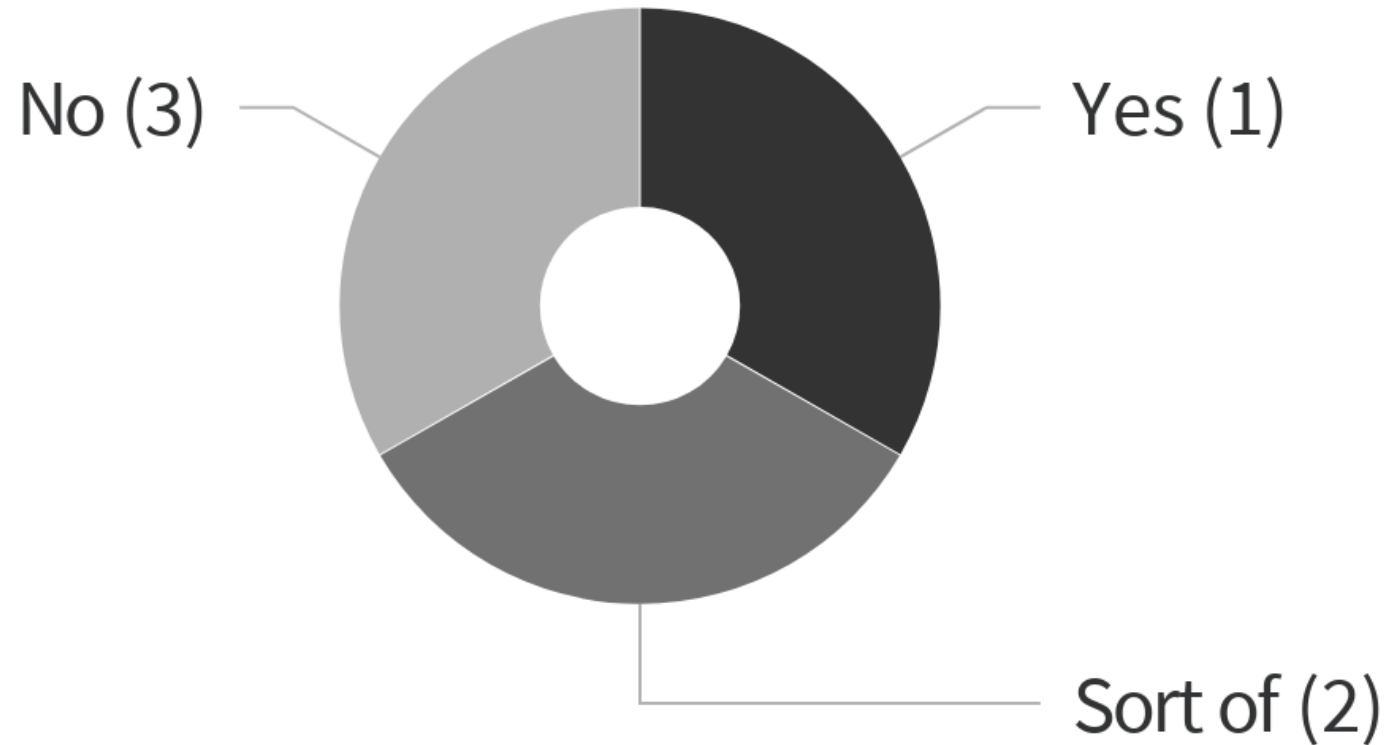
Who are you?

W 1a. What is your major?

W

1b. Have you ever taken a class in philosophy or applied ethics (more than one lecture or class day)?

Yes (1) Sort of (2) No (3)





1c. What job do you want to have 5 years from now?

W 1d. How do you feel about taking this class?

I am looking forward to this!

I am not looking forward to this at all!


I have no strong feeling either way.

Structure of the Course

Policy, Law, and Ethics

- Overview of issues:
 - Freedom of speech and expression
 - Intellectual property (copyright, etc.)
 - Privacy and Surveillance
 - Algorithms and autonomous systems
 - Professional ethics and accountability
 - ...and more

Grading Scheme

 GRADING		
Quizzes	25%	100 points
Lecture Participation	12.5%	50 points
Section Participation	12.5%	50 points
Critical Essay	12.5%	50 points
Peer Review	5%	20 points
Final term paper	32.5%	130 points
Total	100%	400 points

Syllabus!

- Lecture Participation (12.5% - 50 points)
 - Showing up
 - Individual and Group work
- Section Participation (12.5% - 50 points)
 - Up to your TA
- In general: you must be physically present to earn participation credit.

☰ ▾ Quizzes

25% of Total



Course Details Treasure Hunt

Not available until Apr 2 | 5 pts



Quiz #1: Ethical Systems

Not available until Apr 18 | 45 pts



Quiz #3: Intellectual Property, Algorithmic Fairness & Autonomous Agency

Not available until May 30 | 45 pts



Quiz #2: Privacy, Speech, IP

Not available until May 9 | 45 pts



☰ ▾ Essay and Term Paper

50% of Total



Critical Essay

Available until Apr 30 | Due Apr 26 at 10pm | 50 pts



Peer Review

Due Apr 26 at 10pm | 20 pts



Final Term Paper

Available until Jun 14 | Due Jun 10 at 10pm | 130 pts



Deadlines

- **All deadlines are *hard deadlines*.**
 - No extensions, no late work.
- No makeups offered
 - Extenuating circumstances **must be dire** and must be documented
- **Plagiarism is bad** – know what it is and do not do it.
 - Extremely. Serious. Offense.

Personal Technology in Class

Your device
is distracting

My Obligations and Commitments

- I will try to make this class worth your time and attention.
- My goal is to give you a set of tools that helps you lead a positive life and helps you make positive decisions that affect others.
- Communication:
 - Reach out to your TA first. If that does not work for whatever reason...
 - Try me: I try to respond to messages promptly, but sometimes I just can't.
- My door is open
 - Your TAs are the first place for you to go for help, BUT
 - I have regular office hours and I encourage you to use them
 - I have *some* availability by appointment at other times – stay in touch!

We Are Here to Help

- Ask general course questions on Canvas (so others can benefit)
- Ask your TAs specific questions
- Ask me what your TAs do not answer
- Take advantage of these resources:
 - [Student resources](#)
 - [UW Libraries](#)

Course Schedule

(subject to change - check often)

▼ Expand All

▲ Collapse All



Week 1 (Apr 1-7): INTRODUCTION - WHAT IS ETHICS?



Week 2 (Apr 8-14): ETHICAL THEORIES



Week 3 (Apr 15-21) MORE ABOUT ETHICS



Week 4 (Apr 22-28): FREEDOM OF SPEECH



Week 5 (April 29-May 5): PRIVACY



Week 6 (May 6-12): SURVEILLANCE



Week 7 (May 13-19): ETHICS IN PRACTICE



Week 8 (May 20-May 26): INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY



Week 9 (May 27-Jun 2): ALGORITHMS, ARTIFICIAL AGENCY & FAIRNESS



Week 10 (Jun 3-9): PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

About the Readings

“Readings” are *required readings*


Readings will be posted for each lecture

If it’s “required” it will probably be on a quiz

“Optional Readings” are *optional*

Content will not appear in quizzes or “check-ins”

Except whatever is discussed in lecture and/or included in slides.

 Week 2 (Apr 8-14): ETHICAL THEORIES

TUE, APR 9

Ethical Systems

Slides and/or documents


- Posted after lecture

Readings

- Quinn - Chapter 2 (selections - 16 pages)
 - 2.1 Introduction
 - 2.2 Subjective Relativism
 - 2.3 Cultural Relativism
 - 2.4 Divine Command Theory
 - 2.5 Ethical Egoism

Optional Readings (etc.)

- [Crash course in Kant](#)



What is ethics?

Ethics

What is Ethics:

Typically called, “Normative Ethical Theory”

- based on well-founded standards of right and wrong that prescribe what humans ought to do, usually in terms of rights, obligations, benefits to society, fairness, or specific virtues.

Assumes people are rational and make free choices.

- Governs choices over how you/they should act and how to evaluate your/their actions after it happen.

Ethics

A variety of ethical views:

- Deontological theories
- Utilitarianism (aka Consequentialism)
- Natural rights
- Virtue Ethics
- Feminist ethics
- Social contracts
- Critical ethics

Ethics

Obligations to/from others:

- Having a “right” means that others have some sort of obligation.
 - Civil rights – government has obligations to protected classes of people
 - Human rights – institutions/individuals obligated to respect human dignity
- Negative rights (liberties)
 - The right to act without interference (e.g. freedom of speech)
 - Can be thought of as *freedom from* something or someone
- Positive rights (claim-rights)
 - An obligation to provide something to someone else (e.g. a safe and inclusive workplace)
 - Can be thought of as *freedom to* something from someone

Ethics

A variety of ethical views:

- Golden rules
 - Treat others as you would want them to treat you.
- Contributing to society
 - Doing one's work honestly, responsibly, ethically, creatively, and well is virtuous.
- Responsibility
 - Being accountable to others for our actions
 - Holding others to account for theirs

Ethics

A variety of ethical views:

- Do organizations have ethics?
 - Corporations are not “people” but they can act like they are:
 - hold physical and intellectual property, pay taxes, “speak.”
 - Yet, ultimately, it is individuals who are making decisions and taking actions. We can hold both the individuals and the organization responsible for their acts.
 - Morally, it is the people making the decisions who should be held accountable
 - Legally, it is more complicated – by design

Ethical questions are everywhere



Looking for ethical issues

Spot the Issues!
