New Jersey Institute of Technology

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Fall 2023

IS 350 - 451: Computer, Society, and Ethics

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Syllabus for:

IS 350 - Computer, Society, and Ethics

General Course Information/Course Format

Most of the work will be at an individual pace, although there will be strict deadlines for each assignment. There are videos you are responsible to view as well as weekly assignments and postings. You will engage in other activities on-line, both individually and in a team. All are mandatory. You will be responsible for reading the textbook and online materials, participating in online discussion and activities, and doing all assignments.

1. **Prerequisites**

As prerequisites, IS 350 requires an introductory course in computing, an introductory course in the social sciences, and HUM 101. This course is an upper-level course designed for juniors and seniors.

2. **Course Goals**

Upon the completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Explain beneficial and detrimental ways in which computing affects people, including the primary and secondary effects, and intended and unintended consequences.
2. Utilize theories of ethical decision-making and professional codes of ethics to analyze difficult situations with computing aspects.
3. Find and critically evaluate relevant literature pertaining to a situation of concern.
4. Communicate about difficult issues in the computing sciences.

This is an ambitious set of goals, which meets several of the requirements for an ABET accredited degree in the Computing Sciences.

3. **Time Required –**This course requires a significant amount of work to help you achieve these goals. On average, you need to set aside up to 10 plus hours a week for this course, including discussion postings, lecture reviews, online activities, reading, studying the materials, homework and team activities.

4. **Lecture & Recitations –**The lecture slides cover the major course content and supplement (not repeat) the textbook. Readings and other online materials further supplement both the lecture slides and the textbook.

5. **Canvas**– Course materials and other information are on Canvas.

6. **Graded Assignments**

    1. **Ethical Case Analysis, Assignment 1**– The only way to truly understand ethics is to apply ethical theories to real-world situations. Individuals will be responsible for reading and analyzing an ethical case scenario using the analysis protocol presented in class (week 2).

    2. **Weekly Discussions** – We will hold substantial discussion of the week's topics online via discussion postings in the forum. This is where we will begin by introducing ourselves, discuss course content or current events related to ethics and technology. For each discussion assignment, you must post one original post and reply to two classmates' posts with substantive posts. Substantive posts add

to the discussion. A simple post such as, "I agree" or "I disagree" is not substantive and will not receive credit. Some weeks there will be a specific topic(s) to discuss in the Forum. Other weeks, you will be asked to discuss one or more of the assigned contents for that week. Be sure to read Forum instructions.

3. **Weekly Short Quiz** – To ensure you are prepared and have read the material, there is a quiz most weeks on the upcoming week's readings, including the chapter for the week
4. **Debate**– As part of a team you will persuasively argue about an ethical dilemma concerning technology in a debate format. This will be a recorded presentation. You will be assigned to a team and assigned to a topic and position (pro or con).
5. **Current Events Assignment**– This is an individual assignment that focuses on an interesting and timely topic that you are assigned which demonstrates the impact of technology on society. There are several parts to this assignment. They are:
   1. Investigate the Current Event Topic assigned to you
   2. Create a recording of your Current events topic (presentation)
6. **Midterm Current Event Report**
7. **Final Current Event Report**
8. **Introduce Yourself** – The first Discussion Forum assignment, due at the end of the first week, is to post a brief introduction to yourself so we may all get to know one another. For each Discussion Forum assignment, unless otherwise specified, you will make an original post and then reply to at least two of your classmates' postings. Original postings and replies must be substantive. They must add to the conversation. For example, a reply of "I agree" is not substantive and will not be awarded any points.
9. **Community Service Internship** (*optional and NOT during the summer*) – NJIT Career Services can provide you the opportunity to work with a Newark-area non-profit organization using your skills to help that organization achieve its goals. This is a great experience, great service, can open doors for you, and looks great on your resume! Once information is available, it will be posted on Canvas.

Deliverable	Percentage
Assignment: Debate (group)	15%
Assignment: Current Events Presentation	15%
Chapter Quizzes	10%
Assignment 1 – Ethical Analysis	10%
Midterm Report	20%
Final Report	20%
Discussion - weekly	10%
TOTAL	**100%**

Attendance, Absence and Lateness Policy

Attendance is required. **Attendance is taken such that you are present for a week ONLY if you have completed ALL assignments**. Each student is permitted **Three** absences during the semester. Additional absences will affect the student's grade by one letter lower.
Any student with more than five (5) absences will receive an automatic grade of "F" for this course.

The following guidelines apply:
If you are absent three (3) times - no effect on your grade.
Four (4) times and your grade is <u>lowered</u> by **one** letter Grade.
Six (6) times you will be given an "**F**".
<u>Medical Excuses</u> need to be reported to the Dean of Students and they, the Dean's Office, will decide if the absence is to be excused or not.

Grading and other Requirements

"A" breakers – You must do 2 things to be *eligible* for an A.
1. Post all assignments <u>on time</u>. <u>Late assignments are NOT accepted.</u>
2. Participate in online discussions. Discussions are a major part of the class. Late postings prevent replies from other students. All discussions must be posted before the due date. For online courses, the postings also count as attendance, BUT, <u>late postings will NOT be counted towards attendance.</u>

If you will miss any assignment deadline or session, email me in advance. Otherwise, you will be disqualified from an A. (Emailing me does not necessary earn back the A but is a required courtesy.)

<u>For Online classes: Attendance will be counted such that you are present for a week only if you post all required submissions to the week's Discussion Forum.</u>
<u>For Face to Face classes: Attendance will be take in Class.</u>

<u>You are expected to attend every class.</u>
Attendance for an Online class is taken such that you are present for a week ONLY if you post all required submissions to the week's Discussion Forum.
Each student is permitted Three absences during the semester. Additional absences will affect the student's grade by one letter lower.
Any student with more than five (5) absences will receive an automatic grade of "F" for this course.
The following guidelines apply:
If you are absent up to three (3) times without a medical excuse - no effect on your grade.
Four (4) times and your grade is <u>lowered</u> by <u>one</u> letter Grade.
Six (6) times and you will be given an "F".
<u>Medical Excuses</u> need to be reported to the Dean of Students and they, the Dean's Office, will decide if the absence is valid or not.

Nevertheless, the Instructor is the one who decides whether or not the absence will be excused.

The percentages for all course work are as follows. These are subject to adjustment.

Deliverables	Due Date	Percentage
Assignment: Debate (group)		15%
Assignment: Current Events		15%
Chapter Quizzes		10%
Assignment 1 – Ethical Analysis		10%
Midterm Report	All Dates Are Posted on Canvas	20%
Final Report		20%
Discussion - weekly		10%
(Community Service Extra Credit)		up to 5 points added to course grade
TOTAL		100%

Grading Policy

- **A = 90 and up**
- **B+ = 85 to 89**
- **B = 80 to 84**
- **C+ = 75 to 79**
- **C = 70 to 74**
- **D = 65 to 69**
- **F = less than 65**

What if I Don't Agree with my Grade?
If you do not agree with your grade, you have 1 week after the grade has been posted, to dispute the grade. Follow the instructions on Canvas.

But What If Canvas or my computer Crashes and I Cannot Submit Homework or Complete my Midterm or Final?
Please Do NOT wait until the last minute to do your homework or take your exam.

Grade Rebuttal Procedure
Timing: From the date the grades for each assignment are posted, you have up to 7 days to dispute a grade. After this period grade rebuttals will not be accepted.
Email address: Email the instructor and copy the TA using the email addresses in the syllabus.
Email subject: Use the email subject header "IS350 [Assignment Number] [Very Brief Reason]"
Email body: In the email body include:

1. Assignment Number/Type
    o If a discussion grade, then the week, subject of your posting, and whether it was the original post or a reply.
2. Student Name and UCID
3. Your current grade
4. Your desired grade
5. Your justification, following the instructions below

Justification using Grading Rubric/Template: You must clearly justify why you believe you should deserve a different grade. This is the most important part. You have to explain using the rubrics (grading template) provided for each assignment why you deserve a different grade. If your justification is clear, well reasoned, and correct, and the desired grade matches your justification you will get the full credit.
- For example, if you believe you should get a 100 instead of a 70 and you justify it correctly, you will get the 100.
- However, if you instead deserved a 85 and asked for a 100, you won't get anything.
It's a "deserved amount or nothing" situation, so be truthful regarding the grade you think you deserve.

Textbook

Michael J. Quinn, Ethics for the Information Age, 8th edition (2020).
- printed, rental and online versions are available through the NJIT bookstore
Alternative online version through VitalSource);
https://www.vitalsource.com/products/ethics-for-the-information-age-michael-j-quinn-v9780135218006
(If you have a copy of the 7th edition, it may be "mostly good enough", but your weekly quizzes will mostly come from the 8th edition and it has some new material.)

A Note to Students in F. Deek's Section

Dear IS 350 students:

As the professor for the online section of IS 350 Computers, Society, and Ethics, I would like to welcome you to what I hope will be an exciting and rewarding semester in our "Virtual Classroom".
We will be using Canvas for our interaction in this course. Canvas is a Learning Management System that includes features to support teaching and learning. All pertinent class information will be posted there. Detailed information for this course is provided in the course syllabus. Mahshad Koohi, a PhD candidate in the Computer Science Department, will work with me as the Teaching Assistant for the course. Please email me in Canvas or at fadi.deek@njit.edu if you have any questions or concerns. Mahshad's email is mk985@njit.edu.
All normal class functions, such as homework and interaction with the instructor, TA, and other classmates will be conducted using Canvas. Although we will not physically see each

other in the classroom, I will provide opportunities for us to meet during the semester as a group, sub-groups, or individually, on a volunteer basis for those who are interested and able to make it. I will provide more context on this in Canvas.

By now, many of you have already taken online classes before, but some may still be wondering how this learning experience is going to be different from others. In the traditional face-to-face class, we have an instructor taking a lead in communicating course material while students listen, take notes, ask questions, and get answers. Often, due to time limitations and other factors, many students never get to asking or answering questions. Furthermore, some students may be uncomfortable participating in class discussions. In the Virtual Classroom, the content as well as questions and their answers are entered into the learning management system. All questions/answers/comments can be seen by the instructor and classmates. There are no time constraints on when the class starts or ends, and you can fit the coursework whenever you have time during the week, 24 hours a day. However, you MUST submit the work by the stated due dates.

Please note that IS 350 is offered in multiple sections, different modalities, and taught by a group of committed instructors. It is also a "coordinated course". As such, in general, all sections share common content, assessment, and learning objectives. However, we all have different backgrounds, skills, and interests, which gives some distinctiveness to what we do. <u>For my section, I have placed, appropriately, added emphasis on Artificial Intelligence. I will say more on this as we progress through the course</u>. At this time, please take a look at the <u>instructor introduction</u>.

Because of the absence of regular physical class meetings, you might be tempted to "skip a couple of weeks". To avoid this, there will be electronic homework due every week, and you will be expected to log into "Canvas" at least TWICE A WEEK during the semester to review current/new activities. This is an absolute attendance requirement.

At this time, please read the entire content of Week 1.

I would like to wish you good luck in this semester and especially in this course. I hope that you will find it an exciting experience.

Sincerely,
Fadi P. Deek, PhD
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P.S: This course follows the latest guidelines from NJIT on Course Format.
Each module contains a Summary Page that has everything you need to do that week, the discussions, quizzes and assignments. Also, I have provided a ppt presentation as the first item within the Summary Page that gives a Concise Guide to what we will learn and what is required of you each week.
If you do NOT use the links on the summary pages you will miss important information that you need to do the work correctly.
This format is to help you complete this course successfully

Office Hours

Office hours will be held using Webex.

They will be on Monday 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
You will also be able to meet with me by appointment.