

CPSC 302 Computer Ethics

Fall 2022

Instructor: Jennifer Polack Email: polack@umw.edu,
jenniferpolack@gmail.com or just from canvas
Office: Don't really have one this semester Phone: 654-1318
Office Hours: MW 9:45 – 12:00pm in Monroe 329
We can also setup a Zoom meeting if needed. Please email to set a time.

Catalog Description

Prerequisite: CPSC 110 or 220. An examination of issues and events related to ethics, professional conduct and social responsibility as they apply to the field of Computer Science. Includes study of ethical responsibilities and behaviors appropriate for computer scientists.

Required Materials

- All required course materials are provided via Canvas or available online through Simpson library.
- All handouts and assignments are available electronically on Canvas. The best way to find current handouts & assignments is through the “Modules” tab. There is one “Module” for each week of class. Major projects have an additional “Module” to group all of the related assignments. The project assignments are also linked in the regular weekly module to facilitate due date tracking.
- If you like having a paper copy of materials, please print them before class. If you like paper copies, I recommend having a 1-inch binder or 3 prong folder to keep the handouts organized.
- If you like electronic copies of materials, laptops are allowed during class. Be sure to use your device for notetaking and not distractions. I recommend having an electronic folder for all of the course materials.

Course Goals

In this course we will:

- Learn the foundational principles of ethical frameworks including Kantianism, Utilitarianism, Social Contract Theory, and Virtue Ethics
- Reason about moral dilemmas related to computing using ethical frameworks
- React to case studies related to technology and ethics through class discussion, debate, oral presentations, and written arguments.
- Reflect on what it means to be an ethical computer science professional.
- Enhance skills needed to communicate a logical argument in support of a particular action.

Student Learning Objectives

At the end of the semester, you will be able to:

- Describe the various ethical frameworks that can be used to form the basis of solutions to moral dilemmas in computing.
- Identify and define the components of a structured plan for solving ethical problems.

- Compare and contrast examples of professional codes of ethics related to computing, discussing their commonalities, differences, and implications.
- Use an ethical framework and structured approach to analyze an ethical dilemma in case study
- Communicate a logical argument in support of a particular action for a particular ethical dilemma

Speaking Intensive Objectives

This course is speaking intensive and has the following across-the-curriculum goals:

- Students will understand and be able to explain the conventions and expectations of oral communication as practiced within the discipline of the course taken.
- Students will apply theories and strategies for crafting messages (verbal, nonverbal, and visual) for particular audiences and purposes.
- Students will be able to craft oral messages after a conscious process in which various options are reviewed and will be able to explain and support their choices.
- Students will be able to metacommunicate about their own communication patterns.

Writing Intensive Objectives

- Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the varying strategies to convey arguments, main ideas and support/evidence.
- Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the varying patterns of composition organization and development.
- Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the audience, the role of the writer, and rhetorical strategies.
- Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of writing conventions and correctness.

Class Attendance and Participation

Your attendance is expected at each class meeting. Attendance is particularly important in this course because in-class activities, group assignments, debates, and presentations play key roles in the learning experience. If you are not in class, it not only affects you, but affects the rest of the class because we will all miss out on your insights and opinions. There are participation points associated with many class meetings in the form of Class Participation activities (see Canvas for dates and details).

You are responsible for the content of reading assignments, lectures and handouts, as well as announcements and schedule changes made in class. If you must miss a class, check with Dr Anewalt or another student to get what you missed.

You are responsible for checking your email daily for updates or modifications to assignments, lectures, etc. Canvas will be used to send announcements. It's your responsibility to edit your profile in Canvas so that messages are sent to your preferred contact method. If class will be held online due to weather or illness, an announcement will be posted on Canvas no later than 7:30am (and will potentially be made earlier if at all possible).

Tentative Course Schedule

A detailed course schedule with due dates is available on Canvas. A high level topic overview is provided below. Please refer to Canvas for specific assignment due dates and the detailed plan for each week.

- Week 1: Intro to course, class discussions, & ethics
- Week 2: Ethical frameworks
- Week 3: Ethical decision making process/case studies
- Week 4: Networked communication
- Week 5: Professional ethics
- Week 6: Information privacy
- Week 7: Midterm & Project 1 Feedback
- Week 8: Privacy & government
- Week 9: Computer & network security
- Week 10: Reliability
- Week 11: Whistleblowing
- Week 12: Group Project Work
- Week 13: Group Project Work
- Week 14: Group Project Work
- Week 15: Group Project Work

Assignments

All assignments are posted on Canvas. I recommend using the “Syllabus” link, which provides a running list of what’s due for this course. The “Modules” link is also very helpful. There is one “Module” per week.

Electronic assignment submissions are preferred unless otherwise stated on Canvas. All of the due dates/times will be indicated on Canvas. Always check Canvas for the up-to-date schedule information.

You are always welcome to discuss course topics and assignments with others. **However you should always write up your responses on your own unless the assignment instructions explicitly state that the assignment requires a group response.**

Class Preparation

Each week you will complete an assignment with reading and/or video view in order to prepare for the topic of the week. You will also answer some questions to engage with the concepts. Class prep assignments are always due before Monday’s class.

In-class & Online Discussion

We’ll have class discussion at least once a week. Your discussion participation will be evaluated based on evidence of preparation, active listening, and verbal contributions to the discussion. You’ll receive peer feedback after every class discussion.

Approximately every other week, you’ll have the opportunity to share ideas through informal writing in discussion board posts. The posts are scored for completion and participation rather than grammar and style. You will receive feedback on both your ideas and content.

Mastery Assignments

After engaging in lecture and discussion for a week, you’ll complete an assignment that allows you to demonstrate your mastery of that material. The format of the mastery assignment will vary from week to week. Some weeks will be a short online quiz, some will be an online discussion, and some will be a sequence of short answer questions. The mastery assignments are always due on the Monday after the topic is complete.

Individual Projects

During the semester you will complete 3 individual projects focused on current events or case studies. You’ll be communicating your research and analysis back to the class as 5-minute oral presentations with time for questions and answers. You’ll also turn in a written argument for each project in the form of a 4-page paper.

You will receive feedback on both the written and oral communication of your analysis. A rubric is provided for each assignment. You will see that the requirements for all three projects are very similar. This will allow you to learn from feedback given on project 1 and incorporate it into your writing and presentation for projects 2 and 3.

Project 1 is due mid-September. Project 2 is due mid-October. And Project 3 is due in early November. Please see Canvas for exact due dates.

Group Project

In the last weeks of the semester, you will work in an assigned group on a group project. This will allow you to do a more in-depth exploration of a current ethical issue. The project will culminate in a group presentation.

Examinations

There will be a midterm exam on Weds Oct 5 and Friday, Oct 7. The exam will have an in-class component (Oct 5) and an online component (Oct 7).

The final exam is scheduled for Weds, Dec 7 from 12-2:30. If you miss 2 or fewer class meetings during the semester and are satisfied with your current course grade, you are not required to take the final exam.

Grade Determination

Final grades will be based upon the following assignments.

Class Preparation Assignments	10%
Mastery Assignments	10%
Discussion & Participation	15%
Individual Projects	30%
Group Projects	15%
Exams	20%

Course policy stipulates that in order to receive a passing grade in CPSC 302, a student must complete all speaking assignments and earn an average speaking assignment score of 60 or better and complete all writing assignments and earn an average writing assignment score of 60 or better.

Final letter grades will be determined according to the CPSC department grading scale. I reserve the right to lower these standards, but will **not** raise them.

A 93-100%	B+ 87-89%	C+ 77-79%	D+ 67-69%
A- 90-92%	B 83-86%	C 73-76%	D 60-66%
	B- 80-82%	C- 70-72%	F below 60%

Midsemester Grades

The University provides the opportunity to provide grading feedback midway through the semester. Any student who earns a 65% or below on an exam, presentation, or writing assignment will receive a midsemester unsatisfactory (U). Additionally, any student with a participation average below a 70% will receive a midsemester unsatisfactory. Any student receiving a U in this course should meet with Dr. Anewalt to develop a performance improvement plan.

The Honor Code and CPSC 302

All course assignments and exams fall under the conditions of the Honor Code. Individual assignments should be completed individually. You can discuss course assignments with others but must communicate your response without assistance. If you use information found on the web for any aspect of an assignment, you should document the source.

Details about the honor code in CPSC courses along with specific instructions on how to document code sources are found here:

http://cs.umw.edu/mediawiki/index.php/CPSC_Department_Honor_Code_Policy

If you have any questions or concerns about how the Honor Code applies to this course, please contact me at any time.

Academic Accommodations/Disability Resources

I strive to create a fully inclusive classroom. If you require accommodations to facilitate your learning, I'd love to work with you to meet these needs! Please make me aware of the accommodations recommended by the Office of Disability Resources as soon as possible (by bringing me your accommodation letter or sending it to me electronically). My office hours are a great time to privately discuss these items to ensure that we reach a common understanding of the accommodations and how they apply to this course. I will hold any information that you share with me in the strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise.

If you have not contacted the Office of Disability Resources and need accommodations, such as note taking assistance or extended time for tests, their phone number is 540-654-1266. The office will require appropriate documentation of disability.

I also recognize that at times, the class might not be accessible, despite efforts to ensure universal access. Please contact me if you find that a lecture, discussion format, or campus facility is not accessible.

If you aren't connected with the Office of Disability Resources but feel you could benefit from some accommodations, please let me know! I can't make exceptions to a course policy without ODR documentation but perhaps I can extend the accommodation to all students in the course.

Recording Policy

Classroom activities in this course may be recorded by students enrolled in the course for the personal, educational use of that student or for all students presently enrolled in the class only, and may not be further copied, distributed, published or otherwise used for any other purpose without the express written consent of the course instructor. All students are advised that classroom activities may be taped by students for this purpose. Distribution or sale of class recordings is prohibited without the written permission of the instructor and other students who are recorded. Distribution without permission is a violation of copyright law. This policy is consistent with UMW's [Policy on Recording Class and Distribution of Course Materials](#).

Title IX Statement

University of Mary Washington faculty are committed to supporting students and upholding the University's *Policy on Sexual and Gender Based Harassment and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence*. Under Title IX and this Policy, discrimination based upon sex or gender is prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex or gender-based discrimination, we encourage you to report it. ***While you may talk to me, understand that as a "Responsible Employee" of the University, I MUST report to UMW's Title IX Coordinator what you share.*** If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, please contact the below confidential resources. They can connect you with support services and help you explore your options. You may also seek assistance from UMW's Title IX Coordinator.

Please visit <http://diversity.umw.edu/title-ix/> to view UMW's *Policy on Sexual and Gender Based Harassment and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence* and to find further information on support and resources.

Resources

On-Campus

Ruth Davison, Ph.D.

Title IX Coordinator

Fairfax House

1301 College Ave, Fred, VA, 22401

540-654-5656

rdavison@umw.edu

Website: <http://diversity.umw.edu/title-ix/>

Confidential Resources

On-Campus

Talley Center for Counselling

Lee Hall 106, 540-654-1053

Student Health Center

Lee Hall 112, 540-654-1040

Off-Campus

Empowerhouse

24-hour hotline: 540-373-9373

Rappahannock Council Against Sexual Assault

24-hour hotline: 540-371-1666

Classroom Safety/COVID-19

All students are expected to adhere to the policies and expectations of the University to mitigate risk and support the health and safety of the UMW community. No specific policies related to masking or social distancing are in place at this time, but changes may occur and we all need to act collectively to protect the health of our community.

If you are experiencing any cold symptoms, please refrain from attending class. An alternate assignment is typically posted so that you will not be penalized for missing an occasional class meeting.