

# Minnesota State University Moorhead

## CSIS 316: Ethics in the Information Age

### A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Credits: 3

Lecture Hours/Week: 3

Lab Hours/Week: 0

OJT Hours/Week: \*.\*

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

MnTC Goals: Goal 09 - Ethical/Civic Resp

An introduction to ethical issues associated with the Information Age. A description of what the Information Age is, how it came to be, and what makes it different from the previous age. Students will study new ethical issues arising from, or given increased prominence by, the Information Age, advances in information collection, storage, retrieval, processing, and dispersion.

Ethical issues to be covered include privacy, surveillance, accuracy, free speech, intellectual property, Internet crime, identity theft, spam, information access, information dispersion, and some consequences of data mining and emerging technologies.

A significant portion of the assignments in the course require both formal and informal writing. It is critical that learners can express themselves in writing, expressing their views on ethical issues that continue to develop as new technologies emerge.

Written work will be emphasized as shown:

Weekly written discussions

Weekly polls(3 per week an article related to current technological developments will be posted, and a reflection about the ethical considerations will be required.)

Persuasive Paper (Each week, one of the required sections of the paper will be handed in as a draft.

Feedback will be provided on each draft. The revised (complete) paper is due the last week of the course.

MNTC Goal 9

### B. COURSE EFFECTIVE DATES: 02/07/2006 - Present

### C. OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS

1. Introduction to Ethical Concepts and Theories
2. Ethical Issues in the Information Age
3. Property Issues (intellectual property rights, fair use, peer-to-peer networks, open source, creative commons licensing)
4. Privacy & Surveillance
5. Internet Crime & Network Security (spam, denial of service identity theft, data encryption)
6. Computer Accuracy and Reliability (accuracy, software failures, data entry/retrieval errors)
7. Professional Ethics, Impact of Information Age on Work and Wealth
8. Networked Communications (Connecting people via the internet & information access & dispersion)

#### **D. LEARNING OUTCOMES (General)**

1. Identify and discuss issues related to privacy in both print and electronic environments.
2. Identify and discuss issues related to security in both print and electronic environments.
3. Identify and discuss issues related to intellectual property, copyright, and fair use.
4. Identify and discuss issues related to free vs. fee-based access to information.
5. Analyze and discuss the impact of networked communication and digital information as it relates to availability/access.
6. Analyze core ethical concepts (right vs. wrong, duty, virtue, vice) and apply them as they articulate their own ethical views.
7. Compare and contrast major ethical theories and apply them to articulate their own views.
8. Develop a sound methodology in resolving ethical conflicts and issues.
9. Analyze the impact of technology on individuals, organizations, and society, including ethical, legal, security, and global policy issues.
10. Identify and discuss laws and regulations related to ethics.

#### **E. Minnesota Transfer Curriculum Goal Area(s) and Competencies**

##### Goal 09 - Ethical/Civic Resp

1. Examine, articulate, and apply their own ethical views.
2. Understand and apply core concepts (e.g. politics, rights and obligations, justice, liberty) to specific issues.
3. Analyze and reflect on the ethical dimensions of legal, social, and scientific issues.
4. Recognize the diversity of political motivations and interests of others.
5. Identify ways to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

#### **F. LEARNER OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**

As noted on course syllabus

#### **G. SPECIAL INFORMATION**

None noted