

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Undergraduate Course Outline 2024-25
Digital Humanities 2126F/Philosophy 2078F (650):
Ethics for a Digital World

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Information including instructor contact details and course location can be found on the course OWL Brightspace: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/>

ANTIREQUISITES

Philosop 2998 (F/W 2019-20), Philosop 2268

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have not taken, nor are enrolled in, the antirequisites for this course. [Student Responsibility for Course Selection](#)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

We spend an increasingly considerable portion of our lives online. What moral considerations ought to guide our conduct as cyber-citizens, given the possibility that online behaviour is

Week 6: Privacy

Wright – Self-Censorship and the Constriction of Thought and Discussion under Modern Communications Technologies

Mokrosinska – Privacy and the Integrity of Liberal Politics: The Case of Governmental Internet Searches

Marmor – Privacy in Social Media

Unit 4 (Weeks 7, 8, and 9 – October 24th to November 13th): The Ethics of Control over Digital Information

Week 7: Open Access

Parker – The Ethics of Open Access Publishing

Willinsky and Alperin – The Academic Ethics of Open Access to Research and Scholarship

Mauthner and Parry – Open Access Digital Data Sharing: Principles, Policies and Practices

Week 8: Digital Property

Graham – Defining Property

Vica and Socaciu – Mind the Gap! How the Digital Turn Upsets Intellectual Property

Wagner and de Clippele – Safeguarding Cultural Heritage in the Digital Era – A Critical Challenge

Week 9: Hacking/Hacktivism

Blankenship – The Hacker’s Manifesto

Serracino-Inglott – Is it ok to be an Anonymous?

Bellaby – An Ethical Framework for Hacking Operations

Unit 5 (Weeks 10, 11, and 12, November 14th to December 6th): Big Data, Gender, and Cyberbullying

Week 10: Big Data – the Potential and the Problems

Kelley – Scientists Used Facebook for the Largest Ever Study of Language and Personality

Grassegger and Krogerus – The Data that Turned the World Upside Down

Nunan and DiDomenico – Big Data: A Normal Accident Waiting to Happen?

Mittelstadt – From Individual to Group Privacy in Big Data Analytics

Week 11: Gender and the Internet

Lewis – Dear The Internet, This is Why You Can’t Have Anything Nice

Lawford-Smith and Megarry – Is there

ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION

Essays – The first essay is due on Friday, October 11th by 11:59 p.m. EST on OWL. Any essay not submitted by that time will be **subject to a 5% per day late penalty**, weekends included, up to a maximum of 10 days, or 50% of your grade on the essay. At that point, a grade of 0 will be recorded.

Students who wish to avoid the late penalty will **need to submit formal supporting documentation** to the Academic Advising office of the Faculty in which the student is registered. A suitable alternative deadline for the submission of the essay will be established in consultation with Professor Robb once consideration has been granted.

The second essay is due on the last day of classes, i.e., Friday, December 6th by 11:59 p.m. EDT on OWL. Owing to Senate regulations barring the submission of course work after the last day of classes for the term, a failure to meet that deadline will automatically result in a grade of 0.

Essay submissions after the final day of the course will only be permitted when **formal supporting documentation** is submitted to the Academic Advising office of the Faculty in which the student is registered. A suitable alternative deadline for the submission of the essay will be established in consultation with Professor Robb once consideration has been granted.

Exams – The Mid-Term and Final exams will be timed; students will have 4 hours of writing time once they begin for both. The Mid-Term Exam will be open for students to take at any point during Week 7. The Final Exam will be scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during the December 2024 Final Exam period (with an anticipated 4-day writing window). Owing to the flexibility included in this exam scheduling, students who fail to complete an exam during the designated period will be unable to write a make-up without the submission of formal supporting documentation to the Academic Advising office of the Faculty in which the student is registered.

The Final exam will be scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during the December 2024 Final Exam period. Students unable to write at the scheduled time will need to provide formal supporting documentation to the Academic Advising office of the Faculty in which the student is registered, at which point a make-up exam will be scheduled.

All requests for academic consideration for the duration of this course are to be made to the Academic Advising office of the student's Faculty of Registration, NOT to Professor Robb.

Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs

E-MAIL POLICY

I am **not** able to respond to philosophical concerns or questions over e-mail (i.e., I don't have the time to discuss concepts/arguments covered in the course materials by e-mail). I will address those concerns or questions during my Zoom office hours (or by appointment) or in the Unit Discussion Forums on OWL Brightspace. If you need to make an appointment with me or you have some private issue you would like to communicate to me, feel free to use e-mail. Otherwise, please attend my Zoom office hours (or make an appointment).

GENERATIVE AI

In this course, the use of AI (e.g., ChatGPT...) is **prohibited**. If unauthorized AI use is suspected, the instructor will ask for **research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines**, and other materials used in **preparing assignments**. Students are expected to **retain** these materials until after final grades have been entered. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, students may be asked to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against them.

SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Statement on the use of plagiarism-checking software

All required papers will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system.

Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of

Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)000912 0 612 792 reW*ñBT/F2 12 Tf1 0 0 1 244.85

submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration.pdf

The Student Medical Certificate is available at

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Students may request academic consideration in cases of extenuating circumstances – that is, personal circumstances beyond the student's control that have a substantial but temporary impact on the student's ability to meet essential academic requirements.

1. Requests for academic consideration are made to the Academic Advising office of Faculty in which the student is registered.

2. Requests for academic consideration include the following components:

- a. Self-attestation signed by the student;
- b. Indication of the course(s) and assessment(s) relevant to the request;
- c. Supporting documentation as relevant

Requests without supporting documentation are limited to one per term per course.

Documentation for medical illness, when required, includes the completion of a [Western Student Medical Certificate \(SMC\)](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation, by a health care practitioner. Requests linked to examinations scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during official examination periods as well as practice laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled in the last week of term always require formal supporting documentation.

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Western's Policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays can be found here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_religious.pdf.

In the case of mid-term tests, notification is to be "given in writing to the instructor as early as possible, but not later than **one week** prior to the writing of the test".

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

The last day of scheduled classes in any course will be the last day on which course assignments will be accepted for credit in a course. Instructors will be required to return assignments to students as promptly as possible with reasonable explanations of the instructor's assessment of the assignment.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Your Home Faculty's Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters.

Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here: https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends (24/7 availability).

GENDER-BASED AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Western University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: