

Seminar in Computer Ethics

CS 200
Fall 2009

- Instructor:** Thomas P. Kelliher
Hoffberger 140
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Office hours: MWThF 11:00am–12:00pm. Other times by appointment.
- Class:** Hoffberger 135, Tu 12:00–12:50pm
<http://phoenix.goucher.edu/~kelliher/f2009/cs200/>
- Objective:** Computing is a field which is changing much more rapidly than society would seem to be able to handle. As a result, in many situations there are no legal guidelines. As persons or computer scientists, what are our obligations in such situations? Is there a set of ethical standards which we can apply? What laws do exist to guide our actions? Is computing a profession? As “professionals,” what is our obligation to society? What about the obligations of industry, the government, academe, and the legal establishment?
Our objective is to explore these and other questions this semester.
- Textbook:** M. J. Quinn, “Ethics for the Information Age,” 3rd ed., Addison-Wesley, 2009. Required.
- Grading:** **Grade Distribution**
A = [92%–100%], A- = [90%–92%), B+ = [88%–90%), B = [82%–88%), B- = [80%–82%), etc. Grades are “one point rounded.”
Course Point Distribution
There are approximately 420 total points for the course:
1. Attendance and participation. 100 points.
 2. Written assignments. There will be about eight short, written assignments. Each will be worth 15 points, for a total of 120 points. Except for emergencies, late assignments will not be accepted.
 3. Paper and Presentation. Five to 10 page research paper and a 10 to 15 minute class presentation. Each is worth 100 points, for a total of 200 points.
- Course Handouts:** Course handouts may be made available once in class. They may always be obtained from the class home page.

Attendance: Attendance of classes, and participation in classes, is expected and is a part of your grade. You will be penalized 10 points from your Attendance and Participation grade for each unsatisfactorily-explained absence. It is your responsibility to catch up on missed class work.

Electronic Communication:

From time-to-time, I will need to send e-mail messages to the class. These messages will be addressed to your official Goucher e-mail addresses. You are responsible for checking your e-mail on a timely basis.

Distractions: Cell phones must be turned off or set to “silent” during class. If you must enter late, do so as unobtrusively as possible. Likewise if you must leave early. Please use mental telepathy if you must hold a personal conference during class. I have ways of making you not talk!

Integrity: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. We are all bound by the Academic Honor Code.