



**PHIL 314 Lec 01**  
**Information Technology Ethics**  
Spring 2023  
MW 13:00-15:45, SA247

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Instructor Name:** Alican Başdemir (he/him)

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**Office:** SS1211

**Office Hours:** E-mail me to arrange an in-person or online meeting.

**COURSE INFORMATION**

This course will provide a critical analysis of ethical issues in contemporary information technology. We will examine topics that include (i) informational privacy and the rights of personal data, (ii) intellectual property, digital piracy, and hacking, (iii) the ethics of social media and social networks, (iv) freedom of expression, hate speech, and censorship, and (v) the moral status of artificial beings.

**PREREQUISITE(S)**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Identify and describe issues, views, and problems regarding the ethics of information technology.
- Learn how to approach case studies in information technology from a philosophical lens.
- Analyze ethical issues, views, and problems in information technology.
- Build on emerging familiarity with IT ethics to write a philosophy paper by evaluating philosophical positions and developing an argumentative stance.

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

There is no required textbook. All readings including book chapters and papers will be posted on D2L.

**COURSE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

There will be multiple types of written assignments in this course. In each assignment, the assessment will look for your ability to clearly understand and critically evaluate the assigned readings. All assignments will be posted on D2L.

There is no registrar-scheduled exam in this course.

A passing grade on each assignment is not essential to pass the whole course. No particular assignment is required to pass the course.

**Assignments:**

Discussion Posts: 30% of the total grade. Due dates: May 11, May 18, May 25, June 1, and June 11.

Analysis Paper 1: 20% of the total grade. Due date: May 19

Analysis Paper 2: 30% of the total grade. Due date: June 2

Group Assignment: 20% of the total grade. Due date: June 15

**Discussion posts:**

There will be six discussion topics on D2L Discussion Board. Discussion posts take the form of a question or comment about the assigned texts. Your posts should engage with issues that are interesting, unclear, or confusing and should contribute to the class's discussion. You can either start a new thread or reply to an existing thread, perhaps answering a classmate's question or respectfully adding a different perspective. The word limit is 100-200 words.

Students are expected to submit five discussion posts in total. If a student submits six posts in total, the lowest grade will be dropped. Discussion posts will be graded on the basis of clarity and relevance. Each discussion post is worth 6% of the total grade.

**Analysis Papers:**

There will be two analysis papers in the course. In the first analysis paper, students will be asked to explain the main argument(s) and the main conclusion of the assigned reading. In the second analysis paper, students are expected to use the same analytical skills and develop a critical evaluation of the main argument in the assigned paper. Detailed guidelines about the analysis papers will be provided on D2L. Students are encouraged to contact me to discuss their ideas for these papers in advance.

**Group Assignment:**

You will work together in small groups to critically analyze an IT ethics case study in relation to concepts and problems discussed in class. Groups will be responsible for providing a digital artifact (e.g., a Jamboard slide) to present their reflections about the case study.

**Late assignment submissions**

Students can ask for a 24-hour extension for discussion posts or analysis papers twice. To use a 24-hour extension, please send me an email before the deadline. Otherwise, 10% of the total grade will be deducted for each day after the deadline passes. Other requests for extensions will only be considered on a case-by-case basis.

A+ = 96-100	B+ = 81-85	C+ = 66-70	D+ = 51-55
A = 91-95	B = 76-80	C = 61-65	D = 46-50
A- = 86-90	B- = 71-75	C- = 56-60	F = 0-45

**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/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Student-Accommodation-Policy.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/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/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Accommodation-for-Students-with-Disabilities-Procedure.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Accommodation-for-Students-with-Disabilities-Procedure.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. 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.

## **Student Support and Resources**

Full details and information about the following resources can be found at  
[ucalgary.ca/current-students/student-services](http://ucalgary.ca/current-students/student-services)

- 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 <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/current-students/undergraduate/academic-advising> for contact details and information regarding common academic concerns.

For questions specific to the philosophy program, please visit [arts.ucalgary.ca/philosophy](http://arts.ucalgary.ca/philosophy). Further academic guidance is available by contacting Jeremy Fantl (Undergraduate Program Director [jfantl@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jfantl@ucalgary.ca)) or David Dick (Honours Advisor [gfdick@ucalgary.ca](mailto:gfdick@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. For more information, and other services offered by the Student Success Centre, please visit [ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success](http://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success).

## **Required Technology**

In order to successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online, remote, and blended courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Webcam (built-in or external);
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone;
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection.

Most current laptops will have a built-in webcam, speaker and microphone.

## **Responsible Use of D2L**

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

All users of D2L are bound by the guidelines on the responsible use of D2L posted here:

<https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/commitment-to-the-responsible-use-of-d2l/>. The instructor may establish additional specific course policies for D2L, Zoom, and any other technologies used to support remote learning. Instructional materials, including audio or video recordings of lectures, may not be posted outside of the course D2L site. Students violating this policy are subject to discipline under the [University of Calgary's Non-Academic Misconduct policy](#).

### **Media Recording**

Please refer to the following statement on media recording of students: [https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP\\_FINAL.pdf](https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Media-Recording-in-Learning-Environments-OSP_FINAL.pdf)

### **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/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Intellectual-Property-Policy.pdf](http://ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Intellectual-Property-Policy.pdf)

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act, as outlined at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/access-information-privacy>. 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 (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Acceptable-Use-of-Material-Protected-by-Copyright-Policy.pdf>) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>).