**CS 239.2 ~ Spring 2021**

**Final Essay Prompts**

***This final exam is an individual assessment. You should not contact anyone about it other than the instructor for the duration of the exam. You may freely use your textbook and all assigned readings, assignments, and related course materials.***

Instructions:

Download this document and enter your responses to each prompt into it. When done, submit your completed document into Canvas, in the same area where you originally found this document. ***Do not mistake quantity for quality.*** Provide a significant response to each prompt, but do not provide more than what is needed to get your point across. Review the **Grading Criteria Used to Evaluate Written Submissions** (posted in the Course information & resources area of Canvas) before you begin.

For your final evaluation, you are to complete and submit this MS Word document which records your responses to three prompts. ***To guide your reflection, please review all information provided in this document.***

The evaluation consists of three parts.

* Part 1: Learned
* Part 2: Essential question or workforce competency
* Part 3: ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

**You will need to wait until we meet during our final exam time to write your response to Part 1, but you are encouraged to complete the other parts before our final exam time.** *Students striving to earn an* ***A or B must successfully respond to all three parts****. Students striving to earn a* ***C must successfully respond to at least two of the three parts but are required to respond to Part 3*** *(thus they have a choice between Parts 1 and 2).*

**You may complete (but not submit) this evaluation before our final exam time, which is Thursday, 05/06/2021, at 4:00 PM (Eastern). It must be submitted in Canvas by 11:59 PM (Eastern) on Friday, 05/07/2021, *after* we meet for the final exam time.**

Part 1: Learned

We created a “Top N” list in class, during our final exam time. Choose the one item from that list that most resonates with you. Write a brief essay describing how you learned it. Be specific, addressing the people, places, times, and contexts of learning. Describe why it is one of the most significant things you learned. Keep in mind that an essay is more than one paragraph in length and must have a point that is supported.

From our top eight topics we learned this class the one that stands out to me the most is ethical responsibility. I found ethical responsibility to be a prevalent topic during my time in this course. I had a very fuzzy understanding of this topic before this course. The activities and assignments greatly helped me better understand what ethical responsibility is.

Ethical responsibility was always present throughout the term of this course. If it was not the main topic, it was always in the background or implied in other ways. The book covered this topic in detail dedicating a whole chapter to it. This reading was the main source of my understanding of ethical responsibility. Other than the book assignments related to the ACM code of ethics furthered my understanding. The ACM code of ethics directly address the topic and provides guidelines for how to better yourself and others in the pursuit of professional ethics. I also found the discussion helpful general discussion covered this area, but I found the situational examples more helpful. I enjoyed the small and large discussions and believe they helped me learn.

Ethical responsibility is something I will undoubtedly encounter in the future, and this course has given me a greater understanding of what it means to be ethically responsibility.

Part 2: Essential question or workforce competencies

Complete your choice of one of the following two prompts (Essential question or Workforce competencies).

**Essential question:** Write a brief essay response to one of our essential questions listed in our course syllabus, drawing upon specific details of your CS 239 course experience. (Note that this is not necessarily an answer to the essential question.) Keep in mind that an essay is more than one paragraph in length and must have a point that is supported.

**Workforce competencies:** Imagine an employer asked you about CS 239 during an interview. Using between 250 and 350 words, explain what you learned in this course and why this will make you a good employee. Notice I have not said who the employer is; this is on purpose. The way you describe this course should fit any job. Make sure you review our course syllabus and use the *workforce competencies* described there and listed below, since these are phrases that a potential employer will likely understand. Briefly include in your explanation how CS 239 helped you gain these skills.

* Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
* Oral/Written Communications
* Teamwork/Collaboration
* Digital Technology
* Leadership
* Professionalism/Work Ethic
* Career Management
* Global/Intercultural Fluency)

What relationships exist between social and ethical issues, and computer science? For me, this question means examining the impact computer science can have on social and ethical issues. Software and computer science has become more ingrained in everyday life and this means a more prevalent social and ethical impact. This can mean looking into specific social and ethical issues and finding out their relationship to the issue. For example, you can investigate computer crime. This is a good example of computer science has been used for evil. Another good example would be to explore how computer science has affected privacy. It is always important to consider the social and ethical ramifications one's actions have and looking into how my chosen profession impacts those areas clarifies that.

This course has offered many avenues to better understand this essential question. For one the assigned readings seem to address this question to some extent in each of its sections. Discussion with the class also provided different viewpoints to this question that I had not considered myself. I personally found the scenario segment of the discussions to be the most useful. I enjoyed addressing specific case by case social and ethical issues, and I learned from my fellow students.

I tend to believe that social and ethical issues, and computer science are deeply intertwined. I think that there are ethical concerns I should have within the field of computer science. One example that comes to mind is the programming of self-driving cars. I believe there are many trolly problems to be found within this field. I believe that society will continue to be influenced by the work of computer scientists.

Part 3: ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

**Review the ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct at** [www.acm.org/code-of-ethics](http://www.acm.org/code-of-ethics). (Note: the version provided in our textbook is outdated.) Consider the 25 imperatives presented in this code of ethics. To what three do you feel you will have the **easiest time adhering**, both currently as a student, and in the future as a professional? To what three do you feel you will have the **hardest time adhering**, both currently as a student, and in the future as a professional? Briefly explain your response.

Computing has a big impact on society and as with any other profession. People should follow a code of ethics and professionalism. The ACM has constructed just that. They present their code of conduct as a framework for ethical decision making. In my opinion the principles they present are good guidelines to follow, but there are some that are harder to adhere to than others.

The three principals I found the easiest to follow were: 1.3 Be honest and trustworthy, 1.6 Respect privacy, and 2.6 Perform work only in areas of competence. 1.3 Be honest and trustworthy, I work to follow this rule in my personal life, and I do not see too much of an extension to apply it to my professional life as well. This ideal is a commendable goal in the world of computer science. 1.6 Respect privacy, I imagine I will not have too much trouble respecting people’s privacy. Collecting data takes work and I image collecting less or only what is needed will be an achievable goal. 2.6 Perform work only in areas of competence, If I do not feel qualified to do something I tend to err on the side of caution. I like to do things right and I defer to more experienced people when I am unsure. I have done this as a student, and I imagine I will continue doing it in my profession.

Principals I believe harder to follow include: 2.2 Maintain high standards of professional competence, conduct, and ethical practice, 2.3 Know and respect existing rules pertaining to professional work, and 2.7 Foster public awareness and understanding of computing, related technologies, and their consequences.

2.2 Maintain high standards of professional competence, conduct, and ethical practice, this one I find harder to pursue. I like to think I have high standards, but that term can be subjective. I will strive to maintain high standards of professional competence, conduct, and ethical practice. But I am unsure of my future environment and how that may affect this point. 2.3 Know and respect existing rules pertaining to professional work, there is a lot to consider when trying to follow the rules of a profession. It can be difficult to know all of them and keep up with changes. 2.7 Foster public awareness and understanding of computing, related technologies, and their consequences. I personally do not think I am very good a publicly sharing my knowledge. I may get better at this with time, but I am unsure.

While it may be difficult to always maintain the values of a code the simple effort is a worthy contribution.