

CSC 208-402 Ethics in Technology 11:50 am – 1:20 pm

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Homepage: <https://condor.depaul.edu/psisul> (then select course)

Office Hours:

Tuesday (Loop campus), CDM 714: 2:00-3:30 pm

Wednesday (Lincoln Park campus), Student Center 332: 3:00 – 4:30 pm

Course information can be found on D2L: <https://d2l.depaul.edu/>

Contact Information

I will use email to communicate with the class. **Subject of your email should be formatted as follows:**

CSC 208 – *402*, *your last name*, *your first name* and purpose of email

Summary of the course

Computing Technology and the rapid pace in which it has advanced have had a tremendous impact on our lives. Changes have been swift and the human capacity to deal them limited. It has been said that our technology has outpaced our humanity. This course will research the new responsibilities technology presents and our ability to deal with these changes in an ethical manner. Students will employ a framework for ethical analysis, which integrates computer science and ethics, to develop the skills required to examine different sets of assumptions and question them, resulting in an informed evaluation of issues. Philosophies covered: Kant, social contract, Rawls, moral rights, virtue ethics, Mill's harm principles, Feinberg's offense principle and utilitarianism.

Prerequisites

No previous knowledge of computers or philosophy is assumed, or necessary.

Philosophical Inquiry Learning Domain Description & Learning Outcomes

PI Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to address, critically think about, and analyze philosophical questions and problems.

Students will develop these skills through writing analytical papers, weekly writing submissions, class discussion, midterm essay, and a final project requiring the writing of a personal code of ethics.

2. Students will be able to evaluate philosophical questions, issues and/or problems using informed judgment.

Students will develop these skills through writing analytical papers, weekly writing submissions, class discussion, midterm essay, case studies, current events, and a final project requiring the writing of a code of ethics.

3. Students will be able to analyze and interpret the methods used by philosophers in addressing philosophical questions, issues, and/or problems.

Students will develop these skills through readings, writing analytical papers, weekly writing

submissions, class discussion, midterm essay, and a final project requiring the writing of a personal code of ethics.

4. Students will be able to engage with philosophical topics and figures in their historical context. Students will develop these skills through weekly reading responses and class discussion.

5. Confront and interpret primary texts from the philosophical tradition.

Students will read sections of original works and discuss them in class and in weekly reading responses.

6. Students will be able to write an analytic essay treating a philosophical question, issue and/or problem that forwards an identifiable thesis, argument, and conclusion.

Students will write an analytical paper and a Final Project.

PID Writing Expectations

Students will be expected to complete a minimum of 10 pages of writing for this course. This writing may take the form of essays, response papers, reading journals, take-home essay exams, critical analyses, etc. At least one assignment should involve revision, which may count (but only once, not twice) towards the 10-page minimum.

Students will meet this requirement by weekly reading responses, a midterm essay, posted quizzes (not taken with quiz section of D2L) and a Final Project.

Other Course Objectives

Self-Reflection — Students will examine their own use of technology, explore their own feelings regarding ethical computing issues, recognize that these issues are applicable to their everyday lives and in a range of professional fields, and reflect on how the process of using established ethical frameworks supports, or challenges, their feelings about issues.

Develop Skills Most Sought After by Employers — **Most Valuable Career Skills of 2017**

By Rebecca Lake: <https://www.investopedia.com/personal-finance/most-valuable-career-skills/>

Textbooks

Required

1. **Print** edition of: Birsch, Douglas. (2014) Introduction to Ethical Theories, A Procedural Approach. IL:Waveland Press, Inc. ISBN: 1-4786-0670-3; ISBN: 978-1-4786-0670-3 <https://waveland.com/browse.php?t=628>
2. (Free Online) Abelson & Ledeen & Lewis (2008) Blown to Bits: Your Life, Liberty, and Happiness After the Digital Explosion. NY:Addison-Wesley Professional, ISBN 0137135599. Download for free at: <http://www.bitsbook.com/>
3. Handouts/links for original texts.
4. Access to the news. Possible sources: New York Times, Chicago Tribune, The Wall Street Journal, CNN, MSN, Time, Newsweek, PC World, or online newsgroups. You may find newspapers, journals, and magazines at the library or online.

Supplemental

1. Optional purchase: Quinn, M. J. (2017) Ethics for the Information Age, 7th edition. NY:Pearson/Addison Wesley. ISBN-13: 978-0-13-429654-8; PowerPoint slides will be provided on D2L.

<http://www.mypearsonstore.com/bookstore/ethics-for-the-information-age-0134296540>

Recommended

1. A jump drive, or other storage.
2. Lunsford, Andrea A. (2015) *The St. Martin's Handbook*. 8th, NY: Bedford Publishing. ISBN-10: 1-4576-6724-X; ISBN-13: 978-1-4576-6724-4
This text is used in DePaul's required writing classes (WRD 103 and 104) and every student should have a copy. It is also available at DePaul's library.
3. A dictionary and thesaurus, which can be found at the library, or online.

Classroom & Grading Policies

Attendance: Students are expected to attend each class and to remain for the duration. Coming 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes early constitutes an absence. The overall grade for participation drops .5 percentage points (out of 10%) after any absence. Three absences for any reason, whether excused or not, **may** constitute failure for the course.

Class Discussion: Student participation in class discussions will be measured in two ways. First, students are highly encouraged to ask questions and offer comments relevant to the day's topic. Participation allows the instructor to "hear" the student's voice when grading papers. Secondly, students will be called upon by the instructor to offer comments related to the reading assignments. Students must keep up with the reading to participate in class discussion.

Attitude: A professional and academic attitude is expected throughout this course. Measurable examples of non-academic or unprofessional attitude include but are not limited to: talking to others when the instructor is speaking, mocking another's opinion, cell phones ringing, emailing, texting or using the internet whether on a phone or computer. If any issues arise a student may be asked to leave the classroom. The professor will work with the Dean of Students Office to navigate such student issues.

Civil Discourse: DePaul University is a community that thrives on open discourse that challenges students, both intellectually and personally, to be Socially Responsible Leaders. It is the expectation that all dialogue in this course is civil and respectful of the dignity of each student. Any instances of disrespect or hostility can jeopardize a student's ability to be successful in the course. The professor will partner with the Dean of Students Office to assist in managing such issues.

Laptops/Cell Phones/On Call: Out of respect for others in the class, please remember to turn off all electronic devices during class. You may **not** tape the classes. If you bring a cell phone to class, it must be off or set to a silent mode. Should you need to answer a call during class, students must leave the room in an undistruptive manner. Out of respect to fellow students and the professor, texting is never allowable in class. If you are required to be on call as part of your job, please advise me at the start of the course.

Late work policy – Except for current events that may not be turned in late, work submitted after the due date will be **penalized 10%.** **No late work will be accepted more than 1 week**

past the due date. Any work due during the 10th week of the quarter is due by the last day our class meets, no later. At the end of the quarter, **your lowest current event grade will be dropped.**

Religious Observations & School Activities

I will make accommodations to allow students to fully express their faith. Please let me know in advance by email if you will be absent, or need extensions on assignments, due to religious observations.

I will make every effort to accommodate student participation in school activities, such as athletic competitions. Please let me know in advance by email if you will be absent, or need extensions on assignments, due to school activities.

Resources for Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately, during office hours, to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential.

To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at: Student Center, LPC, Suite #370

Phone number: (773)325.1677; Fax: (773)325.3720; TTY: (773)325.7296.

Academic Policies/Absences

All students are required to manage their class schedules each term in accordance with the deadlines for enrolling and withdrawing as indicated in the [University Academic Calendar](#). Information on enrollment, withdrawal, grading and incompletes can be found at: <https://www.cdm.depaul.edu/Current%20Students/Pages/Enrollment-Policies.aspx>
Also see Important Dates listed at the end of this syllabus.

In the case of illness, or other excused absences, a student may contact the Dean of Students to request a formally approved absence. Upon receipt of documentation, the dean's office will notify all instructors of the student that an approved absence has occurred. The notification will maintain student privacy by not including the reasons for the absence. Contact information may be found at: <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos/contactus.html>

Assignments and Grading

Detailed instructions for all assignments will be posted on D2L.

The class consists of Computer Science (CS) majors and Non-CS majors. Although the level of technical content will be kept low, there will, at time, be supplementary reading list for CS majors. Note, the most effective way to learn to think critically is in small groups.

10% – Four Labs designed to be completed during class (Meets PID Learning outcomes #1–6).

20% – Reading Responses/ 3-5 Quizzes/HW (Meets PID LOs #1–6). Reading Responses. Questions on the reading assignments will be posted on the course website and are due at the start of class.

10% – Approximately 5–9 Current Events (Meets PID LOs #1 & 2). Students will be required to identify the computing ethical issue only; no additional writing required. Current Events **may not** be submitted late.

20% – Midterm Paper with mandatory rewrite and presentation (Meets PID LOs #1–6 and the writing requirement). One 7–10 page (doubled spaced) ethical analysis paper on an approved, relevant issue explicitly applying the ethical theories in order to compare philosophies. This is considered a group assignment. You may work alone, or in groups of 2 or 3, on this paper. The first draft of your paper is worth 50 points; you will receive full credit for a **complete draft** submitted by the due date. The final draft/rewrite is worth 100 points. I will explicitly look for improvements in your rewrite. You will present your paper (10 to 15 minutes per group). The presentation is worth 50 points.

30% – Take home Final Exam (Meets PID LOs #1–6). Students will write their own personal code of ethics annotated with justification using the procedures studied (approximately 5 pages, single spaced).

10% – Attendance & Class Participation (PID LOs #1–6). See policies above.

Grading Scale:

A 93–100	B+ 87–89	C+ 77–79	D+ 67–69
A- 90–92	B 83–86	C 73–76	D 60–66
	B- 80–82	C- 70–72	F 0–59

Week-By-Week Guide (subject to change)

This syllabus is subject to change as necessary during the quarter.
Check for changes, assignments, and due dates on D2L.

Week 1 September 12 & 17

Introduction to course; review syllabus; a brief history of computing.

Reading assignments will be posted on D2L.

Birsch, Chapter 1. Woodford, Chris. (2016, January 9). A Brief History of Computers. Retrieved from: <http://www.explainthatstuff.com/historyofcomputers.html>

Week 2 September 19 & 24

Reading and response questions will be posted on D2L, but will not be collected.

Read Quinn, Chapter 2. An introductory examination of ethical issues, philosophical theories, and ethical procedures used for ethical analysis.

Week 3 September 26 & October 1

Lab 1: We will meet on Thursday, September 26, in the lab. Lab location = 14 E. Jackson, Richard & Maggie Daley Bldg, ROOM 1325. (State St. & Jackson Blvd.).

Topic: Fake news and freedom of speech; Rousseau; Mill; Feinberg. **LAB 1 DUE: Oct 1**

Complete the Lab Group Evaluations today and keep the file for the next 3 labs.

****Reading Response #3 due Sept 26 to D2L.** Reading assignments will be posted on D2L. Readings include, but are not limited to, Birsch Chapter 7 Moral Rights Theory; sections of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*; Rawls's Theory of Justice; John Stuart Mill's Harm Principle; Joel Feinberg's Offense Principle

Week 4 October 3 & 8

Lab 2: We will meet on Thursday, October 3, in the lab, ROOM 1325, 14 E. Jackson.

Topic: Intellectual Property; Virtue Ethics; Rule Utilitarianism. **LAB 2 DUE: Oct 8**

****Reading Response #4 due October 3 to D2L.** Reading assignments will be posted on D2L. Readings include, but are not limited to, Birsch, Chapter 8 Aristotle's Ethical Theory; Birsch, pages 76-77 & Rule Utilitarian pages 83-84; John Stuart Mill (1863) Utilitarianism.

Week 5 October 10 & 15

Lab 3: We will meet on Thursday, October 10, in the lab, ROOM 1325, 14 E. Jackson.

Topic: Computer Reliability and Network Security **LAB 3 DUE: Oct 15**

****Reading Response #5 due October 10 to D2L.** Reading assignments will be posted on D2L. Readings include, but are not limited to, sections of Bentham's *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*; Quinn's PP Chapter 8; **skim** Abelson & Ledeen & Lewis, Chapter 4.

Week 6 October 17 & 22

Lab 4: We will meet on Thursday, October 17, in the lab, ROOM 1325, 14 E. Jackson.

Topic: Information Privacy and Government Privacy; Kant **LAB 4 DUE: Oct 22**

****Reading Response #6 due October 17 to D2L.** Reading assignments will be posted on D2L. Readings include, but are not limited to, Birsch Chapter 6; Abelson & Ledeen & Lewis pages 32-35; Sections from Kant's *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*; Quinn's PPs for Chapters 5 & 6. This is the last Reading Response due to D2L.

Week 7 October 24 & 29

Movie *The Traveling Salesman*, shown in class October 24

Reading assignments and response questions will be posted on D2L.

Week 8 October 31 & November 5

Decision Making; Professional Ethics; Work and Wealth; Current Events

Reading assignments and response questions will be posted on D2L.

Readings include, but are not limited to, Birsch, Chapter 4 & 10; Ethics of Whistleblowing Link posted on D2L.

Possible Current Event; Possible Midterm Essay Group Presentations

Week 9 November 7 & 12

Possible Current Event; Midterm Essay Group Presentations

Week 10 November 14 & 19

Possible Current Event; Midterm Essay Group Presentations

Final Exam is due During Finals week; details will be posted on D2L.

EXAM DAY

Tuesday, November 26: 11:30 am – 1:45 pm. You do not need to be in class for this. You will submit your Final Project to D2L before 11:00 am on November 21 – no later.

Important Dates – Fall Quarter 2019

September 11: Begin fall quarter classes

September 17, Tuesday (11:59 pm): last day to add classes

September 24, Tuesday: last day to drop classes with no penalty

September 24, Tuesday: last day to select pass/fail option

October 29, Tuesday: last day to withdraw from fall quarter classes

November 19, Tuesday: end of fall quarter day and evening classes

November 20, Wednesday: begin fall quarter day and evening Final Exams

November 26, Tuesday: end fall quarter Final Exams

November 26, Tuesday: end of fall quarter

December 5, Thursday (11:59 pm): grades due fall quarter

University Policies

Incomplete Grades

An incomplete grade is given only for an exceptional reason such as a death in the family, a serious illness, etc. Any such reason must be documented. Any incomplete request must be made at least two weeks before the final and approved by the Dean of the College of Computing and Digital Media. Any consequences resulting from a poor grade for the course will not be considered as valid reasons for such a request.

Academic Integrity Policy

This course will be subject to the faculty council rules on the [Academic Integrity Policy](#) web site.

Plagiarism

The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course, as well as all other courses in which independent research or writing play a vital part in the course requirements should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report, or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about

what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials be sure to consult the instructor.

Online Course Evaluations

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to providing you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is separate from the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over three weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation. Students complete the evaluation online in [Campus Connect](#).