**Syllabus – CST 373-02**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>CST373 – Ethics and Issues in Communication, Science, and Technology. Section 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Time / Place</td>
<td>M/W 6:00 – 7:50 PM BIT – 119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Gerald Scott <a href="mailto:gscott@csumb.edu">gscott@csumb.edu</a> Office hours by appt.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Why Study Ethics?**

- Because in our diverse and connected world not everyone shares the same ideas and ideals. This course provides one way of looking at, understanding and appreciating diverse viewpoints.
- Because in your career and life you will make decisions with and ethical component or impact. This course gives you some tools to help you make those decisions.

**Course Overview**

This course intersperses an introduction to meta- and normative ethics with a case-based introduction to applied ethics in Communication, Science, and Technology.

- We use both macro-analysis of how broad groups of technology affect our lives, and a micro-analysis of how ethical issues and norms are embedded in specific technologies.
- We look at several historical cases; but we focus on emerging technology and current issues, and explore “near-future” impacts of current trends.
- We look at the impact of culture and globalization on applied ethics in CST.

In that context we return often to two questions:

- How do our individual and collective values affect the development, design and use of modern technology?
- Conversely, how does our use of technology affect our values?

In doing so we develop two important skills:

- How to make decisions that have ethical implications.
- How to communicate information regarding ethical issues and decisions to others.

**This is a writing intensive course.** If you are not comfortable and confident writing at the university level, I strongly recommend going to the writing center (2nd floor of Library) early in the semester.

**This is an interactive course.** We will collectively develop our knowledge of the subject area. Your work and contribution will directly affect the success of the class as a whole.
Learning Outcomes

By the end of this class, you should:

- Have a greater understanding of the individual, social and organizational ethical challenges users and developers of technology face.
- Have a greater understanding of how technological developments affect us and our values as individuals, organizations, and societies.
- Have defined and be able to articulate your own perspective and framework for making ethical decisions.
- Understand and be able to describe ethical perspectives and frameworks that are different than your own.
- Be able to analyze ethical decisions of others.
- Be able to apply your values to a particular case, highlighting the ethical considerations and defending your views.
- Be able to make reasoned predictions about the development of technology and the ethical considerations of those developments.

Class Format and Style

This course is probably different than many you will take at CSUMB:

- This is a “soft” class. In philosophy (and therefore ethics) there is seldom a definitive “right” answer. What we will learn here is how to think about ethics in science and technology, not what to think. Soft ≠ Easy.
- Much of the material presentation is “flipped,” meaning you will watch videos and listen to audio as “homework,” then use that material to work in class. It is critical that you complete these assignments BEFORE class. Failure to do so hurts both your performance, and the class as a whole.
- This is a dynamic class, the material will change to follow current events and topics. You are expected to follow current events, particularly as they relate to this class.
- Much of our classroom time will be spend discussing ethical issues and working on projects or papers in small groups. You must come to class prepared to work.
- A large part of this course will be conducted through the #Slack communications platform. We will use this for both topical and administrative communication. You are required to stay up-to-date with Slack AND iLearn.
- Several class sessions will be conducted remotely, or as self-paced work – participation in ALL types of instruction is required.
# Submitting Assignments

Almost all assignments will be submitted electronically through iLearn or #Slack. Written assignments should be consistently formatted in accordance with the assignment instructions, double-spaced and **submitted in PDF format**. Web assignments should be submitted as a full URL directly to the specific content for the assignment.

Assignments are due when they are due. Because the class is interactive, turning in assignments late affects the whole class. The maximum available points for an assignment will be reduced by 10% every day or portion of a day that they are late. Assignments will not be accepted more than seven days late. **No exceptions.**

# Thick Skins / Soft Hearts

This class deals with difficult and sensitive topics. It is intended to make you uncomfortable. As adults we should be able to discuss uncomfortable topics in a civil and respectful manner. We can do this by implementing my primary classroom policy of “Thick Skins and Soft Hearts.”

We have thick skins by understanding that what others say is seldom intended to hurt. Hurtful words more often come from painful thoughts, not malice intents. We don’t jump to take offense, nor look for unintentional slights.

We have soft hearts by realizing that what we say often does hurt others, we take the other’s perspective into account when we speak. We learn what offends others, understand why it does, and avoid it in the future.

By keeping this in mind we can engage in lively, fruitful discussion and debate on things that matter.
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Grading
This class uses a cumulative point grading scale based on 400 points, reflecting the 4.0 grading system of CSUMB:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>&gt; 430 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>400-430 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>370-400 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>330-370 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>300-330 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>270-300 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>230-270 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>200-230 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>170-200 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 170 points</td>
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By university policy, failure to submit at least 50 percent of the requirements will result in a grade of WU.

There will be at least 500 points available during this course, allowing you the opportunity to leverage those aspects of the class that best reflect your interests, skills and learning styles. The points available for assignments, and details for how to complete the assignments are generally available on iLearn at least two weeks before assignments are due. Group work will be graded both collectively and individually based partly on peer-evaluations.

Most assignments will reflect the same scale. (e.g., for an assignment worth five points, four points is an “A.” More than four points indicates exceptional work above the requirements of the assignment.) In this way, “extra credit” is already built into the course – no other extra credit will be offered.
Earning Points

**Attendance and Participation** – In-class discussions, remote session participation and group work make up a significant portion of this class. You are expected to attend, be prepared for, and actively participate in all class sessions. (Up to 120 points. However, poor attendance or participation will also negatively affect other assignments)

**Personal Paper** - This paper explores your personal moral perspectives, examining the influence of cultural, family and experience. (~5 pages/1500 words, up to 20 points)

**Blogs** – You will maintain a blog for the course. Posts will summarize and analyze other content (news, other blogs, podcasts, books, etc) as it relates to the class. (~16 blog posts, up to five points each, up to 80 points total)

**Online Discussion** – You will engage in an online discussion with your peers, based on your blog posts, links to other material, and topics that the instructor provides. Responses should be thoughtful, critical, civil, and timely. Only responses submitted within one week of the original posting will be counted. (~ 45 responses, up to 2 points each, up to 90 points total)

**Bi-Weekly Assignments** – Assignments may include assignments related to your research and web project, creation professional documents (memos, briefings, etc) and classroom presentations. (up to 10 assignments, up to 10 points each, up to 100 points total)

**Issue Paper** – You will write a well-researched paper related to the course and agreed to by yourself and your instructor. Most often this will relate to your group presentation, blog, and website. (~10 pages/3000 words, up to 50 points)

**Final Project** – Individually or in groups you will develop a projects based on your research and presentations (Details TBD). (Up to 30 points)

**Peer Reviews/Evaluations** – You will review writing assignments of your peers, earning points for the quality of your feedback. You will also evaluate your peers’ contribution to group work and earn points based on their evaluations. (Up to 50 points)
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Classroom Expectations

• I expect to be in class on time and ready to work. I expect you to be prepared for class.
• I expect you to monitor #Slack and the iLearn site, I will not always provide verbal instructions or reminders.
• I expect you to bring a computer and other required material to class, and to use them for classroom requirements and not for other things. During presentations by fellow students I will generally ask that you put your computers away.
• I expect you to be focused on the class, being distracted (particularly by your computer) will have a negative impact on your participation (and therefore your grade.)
• I expect you to complete assignments, turn them in on time, and keep track of your grades (I will NOT keep an up-to-date gradebook on iLearn).
• I expect you to pay attention to your peers, to learn from them and to teach them.
• I expect you to have fun.

• You can expect that I will also be on time and prepared.
• You can expect that I will listen to you and respond to your concerns.
• You can expect some delay in communication with me. This is a secondary appointment for me. I will attempt to respond to communication before the next class meeting.
• You can expect that I will treat you as an adult with a life outside of this class.
• You can expect that I won’t waste your classroom time. If we have covered what we need to for the day, we’re done.

This course is structured for adults. There is enough flexibility in the point structure that scheduled absences, minor illnesses, or other unforeseen circumstances do not require “excuses” or accommodations. Therefore I will not grant them except in very extreme cases. **There are no “excused” absences, assignment extensions, or make-up work.**

Excuses, Extensions and Make-up work

Academic Integrity

The quality of your education is inextricably linked to the standards of academic integrity that are enforced. You are required to understand and follow CSUMB’s policy, which can be found at: [https://csumb.edu/policy/academic-integrity-policy](https://csumb.edu/policy/academic-integrity-policy)
## Syllabus – CST 373-02

### Required Resources

**Computer.** It is strongly recommended that you bring a computer to each classroom session. Many of the classroom activities are web-based or require online resources. If you do not have access to a computer that you can bring to class, please let the instructor know.

### Books

- **Introduction to Ethical Studies, An Open Source Reader,** by L. Archie, and J. Archie, 2003. Available online at:  
  - [http://philosophy.lander.edu/ethics/ethicsbook.pdf](http://philosophy.lander.edu/ethics/ethicsbook.pdf)

- **Ethics, an Online Textbook** by S. Sullivan and P. Pecorino, 2016. Available online at:  
  - [http://www2.sunysuffolk.edu/pecorip/SCCCWEB/ETEXTS/ETHICS/default.htm](http://www2.sunysuffolk.edu/pecorip/SCCCWEB/ETEXTS/ETHICS/default.htm)

- **Computers, Information Technology, the Internet, Ethics, Society and Human Values,** by P. Pecorino, 2006. Available online at:  
  - [http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/SocialSciences/ppecorino/CISESHV_TEXT/CONTENTS.html](http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/SocialSciences/ppecorino/CISESHV_TEXT/CONTENTS.html)

- **Computer Ethics** by R. Plotkin, 2012, Facts on File. Available from CSUMB online at:  

### Other

**iLearn Site.** iLearn is the official repository for course material and grading. If you don’t already have access to this course in iLearn see the instructor.

**#Slack.** We will use Slack for most of the coordination and communication for this class. You should have received an invitation to our Slack channel before the first day of class. If you have not, see the instructor.

**The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy** is a great resource for ethics topics.

**Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL)**
## Resources for Success

I, along with the department and CSUMB as a whole want every student to succeed. The resources listed below are available to help you do that. Please make use of them.

### Student Disability Resources

If you face a barrier to learning because of a disability please contact Student Disability Resources as soon as possible so that we can validate and provide necessary accommodations.

If you think a disability may impact your performance in this class but are unsure what accommodations might help, please see the instructor as soon as possible. Contact SDR at:

Student_Disability_Resources@csumb.edu  
Health & Wellness Services Building (Building 80, Campus Health Center)  
Phone: 831-582-3672 voice, or 582-4024 fax/TTY  
[http://sdr.csumb.edu](http://sdr.csumb.edu)

### Office of Inclusive Excellence

The mission of the OIE is to advance excellence at CSUMB through inclusion and equality. They promote the retention, positive college experience and graduation of students by identifying and institutionalizing effective educational practices for all students. Contact OIE at:

Tanimura & Antle Family Memorial (TAFM) Library  
Phone 831-582-3366  
[http://csumb.edu/diversity](http://csumb.edu/diversity)

### Veteran Student Services

If you are a military veteran, make sure you are getting the benefits you earned. Contact VSS at:

Student Services Suite H110-111  
831-582-5720  |  veteran_services@csumb.edu

### Cooperative Learning Center

The CLC provides free tutoring to all students in most subjects. Contact CLC at:

TAFM Library Rm 2125  
[http://csumb.edu/clc](http://csumb.edu/clc)

### Other Resources

Other resources, including special programs for ESL, migrant, foster and first generation students (and lots more) can be found at [http://csumb.edu/academics/academic-support-services](http://csumb.edu/academics/academic-support-services)