UNT: CSE: Spring/2026

CSCE 4010 – Social Issues in Computing

Classes:

4010-001 (**1153**), MoWe 2:30PM - 3:50PM, **NTDP E264**

Instructor:
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(**Important statement**: *We reserve the right to modify course policies, the course outline, assignment or project point values, and due dates*.)

Course Description, Structure, and Objectives

Course Description

The effect of computer science and engineering on the home and the workplace, with emphasis on the role of the computer professional in modern society.

Course Prerequisites

CSCE 3600; Outside Department: Junior standing and advised from the Engineering Advising.

Course Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an awareness of the social responsibilities in all areas of computing.
2. Explain the need for professional ethics.
3. Generate an effective written communication incorporating topics related to social and ethical issues in computing.
4. Demonstrate teamwork skills on a project for a topic related to a social or ethical issue in computing.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of contemporary issues in computing.

Required Textbook

Baase, Sara and Henry, Timothy. *The Gift of Fire: Social, Legal and Ethic l Issues of Computing Technology* (5th Ed). Pearson, 2021. ISBN-13: 9780137501946 (e-text) / 978-0134615271 (print)
https://www.pearson.com/en-us/subject-catalog/p/gift-of-fire-a-social-legal-and-ethical-issues-for-computing-technology/P200000003177/9780137501946

Course Assessment

Class Participation & Surveys:
Student participation in this class can be counted from the class attendance, the discussion participation in the class, and/or the volume of student work on Canvas. In this class there are 2 surveys for ABET accreditation and SPOT class evaluation. Students are expected and encouraged to complete these surveys.

Discussions:
Discussions are methods for the online forum between students, instructor and TAs/IAs. Topics will be assigned for students led discussions that will include short literature related to and in support of the assigned topic in the social and ethical issues of computing. Students are expected to post a response to the assigned discussion topic as well as respond to other students' postings. Rubrics will be provided for the evaluation of the discussions.

Quizzes:
Generally, quizzes will be given based on the readings. Quizzes will test students' knowledge on the most important aspects of the readings only.

Written Assignments (Essays):
Written Assignments (Essays) are designed to engage students in their learning, so students can begin to apply the reading principles in practice and tailor them to given cases of problems and issues in computing technology. Assignments are to be turned in individually, although students are encouraged to work together extensively. Rubrics will be provided for the evaluation of the assignments.

Term-Paper or Poster-Presentation Project:
In this class, students have a choice to select from term-paper or poster-presentation projects. This project is required to help students to develop teamwork skills and to investigate current development in technology that will have impact on our lives. Students are divided into groups, each of 2 to 4 students, and each group will report on its research with a paper or a poster, and then do paper presentation at online discussion forum or poster presentation at NEXUS conference.

Grading

Grades are determined by a simple points system. The expected distribution of points is given below, with the exact scale determined by percent given for the discussions, assignments, quizzes, and exams.

Assessment Category	Points	Percent
Class Participation (*Participation score - 5 points)*	**5**	**5%**
Discussions *(9 discussions – 10 points each)*	**90**	**20%**
Quizzes *(9 quizzes – 16 points each)*	**144**	**25%**
Written Assignments *(3 assignments – 12 points each)*	**36**	**20%**
Term paper or Poster *(paper/poster – 35 points, presentation – 15 points)*	**50**	**30%**
Total	**325**	**100%**

Grading Scale

Grading scale in this class will be as follows:

A = 90%-100%, **B** = 80%-89.9%, **C** = 70%-79.9%, **D** = 60%-69.9%, & **F** = <59.9%

Late Submission Policy:

Late work will not be accepted in this course. All work turned in after the deadline may lose a percentage of their graded points according to the following schedule:

On time: **0%,** 1-3 days: **10%,** 4-7 days: **20%,** 8-14 days: **40%,** > 14 days: **100%**

Course Requirements/Schedule

Module/Weeks	Readings/Resources (Refer to other resources on Canvas)	Activities/Evaluation (Refer to due dates on Canvas)
Module 1: Technology Changes and Ethics Jan 12-16	**Reading & Resources:** • Chapter 1: Wrapping the Gift • Other related resources	**Activity:** • Module 1 Discussion (***10 pts***) **Evaluation:** • Module 1 Quiz (***20 pts***)
Module 2: Privacy & Technology Impacts Jan 19–30	**Readings and Resources:** • Chapter 2: Privacy • Other related resource Jan 19: ***MLK Holiday – No classes***	**Activity:** • Module 2 Discussion (***10 pts***) **Evaluation:** • Module 2 Quiz (***20 pts***) • Module 2 Written Assignment (***25 pts***) • **Term-Paper or Poster: Groups and topics are due** (***5 pts***)
Module 3: Freedom of Speech Feb 02-13	**Readings and Resources:** • Chapter 3: Freedom of Speech • Other related resources	**Activity:** • Module 3 Discussion (***10 pts***) **Evaluation:** • Module 3 Quiz (***20 pts***)
Module 4: Intellectual Property Feb 16-27	**Readings and Resources:** • Chapter 3: Intellectual Property • Other related resources	**Activity:** • Module 4 Discussion (***10 pts***) **Evaluation:** • Module 4 Quiz (***20 pts***)
Module 5: Computer Crime and Security Mar 02-20	**Readings and Resources:** • Chapter 5: Crime and Security • Other related resources Mar 09-13**: *Spring Break – No classes***	**Activity:** • Module 5 Discussion (***10 pts***) **Evaluation:** • Module 5 Quiz (***20 pts***) • Module 5 Written Assignment (***25 pts***)

Module 6: **Work & Technology Impacts** Mar 23–27	**Readings and Resources:** • Chapter 6: Work • Other related resources	**Activity:** • Module 6 Discussion (***10 pts***) **Evaluation:** • Module 6 Quiz (***20 pts***) • **Poster: Final design is due** (***30 pts***)
April 2nd	**Poster Presentation at NEXUS Conference** **(**Print and then present your poster at the NEXUS Conference on April 2nd at UNT and respond to all questions you received at the presentation (***15 pts***))	
Module 7: **Evaluating and Controlling Technology** Mar 30-Apr 3	**Readings and Resources:** • Chapter 7: Evaluating and Controlling Technology • Other related resources	**Activity:** • Module 7 Discussion (***10 pts***) **Evaluation:** • Module 7 Quiz (***20 pts***)
Module 8: **Errors, Failures, and Risks** Apr 06-17	**Readings and Resources:** • Chapter 8: Errors, Failures, and Risks • Other related resources	**Activity:** • Module 8 Discussion (***10 pts***) **Evaluation:** • Module 8 Quiz (***20 pts***) • Module 8 Written Assignment (***25 pts***)
Module 9: **Professional Ethics and Responsibilities** Apr 20–24	**Readings and Resources:** • Chapter 9: Professional Ethics and Responsibilities • Other related resources	**Activity:** • Module 9 Discussion (***10 pts***) **Evaluation:** • Module 9 Quiz (***20 pts***) • **Term Paper: Final report is due** (***30 pts***)
April 27th	**Term-Paper Presentation at Online Discussion Forum** **(**Posting your presentation videos, sending questions to other groups, and replying to questions from another groups/instructors (***15 pts***))	

Communication

Students are expected to communicate with the instructor/TAs through the office hours, using only the UNT emails of students and instructor/TAs, and/or the communication facilities provided in Canvas. Connect with me through email and/or by attending office hours. During busy times, my inbox becomes rather full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response within two business days, please send a follow up email. A gentle nudge is always appreciated.

Laboratory Safety Procedures and Guidelines policy

Students can access this policy at: Laboratory Safety Procedures and Guidelines policy (PDF) (https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.049_Standard%20Syllabus%20Policy%20Statements_supplement.pdf).

Attendance and Participation

Research has shown that students who attend class are more likely to be successful. You should attend every class unless you have a university excused absence such as active military service, a religious holy day, or an official university function as stated in the Student Attendance and Authorized Absences Policy (PDF) (https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.039_StudAttnandAuthAbsence.Pub2_.19.pdf). If you cannot attend a class due to an emergency, please let me know. Your safety and well-being are important to me.

Digital Requirements

This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content.
Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at Learn Anywhere (https://online.unt.edu/learn).

How to Succeed in this Course

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website (http://www.unt.edu/oda). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Supporting Your Success and Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

Every student in this class should have the right to learn and engage within an environment of respect and courtesy from others. We will discuss our classroom's habits of engagement and I also encourage you to review UNT's student code of conduct so that we can all start with the same baseline civility understanding (Code of Student Conduct) (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct)

Academic integrity, student misconduct, and professionalism policies for CSE

These are the policies of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) at University of North Texas related to academic integrity, student misconduct, and professionalism.

All department policies on Academic Integrity and Student Conduct apply for this course – these are available at the following link:

https://engineering.unt.edu/cse/students/resources/academic-integrity.html

You can also download one copy form the course site on Canvas.

Artificial Intelligence in Academic Integrity

Students need to be aware the "unauthorized" use of any person or technology that assists in a student's assignment, project, or paper is considered cheating under the UNT Student Academic Integrity Policy (UNT Policy 6.003). Unless a professor or instructor gives explicit "authorization," AI cannot be used to assist in the completion of assignments, projects, or papers. Doing so will result in a "cheating" violation. Again, if uncertain contact the instructor prior to using AI tools.

Other University Polices

Students will be aware about Eagle Alert if there is a campus closing that will impact a class and the calendar is subject to change, refer to the Emergency Notifications and Procedures Policy (PDF) and the Campus Closures Policy (https://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-006).

Students can access these policies in Navigate (Navigate.unt.edu), in Canvas under the Help menu, in EIS, and on the Student Support Services & Policies page.