

SOCS 3361 (CV) – Social Issues and Ethics for CS and EE

Dr. Douglas C. Dow

Autumn 2009: TR 2:30-3:45PM CV Seminar Room - GC 1.208B

Office: GC 2.206 Phone: 972-883-4934

Office Hours: TR 12:30-2:00PM and by appointment

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Course Description

This honors seminar will offer a survey of ethical controversies concerning science, technology and public policy. The study of politics and values in science, engineering, and business involves an analysis of three interlocking areas: technology, politics and law, and ethics. We shall begin with a discussion of science and engineering as social institutions, and their unique place within ethical, political, and policy disagreements. Second, we shall have an introduction to the two major systems of normative evaluation (utilitarianism and deontology), as well as a discussion about the problems of debating the normative dimensions of public policy, given the fact of ethical pluralism. We shall then proceed to an examination of selected topics that concerns the interaction between science and technology, ethics, and public policy. Especially relevant will be the concern for how current ethical practices are influenced and challenged by political institutions and technological developments.

The intent of this seminar will not be to generate ‘correct’ answers to the conflicts we shall study. Instead, our goals will be to 1) raise awareness of the larger social and political impact of scientific and technological developments; 2) develop a working vocabulary of evaluative terms and concepts derived from political, economic, and ethical theory; and 3) apply this evaluative vocabulary in formulating and critiquing arguments and decisions regarding the ethical problems that are raised. While there are no right or wrong answers, we will come to discern better and worse arguments.

Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation: An important requirement for this honors seminar will be active participation in class discussion, debate and analysis. Regular attendance is required, and the professor will take attendance for each class. Please bring to class each day the texts under discussion – we will be referring to particular passages regularly. Each student is expected to have completed the day’s readings before class. Be prepared to talk. Everyone will be expected to demonstrate civility and a respect for the thoughts, opinions and beliefs of others. Notes or summaries will not be provided for missed classes. All cellular phones, pagers, and other electronic noise-makers should be turned off during class. Because of the frequency by which many students using laptops to take notes also succumb to the temptations to surf the Web, check email, or otherwise disengage themselves from class discussions, laptops will not be permitted during class.

Exams: There will be three exams, each closed book, closed note, in-class essay exams. They will cover both the assigned readings and lecture/discussion material. The first will be worth 15% of the final grade, and the other two will be each worth 20% of the final grade.

Issues Essay: Each student will be expected to write one issues essay, of between 12-15 pages. This essay will be worth 35% of the final grade, and will be due on Tuesday, November 17, 2009. Students are asked to submit a hard copy of the essay to the professor, and an electronic copy to turnitin.com. For more information on the issues essay, please see below.

Quizzes: Each class may begin with a brief quiz covering the readings that are required for that day. These quizzes will test recollection of the main ideas of the reading material and aid as a starter for class discussion. The accumulation of quizzes, combined with attendance and the quality of student participation will account for 10% of the final grade.

Roundtable Sessions: We will hold two formal student-led roundtable discussions, each lasting one full week (two class periods) while discussing the Michaels and the Lewotin texts.

Make-ups: Make-up exams will be given only in documented emergency situations and at the discretion of the professor.

Syllabus Changes: The professor reserves the right to amend this syllabus during the semester. Any changes will be announced in class, and students will be responsible for getting and following the new information.

Grading Scale: All exams will be graded on a 100-point scale. The following conversion chart will be used to translate numbers into letter grades:

A: 94-100	B-: 80-83	D+: 67-69
A-: 90-93	C+: 77-79	D: 64-66
B+: 87-89	C: 74-76	D-: 60-63
B: 84-86	C-: 70-73	F: below 60

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and all student essays are expected to be the product of a student's own work. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Any acts of plagiarism (representing the work of another as one's own, which includes cutting and pasting from the Internet) invite possible disciplinary action.

If students have any questions on what plagiarism means, they may consult a tutorial at <http://uwp.aas.duke.edu/wstudio/resources/ppt/AvoidingPlagiarism.pdf>. To find out more about UTD policies regarding scholarly dishonesty and its consequences, please refer to the UTD Judicial Affairs website: <http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/>. Students with any questions or concerns are also encouraged to contact the professor.

Books for Purchase

Books for this class can be purchased at the University Book Store (on campus) or at Off Campus Books (561 W. Campbell Rd. #201, Richardson; ph: 972-907-8398). They may also be purchased at any number of online websites, where used copies may be found. All other readings will be made available by email, in class handout, or will be available online.

- Richard C. Lewontin. *Biology as Ideology: The Doctrine of DNA* (Harper, 1993).
- David Michaels. *Doubt is Their Product: How Industry's Assault on Science Threatens Your Health* (Oxford University Press, 2008)

Issues Essay

Each student will be expected to write one "issues essay", of between 12-15 pages. This assignment will consist of identifying and assessing a range of opinions on one discrete controversy within professional ethics or public policy (which can encompass business, engineering, computer science, bioethics, health care, and the law). Your goal will be to identify a concrete ethical problem that involves a current topic of public concern, explain why a dilemma or controversy exists, and explore two or more possible positions on this controversy, assessing their principles, their strengths and weaknesses.

This essay will be worth 35% of the final grade. Students will submit to the professor a paragraph description of their topic choice by Tuesday, September 8. This paragraph will both identify a concrete issue of contemporary significance, as well as explain why the issue involves an ethical dilemma. A bibliography of sources should be turned in by Tuesday October 6. You must use at least five academic sources (i.e., scholarly books or peer reviewed journal articles). You are encouraged to use more sources, and to supplement with non-academic sources, such as from popular journals or newspaper accounts. Naturally, all sources should be reasonable and thoughtful accounts of the issue, and you should avoid overly narrow and/or thoughtless positions. You should use footnotes for citations, and attach a bibliography to the end of your paper.

The final essay will be due at the beginning of class, Tuesday, November 17. Students are asked to submit a hard copy of the essay to the professor and an electronic copy to **turnitin.com**.

Possible Topics for the Issues Essay

Abortion	Health and safety regulations
Advance directives	IP conflicts
AIDS treatment in developing nations	Land use controversies
Animal research	Nuclear testing
Birth control	Organ transplants and fair distribution
Coercive treatment in psychiatry	Overuse/damage of natural resources
Consumer privacy	Physician assisted suicide
Corporate responsibility	Plagiarism
Disaster preparation	Privacy and technology
Electronic surveillance	Production and disposal of hazardous/toxic substances
Employees rights	Sexual harassment at the workplace
Ethics in accounting	Stem cell research
Euthanasia	Teaching of evolution in public schools
Fetal research	Wildlife conservation
Gene research	War on terrorism and privacy
Genetically modified food	Whistle blowing
Greenhouse effect	

Turnitin.com: We will be using **turnitin.com** to guard against plagiarism in the issues essays. Each student must submit her or his issue essay to **turnitin.com**. I have established an account for this class. For those who have never used this website before, on the homepage there is a brief tutorial on setting up your class account. You will need both your class ID # and class enrollment password. Be careful: the password is case-sensitive:

Class ID #: 2783254

Class Enrollment Password: engineering

Schedule of Readings

August 20: Introduction

Syllabus

August 25: Science and Engineering as a Culture and an Institution

Robert K. Merton. "The Normative Structure of Science" from *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations* (University of Chicago Press, 1973), pp. 267-278.

Piotr Sztompka. "Trust in Science." *Journal of Classical Sociology* V. 7, No. 2 (2007) pp. 211-220.

Kevin Kelly. "The Third Culture" *Science* (February 13, 1998), pp. 992 – 993.

August 27: The Problems of Ethical Disagreement and Science in a Democracy

Steven Lukes. "Making Sense of Moral Conflict" in *Liberalism and the Moral Life* (Harvard University Press, 1989), pp. 127-142.

James W. Fossett, et.al. "Federalism and Bioethics: States and Moral Pluralism" from *Hastings Center Report* (Nov.-Dec. 2007), pp. 24-35.

Daniel Smith. "Political Science." *New York Times*. September 4, 2005.

Yuval Levin. "Two Visions of the Future" from *Imagining the Future: Science and American Democracy* (New Atlantis Books, 2008), pp. 54-81.

Sept. 1, 3, 8: The Languages of Utilitarianism

Tim Chappell and Roger Crisp. "Utilitarianism" from *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

Jeremy Bentham. *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789)

John Tierney. "Life: The Cost-Benefit Analysis." *The New York Times*. May 18, 2003.

Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson. "The Promise of Utilitarianism" in *Democracy and Disagreement* (Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 165-198.

Alan Coddington. "Utilitarianism Today" *Political Theory* (May 1976), pp. 213-226.

September 10, 15, 17: Deontological Ethics and Rights

Onora O'Neill. "Kantian Ethics" from *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

Thomas E. Hill, Jr. "The Importance of Autonomy" in *Autonomy and Self-Respect* (Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 43-51.

Susan M. Shell. "Kant's Concept of Human Dignity as a Resource for Bioethics" in *Human Dignity and Bioethics: Essays Commissioned by the President's Council on Bioethics* (2008)

Steven Pinker. "The Stupidity of Dignity" *The New Republic*. May 28, 2008

September 22: First Exam

September 24, 29, October 1: Bioethics and Stem Cell Research

National Bioethics Advisory Commission. *Ethical Issues in Human Stem Cell Research: Executive Summary* (September 1999)

George W. Bush. Statement on Federal Stem Cell Research Policy (August 9, 2001).

Barak Obama. Statement on Federal Stem Cell Research Policy (March 9, 2009)

John A. Robertson. "Ethics and Policy in Embryonic Stem Cell Research" *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 9.2 (1999) 109-136.

Glenn McGee and Arthur Caplan. "The Ethics and Politics of Small Sacrifices in Stem Cell Research." *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* 9.2 (1999) 151-158

Andrew W. Siegel. "Locating Convergence: Ethics, Public Policy, and Human Stem Cell Research." Commissioned paper for the National Bioethics Advisory Commission. (September 1999)

Peter Berkowitz. "The Meaning of Federal Funding" Commissioned paper for the President's Council on Bioethics report *Monitoring Stem Cell Research*. (January 2004) pp. 225-236.

Ken Adelman. "Biotechnology and Stem Cell Research: An Interview with Dr. Leon Kass" *The Washingtonian* (November 1, 2005)

Liza Mundy. "Souls On Ice: America's Embryo Glut and the Wasted Promise of Stem Cell Research." *Mother Jones*. July/August 2006.

William Saletan. "The Frozen Ones" *Slate*. December 12, 2008

October 6, 8: Interest Group Products and Scientific Credibility

Michaels. *Doubt is our Product*

October 13, 15: Technology and Democracy

Vig, Norman J. "Technology, Philosophy, and the State: An Overview" in *Technology and Politics* (eds.) Michael E. Kraft and Norman J. Vig (Duke University Press, 1988)

Winner, Langdon. "Do Artifacts Have Politics?" in *The Whale and the Reactor: A Search for Limits in an Age of High Technology* (University of Chicago Press, 1986)

David Nye. "Should 'the Market' Select Technologies?" in *Technology Matters: Questions to Live With* (MIT Press, 2006), pp. 135-159.

Stephen P. Turner. "The Last Inequality" in *Liberal Democracy 3.0* (Sage Publications, 2003), pp. 18-45.

October 20, 22, 27: The Environment and the Form of Tragedy

Garrett Hardin. "The Tragedy of the Commons" *Science* 162 (1968) pp. 1243-1248.

Garrett Hardin. Extensions of 'The Tragedy of the Commons'" *Science* 280 (1998) pp. 682-683.

Robert T. Watkins. "Climate Change: The Political Situation" *Science* 302 (2003) pp. 1925-1926.

Thomas Pfeiffer and Martin A. Nowak "Climate Change: All in the Game" *Nature* 441 (June 2006) pp. 583-584.

Bill McKibben. "Warning on Warming" *New York Review of Books* 54:4 (March 15, 2007)

Jim Giles. "Scientific Uncertainty: When Doubt is a Sure Thing" *Nature* 418 (August 2002) pp. 476-478.

Tim Haywood – "Human Rights vs. Emissions Rights: Climate Justice and the Equitable Distribution of Ecological Space" *Ethics and International Affairs* (Winter 2007) Vol. 21, Issue 4, pp. 431-450

Carter F. Bales and Richard D. Duke. "Containing Climate Change" *Foreign Affairs* (September-October 2008)

"On the Climate Change Beat, Doubt Gives Way to Certainty." William K. Stevens. *New York Times*. February 7, 2007.

Graeme Wood. "Re-engineering the Earth" *The Atlantic* (July-August 2009)

"Making Carbon Markets Work." Danny Cullenward and David G. Victor. – *Scientific American*. September 24, 2007.

October 29: Second Exam

November 3, 5: Privacy and Security during the "War on Terror"

Louis Fisher. "NSA Surveillance" from *The Constitution and 9/11* (University Press of Kansas, 2008)

Lisa Nelson. "Privacy and Technology: Reconsidering a Crucial Public Policy Debate in the Post-September 11 Era" *Public Administration Review* (May/June 2004) pp. 259-269.

Mary DeRosa. "Data Mining and Data Analysis for Counterterrorism" (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2004)

Senator Jon Kyl. "Why you Should Like the PATRIOT Act" and Senator Russ Feingold "Why I Oppose the PATRIOT Act". from Clayton Northouse (editor) *Protecting What Matters: Technology, Security, and Liberty since 9/11* (Brookings Institution Press, 2006)

Lisa Austin. "Privacy and the Question of Technology" *Law and Philosophy* 22:2 (March 2003), pp. 119-166. [selections]

November 10, 12: Roundtable: Social and Biological Determinism

Richard C. Lewontin. *Biology as Ideology*.

November 17, 19, 24: Death and Medical Care

Daniel Bergner. "Death in the Family" *New York Times*. December 2, 2007.

American Medical Association's Code of Medical Ethics on PAS

Washington v Glucksberg 521 U.S. 702 (1997) (edited)

Douglas C. Dow. "Washington v Glucksberg". *Encyclopedia of the United States Constitution*

John Rawls, et.al. "Assisted Suicide: The Philosopher's Brief". *New York Review of Books* V.44, No. 5 (March 27, 1997)

New York State Task Force on Life and the Law. *When Death is Sought: Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia in the Medical Context*. Supplement to the Report (April 1997)

Kathryn L. Tucker. "In the Laboratory of the States: the Progress of *Glucksberg's* Invitation to States to Address End-Of-Life Choice" *University of Michigan Law Review* (June 2008)

Judith Jarvis Thomson. "Physician-Assisted Suicide: Two Moral Arguments" *Ethics*, Vol. 109, No. 3 (Apr., 1999), pp. 497-518.

Ezekiel J. Emanuel. "What is the Great Benefit of Legalizing Euthanasia of Physician-Assisted Suicide?" *Ethics*, Vol. 109, No. 3 (Apr., 1999), pp. 629-642.

December 1: Review

December 3: Third Exam

University of Texas at Dallas Academic Policies

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and

evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22
PO Box 830688
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.