



**UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
Department of Philosophy

**PHIL 314**  
**Information Technology Ethics**  
Summer 2020  
Online

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Instructor Name:** Ananya Chatteraj

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**Office:** Online meetings only for Summer 2020

**Office Hours:** Thursdays 5pm – 6pm on Zoom or by appointment

**Teaching Assistant Name:** Joshua Stein

**Email:** joshua.stein@ucalgary.ca

**Office:** Online meetings only for Summer 2020

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**COURSE INFORMATION**

This course is an applied ethics course in information technology. The purpose of this course is to bring greater awareness of the ethical issues surrounding information technology creation, use, and distribution.

Since this course has been moved online, all “lecturing” will occur asynchronously. Office hours will be scheduled synchronously based on student availability.

The following topics will be covered:

1. What’s ethics got to do with it?
2. Building tech – data and databases
3. Building tech – algorithmic bias
4. Using tech – proprietary tech
5. Using tech – deep fakes + AI
6. Using tech – games and virtual worlds
7. Distributing tech – digital divide and access

**PREREQUISITE(S)**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Broad knowledge of the pervasiveness of ethical issues in the tech industry
- Ability to critically digest, interpret, and analyze complex sources
- Ability to write a convincing argument that takes adequate account of alternative positions
- Ability to engage in constructive, respectful, oral and written argumentation

**REQUIRED/RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS, READINGS AND MATERIALS**

All readings will be available on D2L as a link, subject to university policies and Canadian copyright law.

- Bynum, Terrell. 2018. "Computer and Information Ethics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2018 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.)
- Miller, Boaz, 2020, "Is Technology Value Neutral?" *Science Technology, and Human Values*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243919900965>.
- Wildman et al. 2019. "Data, Privacy, and the Individual: The Ethics of Data Acquisition." *Center for the Governance of Change*. <https://www.ie.edu/cgc/research/data-privacy-individual/>
- Bivens, Rena. 2015. "The Gender Binary Will Not be Deprogrammed: Ten years of coding gender on Facebook." *New Media and Society*.
- Martin, Kirsten. 2018. "Ethical Implications and Accountability of Algorithms." *Journal of Business Ethics*.
- Benjamin, Ruha. 2019. "Engineered Inequity." *Race after Technology*. Pgs 37 – 53.
- Rappaport, Jesse. 2017. "Is Proprietary Software Unjust? Examining the Ethical Foundations of Free Software." *Philosophy and Technology*. 31(3). 437 – 453.
- Chan Grinvald, Leah and Ofer Tur-Sinai. 2019. "Intellectual Property Law and the Right to Repair." *Fordham Law Review*. 88(1). Excerpt pages 83 – 96.
- Rini, Regina. 2019. "Deepfakes Are Coming. We Can No Longer Believe What We See." *New York Times*. The Stone. <https://nyti.ms/2K7W3ZC>
- Metz, Cade. 2019. "Internet Companies Prepare to Fight the 'Deepfake' Future." *New York Times*. <https://nyti.ms/2OeECau>
- Claypoole, Theodore. 2020. "AI and Evidence: Let's Start to Worry." *National Law Review*.
- Reynolds, Ren. 2012. "Ethics and Practice in Virtual Worlds." *The Philosophy of Computer Games*. Eds John Sageng, Hallvard Fossheim, Tarjei Larsen.
- Nathan Grayson, 2020, "Sims Players Hold Virtual Black Lives Matter Rally." *Kotaku*. <https://kotaku.com/sims-players-hold-virtual-black-lives-matter-rally-1843998733>
- Tavani, Herman. 2003. "Ethical Reflections on the Digital Divide." *Journal of Information, Communication and Ethics in Society*. 1(2), 99 – 108.

## **COURSE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

### **Assessment Components and Grading Schemes**

No particular assignment is required to pass the course as a whole.

All assignments should be submitted on D2L dropbox or the appropriate quiz assessment. Detailed information on assignments can be found on D2L.

Students must take a screenshot of the D2L dropbox submission confirmation.

### Assignments:

- Reading Quizzes: 30% of the grade. Due: July 10, July 17, July 24, July 31, Aug 7, Aug 12. Lowest grade is dropped.
- Reading Questions: 5% (P/F). Due: July 2, July 6, July 13, July 20, July 27, Aug 4. Lowest grade is dropped.
- Very Short Paper Draft: 15% of the grade. 1000 words max. Due July 24 before 11:59pm.
- Very Short Paper: 25%. 1500 words max. Due August 10 before 11:59pm if you want comments. Due August 14 before 11:59pm if you do not want comments.
- Current Events Analysis: 25% of the grade. Due August 12 before 11:59pm.

Late quizzes, questions, or paper draft will only be accepted on a case by case basis.

Late final paper and current events analysis will be penalized 10% per day (penalty for final paper starts August 15 and penalty for current events analysis starts August 13).

### **Exams**

- There is no registrar scheduled final exam for this course.

A+ = 96 – 100	A = 91 – 95	A- = 86 – 90	B+ = 81 – 85
B = 77 - 80	B- = 72 – 76	C+ = 68 - 71	C = 64 - 67
C- = 59 - 63	D+ = 54 - 58	D = 50 - 53	F = 0 - 50

## IMPORTANT DEPARTMENTAL, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

### Academic Accommodations

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures. The student accommodation policy can be found at [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf).

Students needing an Accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf). Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a protected ground other than disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their instructor.

### Absence or Missed Course Assessments

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. Instructors may request that evidence in the form of documentation be provided. If the reason provided for the absence is acceptable, instructors may decide that any arrangements made can take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test. For information on possible forms of documentation, including statutory declarations, please see [ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html](http://ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html)

### Student Support and Resources

Full details and information about the following resources can be found at [ucalgary.ca/Registrar/registration/course-outlines](http://ucalgary.ca/Registrar/registration/course-outlines)

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success Centre
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk

### Academic Advising

If you are a student in the Faculty of Arts, you can speak to an academic advisor in the Arts Students' Centre about course planning, course selection, registration, program progression and more. Visit the Faculty of Arts website at [arts.ucalgary.ca/advising](http://arts.ucalgary.ca/advising) for contact details and information regarding common academic concerns.

For questions specific to the philosophy program, please visit [phil.ucalgary.ca](http://phil.ucalgary.ca). Further academic guidance is available by contacting David Dick (Undergraduate Program Director [dgdick@ucalgary.ca](mailto:dgdick@ucalgary.ca)) or Jeremy Fantl (Honours Advisor [jfantl@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jfantl@ucalgary.ca)). If you have questions regarding registration, please email Rebecca Lesser (Undergraduate Program Administrator [phildept@ucalgary.ca](mailto:phildept@ucalgary.ca)).

### Writing Assessment and Support

The assessment of all written assignments—and, to a lesser extent, written exam responses—is based in part on writing skills. This includes correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.), as well as general clarity and organization. Research papers must include a thorough and accurate citation of sources. Students are also encouraged to use Writing Support Services for assistance (one-on-one appointments, drop-in support and writing workshops). For more information, and other services offered by the Student Success Centre, please visit [ucalgary.ca/ssc](http://ucalgary.ca/ssc).

### **Online Resources and Electronic Devices**

Important information and communication about this course may be posted on D2L (Desire2Learn), UCalgary's online learning management system. Visit [ucalgary.service-now.com/it](http://ucalgary.service-now.com/it) for how-to information and technical assistance.

The instructor reserves the right to establish specific course policies regarding the use of electronic devices. If permitted, the use of devices must be exclusively for instructional purposes, and without disruption to the instructor or fellow students. Devices should be set to silent mode during lectures. Audio or video recording of lectures is not permitted without the written permission of the instructor. Students violating this policy are subject to discipline under the University of Calgary's Non-Academic Misconduct policy.

### **Academic Misconduct/Honesty**

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is as an extremely serious academic offense, the penalty for which will be an F on the assignment or an F in the course, and possibly a disciplinary sanction such as probation, suspension, or expulsion. For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at [ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html](http://ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html).

Intellectual honesty requires that your work include adequate referencing to sources. Plagiarism occurs when you do not acknowledge or correctly reference your sources. If you have questions about referencing, please consult your instructor.

### **University Policies**

The Instructor Intellectual Property Policy is available at [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/Intellectual%20Property%20Policy.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/Intellectual%20Property%20Policy.pdf)

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act, as outlined at [ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip](http://ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip). The instructor (or TA) must return graded assignments *directly* to the student UNLESS written permission to do otherwise has been provided.

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright ([ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf)) and requirements of the copyright act ([laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html)).