

Course Description

- Credits: 3
- Prerequisites: CS 2604, COMM 2004. (A grade of C or better required in CS prerequisite 2604.)

Purpose:

- Studies the ethical, social, and professional concerns of the computer science field.
- Covers the social impact of the computer, implications and effects of computers on society, and the responsibilities of computer professionals in directing the emerging technology.
- The topics are studied through case studies of reliable, risk-free technologies, and systems that provide user friendly processes. Specific studies are augmented by an overview of the history of computing, interaction with industrial partners and computing professionals, and attention to the legal and ethical responsibilities of professionals.
- This is a web-supported course, incorporating writing intensive exercises, making extensive use of active learning technologies.

Texts:

Required:

- *A Gift of Fire: Social, Legal, and Ethical Issues for Computers and the Internet* (2nd ed.), S. Baase, Prentice Hall, 2003.
- *Writing Arguments* (6th Edition), J. D. Ramage, J. C. Bean, & J. Johnson, Pearson/Longman, 2004.
- *Visual & Statistical Thinking: Displays of Evidence for Decision Making*, E. R. Tufte, Graphics Press, 1997

Course Notes:

- The course notes will available on-line at <http://courses.cs.vt.edu/~cs3604/fall105/> during the week after the lecture in which they were given.

Instructor

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Office Hours:

- TBA

Teaching Assistants

Julian Dymacek

Course Website: <http://courses.cs.vt.edu/~cs3604/fall05/>.

This website will contain all the project specifications, homework assignments, etc. You will want to check in regularly to keep up-to-date.

Assignments

There will be a series of writing assignments aimed at developing concepts that have been discussed in the class. These assignments are to be completed by you, with help from no one except the course administrators, i.e. Instructors, TA's, etc.

In addition to the assignments there will be other graded assignments that could be homework, quizzes, etc.

There is also a Service Learning portion to this course. You will be required to perform an amount of volunteer hours in the area of computers and society. You will hear from a few different groups that you may choose from. You are not required to complete all of your hours with the groups that make presentations; however if you choose to use a different group, you must get my permission before completing the hours.

Additionally, there will be one test throughout the course of the semester and a final exam.

The breakdown for the points on the graded material is as follows:

| Item | Number of Points | Tentative Dates |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| Assignments | As assigned | Varied |
| Tests | 100 | TBA |
| Other Graded Material | As assigned | Varied |
| Final Exam | 200 | 3:25-5:25 am, Monday December 12 |

Other Graded Assignments

These can be anything from an in class pop quiz to homework assignments which will be graded by the TAs. You should plan on several pop quizzes throughout the semester and several graded homework assignments along the way as well.

Grading Policies

This course is largely devoted to the development of skills in writing as well as exploring different social and ethical issues as related to computers. Your writing skills will be graded and you are expected to be able to write a coherent argument for a given issue. That being said, writing is a skill like programming and the more you practice the better you get and an improvement to your writing skills will be expected and unique to each individual in the course.

Late Work

Each assignment will have a due date and time and will include instructions for submission. Except in the very rare case that an extension is granted, late submissions will incur a penalty of 10% per day, and will not be given any credit if submitted after the assignments have been graded or solutions have been released. Any request for an extension must be made at least 24 hours prior to the due date. Plan your time carefully for the papers

Statute of Limitations

Any questions or complaints regarding the grading of an assignment or test must be raised within two weeks after the score or the graded assignment is made available (not when you pick it up).

Absences

If a serious illness prevents you from taking any of the tests, send a friend with a note describing your condition or notify me before the day of the test. Also, to establish a valid excuse for an illness you must get a note from a physician or the University infirmary. Before missing a test for any reason, you must make every effort to discuss the problem with me before the day of the test. Excuses other than an illness must be reported to your Dean's office so that they can send me a written explanation of the absence. If you need to be away for an official University event, this must be cleared with me in advance. Without a valid excuse, no makeup tests or exam will be given!

Grade Scale

Final grades will be set according to the usual 10-point scale; i.e., 90% of the total points guarantees at least an A-, 80% of the total points guarantees at least a B-, etc.

Honor Code

An exhaustive list of Honor Code violations would be impossible to present here, but among other things, each of the following is a flagrant violation of the Virginia Tech Honor Code, and violations will be dealt with severely (Honor Court):

- Working with another student to derive a argument to an issue. There are no group projects in this course.
- Copying (plagiarism) in whole or in part from someone else.

It is acceptable to discuss with classmates any issue and use this discussion to get more ideas and arguments for an issue; however the final written product must be yours.

Feel free to discuss the homework assignments and your papers with the teaching assistants assigned to CS 3604, the instructor or any one at the writing lab. The discussion of your papers must be limited to these people. Note that this specifically excludes discussions of your papers with other students (even if they are not enrolled in CS 3604), or with tutors except for those named above.

Privately hired tutors are not an exception to this requirement, nor are athletic or other tutors provided by the University.

Copies of all submitted work are retained indefinitely by the Department. Submitted programs are subjected to automated analysis for detection of cheating.

If you have any question as to how the Honor Code applies to this class, remember that:

- Any work done in this class must be done on an individual basis.
- Credit will be given only for work done entirely on an individual basis.
- Do not make any assumptions as to who can provide help on a programming assignment.
- All submitted work is archived. All submitted programs will be subjected to automated cheat analysis.
- Evidence indicating the violation of the policy stated above will be turned in directly to the Honor Court.
- It is much easier to explain a poor grade to parents or a potential employer than to explain an Honor Court conviction.

Special Accommodations

If any student needs special accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor during the first week of classes.