CSC 300

Computers and Society

Fall 2014

General Information

Instructor   Juan González

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Lectures   Wednesdays 6-8pm @ MP137

Tutorials   Wednesdays 8-9pm @ MP137, LM155, LM157

Office Hours   Wednesdays 5-6pm (by appointment only)

WWW   https://piazza.com/utoronto.ca/fall2014/csc300h/home

Overview

This course is an exploration of how computer related technologies are shaping society and the ways in which society can evaluate such technological change. While this is not a philosophy course, various reasoning frameworks will be introduced as tools to consider alternate points of views that will help the student produce a more comprehensive analysis of any particular problem introduced by computer related technologies with the objective of enriching their own decision making.

Our approach through the course is to discuss recent developments in the computer industry that present a particular ethical challenge while we explore a consistent method to evaluate their potential impact into society.

Topics to be covered during the course include social networks, intellectual property, privacy, pervasive computing, security and open systems, among others.

Recommended Reading

Ethics for the Information Age, 6th Edition by Quinn, Michael J (ISBN 978-0-13-374162-9)

NB: less expensive 180 day "rental" available at coursesmart.com

Prerequisites

There are no particular prerequisites for this course, but every student will be expected to participate verbally throughout the term as well as write short essays with a solid argument around a number of topics, so we expect a good level of proficiency in the English language.

Students are encouraged to take advantage of their college writing centres.
See http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres

Marking

Course grade will be determined as follows:

	Weight	Out	Due
Participation	10%		
Mid-Term Debate	20%		Oct 22/29
Essay I - Proposal	10%	Oct 1	Oct 8
Essay II - Ethical Framework	15%	Oct 8	Oct 29
Essay III - Final Report	15%	Nov 5	Nov 19
Final Exam	30%		

Assignment/Project Policies

1. Participation mark is earned by preparing each class using the reading list.

2. The Mid-Term Debates will be done in groups of 3 to 5 students. Each group will be assigned a topic and a position to defend during the debate. All members of the group must participate in the debate to earn a mark.

3. All the essays are to be prepared individually. The essays will be based on a term-long project that will explore an issue chosen by each student and analyzed according to the methodology learned during class.

4. Essays are due at midnight on their due date.

5. All deliverables should be submitted electronically.

6. **Late course work**. No assignment will be accepted after the deadline.

7. **Re-marking**. The TA's will hold a special re-marking session shortly after assignments are handed back to students. If you are still dissatisfied after talking to the TA, then set an appointment with the instructor. All re-marking should be complete within one week of the date when the marked assignment is available for hand-back. No assignment will be re-marked after this period.

8. Communications. Students are encouraged to use an electronic forum to discuss the contents of each class and the appropriate channels to do so will be discussed in class. When communicating with the professor please use email and expect a 48hr turn around.

9. The Final Exam is worth 30% of the overall mark for the course. Students must earn at least 20% on the final exam in order to pass the course.

10. Cheating/Plagiarism. The academic policies of the University of Toronto will be in effect. See http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca. All work that you or your group submit must be your own. When you submit an assignment with your name on it, you are certifying that you have done the work on that assignment yourself. (Keep in mind that the penalty for cheating is always worse than handing in the assignment late.)

Schedule

Date	Topic	Notes
September 10	Introduction - The Last 20 Years	
September 17	The Next 20 Years	Tutorial: How to debate
September 24	Introduction to Ethics	Tutorial: scenario
October 1	Applying Ethical theories	Tutorial: essay methodology I Essay I: OUT
October 8	Networked Communications	Tutorial: essay methodology II Essay I: DUE - Essay II: OUT
October 15	Intellectual Property	Tutorial: scenario
October 22	Privacy	Debate
October 29	Open Source Principles	Debate Essay II: DUE
November 5	Computer Crime / Security	Tutorial: essay methodology III Essay III: OUT
November 12	System Failure	Tutorial
November 19	Disruption	Tutorial Essay III: DUE
November 26	Review	Tutorial