CMPT 320 - E100 Social Implications - Computerized Society

Instructor(s): Diana Cukierman  

Calendar Objective/Description:
An examination of social processes that are being automated and implications for good and evil, that may be entailed in the automation of procedures by which goods and services are allocated. Examination of what are dehumanizing and humanizing parts of systems and how systems can be designed to have a humanizing effect.

Instructor’s Objectives:
The general goal of this course is to provide an opportunity for participants to deepen their awareness and to reflect with a critical, inquisitive and informed eye about some selected issues in our society which are especially influenced by the extensive and intensive usage of technology and networked communications in our lives.

We will explore social and ethical theories including technological determinism, act utilitarianism among others, which will provide us a framework for our discussions. We will aim to explore the various issues from multiple perspectives. No prior background in sociology or communications is expected.

The topics that we will address will include those described in this outline, subject to modifications; part of the topics discussed may also be determined by the interests of students and in general, the topics addressed will be subject to time availability.

We will alternate between lessons, talks by invited speakers, watching videos, doing a diverse style of assignments, and doing individual and group activities both in class and outside class. Students will be expected to do readings and/or other assignments outside of class, and we will discuss and apply related topics in class, often as group activities. Assigned readings will be selected from the recommended textbooks and others, as will be described in class.

This is not a W (Writing intensive) course, however students will be expected to do some writing assignments. The prepare-materials-lesson-then-activity format will repeat itself throughout the course.

Prerequisites:
A CMPT course and 45 units. Breadth-Science.

Topics:
- Introduction to Social Science and Technological Theories
- Ethical Theories
- Privacy
- Intellectual property
- Internet Culture
- Social Media
- Cybercrime and Cybersecurity
- Journalism and Technology
- Professional Ethics and Conduct
- Environment and Technology
- Big Data
Grading:

To be discussed the first week of classes

Students must attain an overall passing grade on the weighted average of exams in the course in order to obtain a clear pass (C- or better).

Recommended Books:

A Gift of Fire (Fifth Edition), Sara Baase and Tymothy M. Henry, Pearson, 2018, 9780134615271, Readings will be assigned from this book. Some copies will be available on reserves at the SFU library.

Ethics for the Information Age (Seventh edition), Michael J. Quinn, Pearson, 2017, 9780134296548, Readings will be assigned from this book. Some copies will be available on reserves at the SFU library.

Academic Honesty Statement::

Academic honesty plays a key role in our efforts to maintain a high standard of academic excellence and integrity. Students are advised that ALL acts of intellectual dishonesty will be handled in accordance with the SFU Academic Honesty and Student Conduct Policies (http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/student.html).