A. Course Description

Credits: 4

Lab Hours/ Weeks: Corequisites: None

Lecture Hours/ Week:

MnTC Goals: Goal LS - Upper Division Liberal Studies, Goal 06 - Humanities/Fine Arts, Goal 09 - Ethical/Civic Resp

This course explores a range of moral issues raised by the introduction of new technologies for the production, distribution and use of information -- issues about privacy, surveillance and data-mining, freedom of speech, copyright, computer crime and abuse, justice in access to information, the political and social significance of the Internet, and so on. The course is intended to be helpful not only to information technology professionals, who will encounter some of these issues in connection with their work, but also to anyone who has an interest in the way information technology is changing our lives. Students will study moral theory, professional codes of ethics and a variety of case studies.


C. Outline of Major Content Areas:

See Course Description for major content areas.

D. Learning Outcomes (General)

1. Compare and contrast major moral theories and applied professional codes specific to information ethics.
2. Focus most acutely on the centrality of justification for claims made in these accounts.
3. Assess case studies, comparing various professional codes of ethics with accounts developed in the course, focusing on issues such as privacy, surveillance and data mining, freedom of speech, copyright, computer crime and abuse, justice in access to information, the political and social significance of the Internet, and so on.
4. Use the work of the course to reflect on personal beliefs and attitudes about these central issues, and to construct ways, as a citizen concerned about the ways in which information technology is changing our lives, to act on those beliefs.
5. Apply, at an advanced collegiate level, the resulting understandings to an analysis of the moral dilemmas inevitably facing all members of the information community, from information technology professionals to citizen concerned to contribute to the shaping of information policies.

E. Learning Outcomes (MN Transfer Curriculum)

Goal LS - Upper Division Liberal Studies

None

Goal 06 - Humanities/Fine Arts

1. Articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.
2. Understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
3. Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
4. Respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.

Goal 09 - Ethical/Civic Resp

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

None