COMP 4730: Computer Ethics
SYLLABUS | FALL 2021
Tuesdays 8:00 AM – 8:50 AM
ALTERNATE TUESDAYS NO LIVE CLASS MEETING FOR THE FIRST
EIGHT WEEKS (THERE WILL BE CLASS WORK)

INSTRUCTORS:
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TEXTS AND MATERIALS:
- **Required Text**: Baase, S. & Henry, T. M. (2018) *A Gift of Fire: Social, legal and Ethical Issues for Computing Technology.* **Fifth Edition**, New York, NY: Pearson. ISBN: 0-13-461527-1
  - Chapters referenced in the course schedule are from this book. https://www.pearson.com/us/higher-education/program/Baase-Gift-of-Fire-A-Social-Legal-and-Ethical-Issues-for-Computing-Technology-5th-Edition/PGM1225612.html (*students will use "All Access" for the textbook this semester-information posted in Canvas-charged to your E-bill*)
- Webcam, microphone and computer for video assignments and zoom meetings
- *ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct (https://www.acm.org/code-of-ethics)*
- *2020-2021 Auburn University Bulletin* (www.auburn.edu/bulletin)
- Planner/Calendar

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Computer Ethics is a required class in the Computer Science, Software Engineering and Wireless Engineering curricula. The course covers the application of ethical principles to computing-related topics, including privacy, property rights, autonomy, access, and diversity. A successful student will be one who is able to effectively utilize communication and teamwork as integral tools throughout the course.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students will have a solid foundational understanding of the application of ethical principles to real-life problems encountered in the professional field of computing.
- Students will expand their foundation of classical ethics through both oral and written assignments to include contemporary ethics, professional ethics, and cyber ethics with a special emphasis on computing technology.
- Students will be able to discuss the global effects of technology and how ethics plays into this.
- Students will be able to strengthen their oral and written communication skills through debates, individual or group presentations, in-class and online discussions, and written reports.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Readings as assigned
- Case Study/Ethical Scenario
- Debates
- Chapter Quizzes (Canvas - due within 24 hours of a class)
- Canvas discussions
- Final Oral Presentation (uploaded to Canvas - due by midnight Friday of the last week of classes)

- All of these except the debate are individual assignments

- All students are expected to attend all classes and participate in in-class discussions. There is a penalty for missing classes.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance is taken at the beginning of each class period. The student is expected to attend <u>all live</u> classes, except in the case of a University-approvedexcused absence (see the Student Policy eHandbook: www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies).In the case of an *expected* absence, advance notice should be provided to the instructor as soon as such absence is known. Except in the case of a University-excused absence, it is the instructor's prerogative to deem an absence excused or unexcused. In the case of a University-excused absence, any assignments due on the absent day will be due at the beginning of the next class attended. **NO UNEXCUSED ABSENCES WILL BE ALLOWED.** Each lecture absence will result in a **1 POINT** REDUCTION (from the final grade points of 100) PER ABSENCE. Each debate absence will result in a **2 POINT** REDUCTION PER ABSENCE. Each instance of tardiness (**late to class by more than 10 minutes**) will result in a **0.5 POINT** REDUCTION.

ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and to schedule a meeting with the instructor during office hours the first two weeks of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with instructor/TA office hours, an alternate time should be arranged through email. <u>If a student fails to meet with the instructor during the first two weeks of classes, no accommodation will be provided.</u> If you have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Auburn University expects students to pursue their academic work with honesty and integrity. The Academic Honesty Code is available in the Student Policy eHandbook (www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies) and contains a list of those actions that are considered cheating and the possible consequences they carry. Violations of the Academic Honesty Code will NOT be tolerated in this course.

GRADING POLICY:

Activity	Points	% of Final Grade
Book Chapter Canvas Discussions(8)	8	8%
Book Chapter Quizzes (8)	24	24%
Ethical Case/Scenario Submission (1)	14	14%
Ethical Case/Scenario Discussions (4)	24	24%
Debate	15	15%
Final Presentation	15	15%
TOTAL:	100	100%

* 2 extra points (2%) <u>may</u> be given at the end of the semester based on in-class participation or other criteria at the discretion of the instructor*

Final Grade
A   90 or more points
B   80-89 points
C   70-79 points
D   60-69 points
F   59 or fewer points

ASSIGNMENTS:

CASE STUDY/ETHICAL SCENARIO VIDEOS:

This is an individual assignment. Each student will be asked to develop and describe a case study/ethical scenario from an assigned chapter. The case may be real and based on a current or past event or controversy involving ethical content described in the chapter, a case developed from one of the exercises/problems at the end of the chapter (*you may not use a case or scenario that is already discussed in detail in the chapter*), or a fictional case constructed by the student to illustrate an ethical dilemma or issue. The case or scenario must pertain to one of the broader ethical issues covered in the assigned chapter in the textbook. The assignment will be submitted in video format and must be between 5-8 minutes long. You may use PowerPoint slides, but if you do those should appear in the video, and not submitted separately. The first part of this assignment is to develop the case study (the student should contact the instructor **in advance** to check if the case study will be appropriate and relevant to the chapter) and describe it in complete detail in the first part of the video. The second part of the assignment is to analyze the case from the perspective of computer ethics and develop an analysis. This analysis should include both sides of the presented case, such as positive and negative implications and other stakeholders who may be impacted by it, and the student's conclusion or decision -- if he/she were the arbiter, which side would he/she choose? – **and** a justification for that conclusion/decision. The video will be concluded with **you asking the class a question** (all other students will respond to this question in a Canvas Discussion).

Reading Chapter 9, especially the scenarios described in it, yourself (since it will be covered in class only toward the end of the term) will be very helpful in doing this assignment. You cannot choose a scenario described in this chapter for your submission.

Students have been randomly divided into 4 groups. Every student from a group will submit his/her video to Canvas on a Tuesday with no live lectures. The schedule where a student can find out when his/her assignment is due is posted at the end of the syllabus. Students must submit their video to the assigned Canvas assignment by **8:45 AM** on the due date (Tuesdays). No late submission will be accepted. If you miss this deadline without prior instructor approval or a university approved excuseyou will automatically receive a zero grade for this assignment.

CANVAS DISCUSSION POSTINGS:

In a week with a live lecture, students will be asked to make **one** Canvas discussion posting on the topic discussed in class on Tuesdays. This Canvas discussion posting will be on a topic discussed in class, make a posting about the book chapter covered in that class, or have an open dialogue about a case study or legal case that was discussed in class. It carries one point. The instructor will clarify each week which type of discussion is expected and post a discussion prompt on Canvas. **This discussion carries one point and is due by 11:59 pm on the following Monday**. No late submission will be accepted.

In a week with a chapter reading assignment instead of alive lecture, **two** Canvas Discussion postings – one on the assigned chapter reading for that Tuesday and

another on case studies/ethical scenarios uploaded by students on that Tuesday (both due by 11:59 pm the following Monday). These two Canvas discussions are as follows.

On a Tuesday with no live lecture, you are assigned to read a textbook chapter yourself and make a Canvas discussion posting about an issue covered in that chapter. The instructor will clarify each week which type of discussion is expected and post a discussion prompt on Canvas. **This discussion carries one point and is due by 11:59 pm on the following Monday**. No late submission will be accepted.

The second posting will be on the case study/ethical scenario videos submitted by fellow students. The TA will have the videos uploaded by 12 Noon on each Tuesday with no live lecture into a Canvas discussion.

For this second posting, which carries three points, you must (1) select and watch **three** videos posted on that Tuesday (*students who submitted a video on that Tuesday should pick three other videos, i.e., one cannot discuss one's own video!*), (2) and for each video re-state the question asked by the presenter at the end of the video and answer it, and (3) state which side (pro or con) of the ethical issue/case/scenario discussed in the video you support **and** explain why – if you choose the same side as the video presenter in his/her video, **you cannot copy the presenter's justification** – you have to come up withyour own. The discussion of each video in your Canvas posting carries 2 points. Based on the quality or your discussion, you will be awarded either 2 points or zero points for the discussion of each video in your posting (i.e., the entire posting will have a grade of 6 points each week), with no partial credit. **This Canvas discussion is due by 11:59 pm on the following Monday**. No late submission will be accepted.

Because of our mixed in-person and online class model this semester student engagement in these Canvas discussion postingsare essential and together carry **eight points every two weeks**, awarded based on the instructors' or TA's determination as to whether the student demonstrated critical thinking of the issue in his/her posting (e.g., mere parroting of an issue or copying from the textbook or someone else's opinion will not count; our decision to award full points or zero points – no partialcredit – will be final). Deadlines for all Canvas discussion postings are on the schedule at the end of this syllabus. No late submission will be accepted. If you miss a deadline without prior instructor approval or a university approved excuse you will automatically receive a zero grade.

DEBATE:
The last classes of the course will consist of debates. A set of debate topics will be provided before mid-semester and students divided into groups. Each group will select a topic or be assigned one. In-class students will conduct the debate in class, and online students will do the debate on Zoom. The debate will start with a student explaining the topic of the debate to the class. Then a subset of the group will present the pro arguments and the another subset will present the con arguments. Thereafter, the pro side will get to rebut the con side and vice versa. Following the rebuttals, the two sides will have a chance to argue and question each side's positions and rebuttals. After that, there will be a Q & A session in which the rest of the class gets to ask questions to the debaters. The debate ends with the rest of the class voting which side won. More details

about debates will be presented in class. No late submission or absenteeism will be accepted from the debate groups. If you are debating and miss the deadline for uploading debate materials or are absent on the day of the debate without prior instructor approval or a university approved excuse, you will automatically receive a zero grade. Non-debating students who are absent on a debate day without an approved excuse will lose 2 points from their final grade per absence.

QUIZZES & FINAL PRESENTATION:

Eight brief quizzes will be given in this class. All quizzes are included in the schedule at the end of this syllabus, will be announced in class, and cover assigned readings. <u>Quizzes are due within 24 hours after each class hour on Tuesdays</u>. Late submission will earn a zero grade.

In lieu of a final exam, each student will make and submit a live video oral presentation to the instructors about an assigned scenario. These presentations will need to be uploaded to Canvas. Deadline for this is Friday of the last week of classes No late submission will be accepted. <u>If you miss the</u> <u>deadline without prior instructor approval or a university approved excuse you will</u> <u>automatically receive a zero grade</u>. More details on the presentation will be provided on Canvas.

CLASS PARTICIPATION POLICIES:

Learning cannot take place if the learner is not present. Therefore, the student must come to class on time and be prepared to contribute to the classroom learning experience. It is important to recognize that one should share his/her thoughts and ideas in a thoughtful and respectful way. In order for this to be a positive learning experience for everyone, it is imperative that everyone arrives with an open mind and prepared to engage in classroom discussions and group activities.

Students will not receive a grade on class participation in this course. However, as mentioned above, students <u>may</u> have the opportunity to earn up to 2 points (2%) at theinstructors' discretion based on active involvement and course participation This means that **in order to be eligible for consideration of receiving these bonus points at the end of the term, you must have attended all live lectures and debates, and submitted all assigned graded items**.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS, MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS AND QUIZZES

<u>No late work will be accepted in this course unless prior permission has been received from the instructors or the student provides documented evidence for a university approved excuse that is accepted by the instructors</u>. Arrangements for make-up assignments and exams must be made in advance unless due to emergency, and will be subject to the policies as outlined in the Student Policy eHandbook (www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies) and this syllabus. No make-up work will be provided for unexcused absences and a zero grade will be assigned.

Semester Schedule			
Class	**Date**	**Class Topic(s)**	**Work assignments and due dates**
#1	8.17	LIVE CLASS Review Syllabus, set-up textbook access	If you start reading the textbook chapters (starting with CH 1and CH 9) now, you will do well in this class and save significant time later!
#2	8.24	NO LIVE CLASS Read What is computer ethics? Change andunexpected developments (CH 1) Use the class hour to do assigned readings and work	Read the assigned book chapter**. Case study/ethical scenario video based on CH. 1** to be uploaded **before 8:45 am today (only** for assigned students)**. Chapter Quiz** due within 24 hours after class hour. **Canvas Discussion** due by 11:59pm 8.30. TA will upload Case study/ethical scenario videos to Canvas by 12 noon today. **Case Study/Ethical Scenario Canvas Discussion of three of these videos** due by 11:59 pm 8.30.
#3	8.31	LIVE CLASS Read Privacy (CH 2)	Read the assigned book chapter**. Chapter Quiz** due within 24 hours after class hour. **Canvas Discussion** due by 11:59pm 9.6.
#4	9.7	NO LIVE CLASS Read Freedom of speech (CH 3) Use the class hour to do assigned readings and work	Read the assigned book chapter**. Case study/ethical scenario video based on CH. 3** to be uploaded **before 8:45 am today (only** for assigned students)**. Chapter Quiz** due within 24 hours after class hour. **Canvas Discussion** due by 11:59pm 9.13. TA will upload Case study/ethical scenario videos to Canvas by 12 noon today. **Case Study/Ethical Scenario Canvas Discussion of three of these videos** due by 11:59 pm 9.13.
#5	9.14	LIVE CLASS Read Intellectual property (CH 4)	Read the assigned book chapter**. Chapter Quiz** due within 24 hours after class hour. **Canvas Discussion** due by 11:59pm 9.20
#6	9.21	NO LIVE CLASS Read Hacking/crime & security (CH 5) Use the class hour to do assigned readings and work	Read the assigned book chapter**. Case study/ethical scenario video based on CH. 5** to be uploaded **before 8:45 am today (only** for assigned students)**. Chapter Quiz** due within 24 hours after class hour. **Canvas Discussion** due by 11:59pm 9.27. TA will upload Case study/ethical scenario videos to Canvas by 12 noon today. **Case Study/Ethical Scenario Canvas Discussion of three of these videos** due by 11:59 pm 9.27.
#7	9.28	LIVE CLASS Read Ethics in the Workplace (CH 6)	Read the assigned book chapter**. Chapter Quiz** due within 24 hours after class hour. **Canvas Discussion** due by 11:59pm 10.4.
#8	10.5	NO LIVE CLASS Read ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Ethics and Responsibilities(CH 9) Use the class hour to do assigned readings and work	Read the assigned book chapter**. Case study/ethical scenario video based on CH. 9** to be uploaded **before 8:45 am today (only** for assigned students)**. ACM Code Quiz AND Chapter Quiz** due within 24 hours after class hour. **Canvas Discussion** due by 11:59pm 10.11. TA will upload Case study/ethical scenario videos to Canvas by 12 noon today. **Case Study/Ethical Scenario Canvas Discussion of three of these videos** due by 11:59 pm 10.11.
#9	10.12	DEBATE #1	
#10	10.19	DEBATE #2	
#11	10.26	DEBATE #3	
#12	11.2	DEBATE #4.	
#13	11.9	DEBATE #5	
#14	11.16	DEBATE #6	
#15	11.30	DEBATE #7	Final Presentation due by **11:59 pm Friday December 3**.
	This is a tentative schedule and may change based on class needs as we progress through the semester. *The instructor reserves the right to modify this schedule at any time. If a change is made, appropriate notice will be given. Revised 16 August 2021*		