CSCI 4217  

Ethical Issues in Computing

Credit Hours: 3  
Contact Hours: 3  
Course Coordinator: Gene Bailey  
Text(s): None

Catalog Description:

A study of the ethical issues facing computer users and computer professionals including an examination of the techniques for the analysis and resolution of these issues consistent with standards of the computing profession.

Prerequisite(s): CSCI 3250

CS: MAJOR ELECTIVE  
IS: MAJOR ELECTIVE  
IT: MAJOR ELECTIVE

Course Outcomes:

- Identify correctly the potential for an ethical problem in a particular context and/or to identify what moral rules are being compromised (Student Outcomes 5a*, 2a*, IT-1) - ETSU Outcomes 2a, 5a, IT-1; ABET Outcomes e, e.2, e.5, IT-m
- Identify the cause of these issues: determine several alternate forms of action consistent with morality in that context (Student Outcomes 2a*, IT-1) - ETSU Outcomes 2a, IT-1; ABET Outcomes e, e.2, e.5, IT-m
- And, for each of these possible actions, determine expected Outcomes and reasons for taking or not taking that action select a workable solution and work through the situation, either technically or morally (Student Outcomes 5a*, 2a*, IT-1) - ETSU Outcomes 2a, 5a, IT-1; ABET Outcomes e, e.1, e.2, e.5, IT-m
- Demonstrate an awareness of the responsibilities of computer professionals with respect to ethical issues in computing (Student Outcome 2a*) - ETSU Outcomes 2a; ABET Outcomes e, e.1, e.2, e.5
- And communicate effectively well-informed and well-reasoned positions on these issues. (Student Outcomes 1a*, 1b*, 2a*) - ETSU Outcomes 1a, 1b, 2a; ABET Outcomes e, f
Major Topics:

- Ethicality vs. legality
- Justifying ethical beliefs
- Personal versus professional ethics
- Ethical theory (consequentialism, deontologism, and ethical relativism) Frameworks of ethical analysis and decision making
- Types of information (form vs. content)
- Information management and technology
- Information cultures (international, national, corporate, individuals, and "hackers") Work at home and telecommuting
- Democracy in an electronic age
- Computers in education
- Computers in war and peace
- Information system dynamics and world models
- Information technology and gender neutrality
- Privacy and legal issues (confidentiality, security, data cross matching and merging)
- Ethics and the information superhighway (email, encryption, computer networks, computer privacy on campus, computers and the future)
- Professional ethics
- Professional responsibility, liability, licensing, software safety, codes of ethics and professional practices