Course Syllabus

IDH 3034: Could We, Should We?

Exploring the ethical questions of emerging technologies in society

Florida International University | Honors College

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Fall 2020 | Tuesdays 12:30 pm - 1:45 pm | Location: GL 132

Course Overview

In our race to innovate, the implications of new technologies are often ill-conceived and can have dire ramifications. This course will use the British television science-fiction anthology Black Mirror to explore these ethical dilemmas centered around surveillance technologies and our right to privacy. Furthermore, students will be challenged to consider if and how to mitigate these modern-day crises.

Emergent technologies can have unintended consequences frequently resulting in unexpected ethical dilemmas for consumers, businesses, organizations, governments, and society. Students will apply practical strategies for identifying and managing ethical issues at the intersection of human behavior, technology, and society.

Black Mirror is speculative fiction with futuristic elements that allow for envisioning the ethical implications that science and logic may not afford. By leveraging Black Mirror, students will vividly tap into previously unconsidered uses of technology and be presented with robust examples of ethical themes and their impact on society. Thus, enabling students to reflect and answer the question, could we and more importantly, should we?

This class is more discussion and activity-oriented, rather than lecture-based. We will be discussing potentially controversial topics that you may feel an emotional attachment for; You will be required to explain, discuss, and modify their ethical perspectives in theoretical and practical terms. *"I think _____ is wrong"* always needs to be followed up with why it is wrong - focusing on benefit (utilitarian), harm (utilitarian), right (social contract), obligation (Kantian), duty (Kantian), or character (virtue).

As your instructor, my goal is to pose questions and allow you to formulate your answers while ensuring that your responses are justified by explaining the reasoning.

Course Objectives

Global Learning Objectives

<u>Global Awareness:</u> Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues, trends and systems.

<u>Global Perspective:</u> Students will be able to conduct a multi-perspective analysis of local, global, international, and intercultural problems.

<u>Global Engagement:</u> Students will be able to demonstrate willingness to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving.

Upon completing this course, it is expected that you will be able to:

- Describe ethical theories and how to apply them
- Construct arguments rooted in evidence
- Identify foundational understanding of digital age privacy concepts and theories
- Describe the complex relationships between technology and society
- Analyze ethical issues raised in selected cases of technology gone awry
- Recognize and assess the key ethical questions that arise from the use of personal information
- Agree to respect and demonstrate a willingness to understand different viewpoints

Textbook and Course Materials

Textbook: A Gift of Fire- Social, Legal and Ethical Issues for Computing Technology. Author: Baase, Sara & Henry, Timothy. Pearson, 5th Edition, 2018. ISBN-10: 0-13-461527-1

Netflix Subscription: You may purchase an account on the **Netflix website** **(https://www.netflix.com/)** .

Expectations of this Course

This is a hybrid course, which means most of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in a hybrid course are the same as for a traditional course. In fact, hybrid courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- **review the getting started page** located in the course modules;
- **introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion;
- **take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with the learning management system, Canvas;
- **interact** online with instructor and peers;
- **review** and follow the course calendar and weekly outlines;
- **log in** to the course **3 times** per week;

- **respond** to discussions by the due date specified. **No late work will be accepted;**
- **respond** to **emails** within **2 days;**
- **submit** assignments by the corresponding deadline.

The instructor will:

- log in to the course **4 times a** week;
- respond to discussion postings within **3 days of the deadline**;
- respond to **emails** within **48 hours**;
- grade assignments within **5 days** of the assignment deadline.

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox. Check out the **Canvas Conversations Tutorial** (https://vimeo.com/canvaslms/212en) or **Canvas Guide** (https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10574-4212710325) to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox.

Our Learning Community Rules

In this class, we will learn together as members of a learning community. To ensure our community develops, thrives, and sustains, the following ground rules should be observed.

As a member of our learning community, we agree too:

1. **Respect one another & keep an open mind.** Our beliefs, values, and ideas may differ because we draw from different life experiences. In this class, we will discuss, question, and challenge ideas, but we need to be careful not to attack individuals and create an unsafe and unproductive space. We challenge ideas, not individuals.
2. **Challenge our own beliefs, values, and ideas.** We need to be open to challenging our own prejudices, assumptions, and interpretations. We also need to expect to discuss things we often do not discuss in public but still feel strongly about it. It is okay to feel uncomfortable!
3. **Allow others to change their minds.** In the give-and-take of collaborative learning, we are open to learning from our peers' knowledge and experiences, and we also allow others a safe environment to consider new possibilities, learn, and grow.
4. **Be mindful of how we communicate our ideas.** Understand that communications shared through text have a higher likelihood of being misinterpreted than the spoken word. Therefore, when you type a thought or a comment, read it carefully before you submit it. If you question the way it is worded, read it out loud to yourself. If you still question the way it's phrased, rewrite it.
5. **Contribute regularly to the conversation,** to ensure other members of the community have ample opportunity to read/listen, reflect, and respond to your ideas. The contributions of each individual play a role in the collective strength and diversity of our community.

By participating in our community, you agree to be familiar with and abide by these ground rules. If at any time, you feel that any of these ground rules have been violated by a member of our community, I encouraged you to bring your concern directly and immediately to me.

The learning community ground rules are adapted from Michelle Pacansky-Brock's Digital Citizenship Community Ground Rules

Deliverables

Attendance

A portion of your grade will depend on you attending class, actively watching the assigned episodes, and participating in in-class activities. You are strongly encouraged to bring your own perspectives and interests to the class discussions. If you need to miss a class, please let me know before the day of the class (unless it's an emergency). Attendance in class will earn you one point toward your grade. Missing more than one class will cause your class participation grade will suffer.

Ethics Theory Quiz

In order to be successful in this class a firm grasp of ethical frameworks is critical. Therefore, this course will have one quiz aimed to assess your understanding of ethical theories. The quiz will have 25 questions and you will have 50 minutes to complete the quiz.

Reflections

You will complete ten guided reflections throughout the semester based on the activities in class. Each reflection will have its own set of instructions. Please see Canvas for details and specifications. Grading rubrics will be provided in Canvas.

Ideas Worth Spreading Project

You will prepare a 10-15 minute talk to be delivered in class based on a technology (current or conceivable) of your choice and answer our course theme question *"should we."* A grading rubric will be provided in Canvas. This assignment meets the Honors College Portfolio learning outcomes.

Grading

Assignment Grading Breakdown

Requirements	#of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Attendance	15	1	15	15%
Quiz	1	10	10	10%
Reflections	10	5	50	50%
Ideas Worth Spreading	1	25	25	25%
Total	27	N/A	100	100%

Grading Scale

Letter	Range
A	100% - 93%
A-	92.99% - 90%
B+	89.99% - 87.00%
B	86.99% - 83.00%
B-	82.99% - 80.00%
C+	79.99% - 77.00%
C	76.99% - 70.00%
D	69.99% - 65.00%
F	64.99% - 00.00

Honors College Policies and Requirements

Religious Observances

Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students whose religious practices coincide with class requirements or schedule. Please make sure to notify your instructor at the beginning of the semester of which dates you will be absent or any anticipated problems with completing course work.

Physical, Mental, and Sensory Challenges

The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the DRC at 305-348-3532 (MMC) or at 305-919-5345 (BBC) to schedule an appointment. You can also visit them in person in GC 190 at MMC or in WUC 131 at BBC campus.

Honors College Policies and Requirements

Academic Misconduct Procedures and Policies

In The Honors College, the term "honor" refers both to academic accomplishment and character. Students in Honors should therefore adhere to and be held to the highest standards of personal

academic accountability. Academic dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, is antithetical to the very definition of being an Honors student at FIU. Consequently, an Honors College student found responsible for academic misconduct will be dismissed from the College.

An Honors faculty member may bring charges of academic misconduct against an Honors student if the faculty member suspects plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. The faculty member will decide whether to pursue informal resolution, file formal resolution charges, or take no further action and will follow the procedures outlined in the Academic Misconduct Procedures available at **https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/academic-integrity/index.php (https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/academic-integrity/index.php)** .

Please refer to the following documents for additional information:

FIU Student Handbook: **https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/student-handbook/index.php (https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/student-handbook/index.php)**

Student Portfolios

The Honors College will be using a portfolio method to assess students' learning outcomes. The portfolio allows for maximum flexibility in gauging student learning. Students decide (with instructor consultation) what "artifacts" or assignments to include for consideration in their portfolios to demonstrate successful achievement of each of five key student learning outcomes over the 4-year Honors experience. Portfolios provide a rich context for students to show what they have learned and to explain their learning process. Because the Honors curriculum is meant to be thought-provoking and reflective, student self-assessment through portfolios will facilitate learning and provide an in-depth assessment. Each Honors College course includes at least one assignment that could potentially fit portfolio requirements. **http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/portfolio/ (http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/portfolio/)**

Honors Engagement

Requirements Honors College students are required to accumulate at least 20 engagement points each academic year (Fall and Spring) by attending Honors College activities. Students attending only one semester (Fall or Spring) are required to accumulate 10 engagement points. Each activity has a point value. Students may select which events and activities they want to attend. The new system is designed to be more flexible for students, offering events on various days and times (including some weekend events) and allowing for a variety of ways to meet the requirements. Please plan accordingly. **http://honors.fiu.edu/current- students/citizenship/ (http://honors.fiu.edu/current- %20students/citizenship/)**

Community Service
Honors College students must also complete 20 volunteer service hours. These hours DO NOT count toward the 20 engagement points discussed above. **http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/community-service/ (http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/community-service/)**

Honors Education in the Arts (HEARTS)
The HEARTS program is designed to give Honors College students opportunities to "explore and appreciate different artistic and cultural traditions and modes of artistic expression. HEARTS will also serve as a clearinghouse (and curatorial framework) for our students to experience the arts on campus and in the community by providing them with information about cultural activities and access to performances with free or discounted tickets. http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/hearts/

Resources:
Panthers Care & Counseling & Psychological Services
If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you have, for the classmate's well-being or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with FIU's Panthers Care.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress, and other concerns that life brings. Learn more about CAPS at http://caps.fiu.edu/. Professional counselors are available