

CS4001 Syllabus

Computing and Society, Summer 2026, 3 credits
11:00-12:50pm

Instructor Information

Instructor Jennifer Reddig	Email jreddig3@gatech.edu	Drop-in Hours & Location [Location/Link, Hours, Days]
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Teaching Assistant(s) [TA Name]	Email [Email address]	Drop-in Hours & Location [Location/Link, Hours, Days]
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General Course Information

Description

In this course, we will explore the ethical dimensions of technology. Technology can be a powerful force for good, but it can also do enormous harm. In this course, we will learn how technologies impact individuals and communities both within the U.S. and globally. As computer science professionals with a Georgia Tech degree, you will play an important role in shaping the future of technology. Hence, this class affords you the ability to understand contemporary debates on the ethics of technology and develop your position on such matters.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

In this class, you will:

- Identify and describe ethical issues in the design and implementation of computing technologies
 - Critically evaluate all stages of the lifecycle of contemporary computing and data technologies
 - Develop a global perspective on debates regarding technology and data ethics
 - Gain familiarity with ethical theories for reasoning your position on these debates
 - Propose professional, ethical, legal, security, and social issues and responsibilities for computing professionals
 - Recognize the need for and an ability to engage in continuing professional development
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Course Requirements & Grading

Assignments are tailored to help you learn and formulate your ethics of technology. As builders of technology, what you make has societal and ethical impacts. How do you decide what is best and for whom? How do you balance the trade-offs of technology? After taking this class, you will be able to creatively and constructively develop and interdisciplinary approach to ethics.

Assignment	Date	Weight
Reading Quizzes		10%
Participation		20%
Reflections		15%
Presentations/Lightning Talks		25%

Assignment	Date	Weight
Final Presentation		15%
Final Presentation Reflection		10%

Description of Graded Components

Reading Quizzes (10%)

You are expected to read the day's assigned article or chapter. A short free-response quiz will be given at the start of class and will be graded and returned by the end of class.

- Format: Free-response paper and pencil quizzes
- Frequency: After each reading assignment
- Submission: Submitted in class

Participation (20%)

You are expected to read the associated discussion guide before the in-person discussion. You will complete any pre-class tasks, come to class with questions and comments on the reading, and engage in active discussion with the class. On presentation days, you will listen and give constructive feedback to each presenter as well as thoughtfully answer their discussion prompts.

- Participation will be graded on a continuous scale from 0-100. Students are graded according to the following ranges:
 - 100: Exceptional. Student is fully prepared, listens to others in the classroom, and advances discussions that go beyond what is found in the reading to synthesize concepts and connect to other course content or relevant materials.
 - 90: Good. Student is prepared, listens to others, and comes to class with questions and comments. Most students should get a 90 most of the time.
 - 80: Fair. Student is somewhat underprepared, asks questions but does not listen and advance conversation. They offer opinions but do not articulate ideas.
 - 70: Poor. Student is underprepared and unengaged. Contributions are perfunctory or irrelevant.
 - 60 or lower: Student is totally underprepared and does not participate.

Presentations (25%)

You will present thoughtful analyses of real-world technologies and topics of interest as they connect to the assigned readings. Presentations will vary in length and audience size, increasing as the semester progresses. Communicating ideas is a goal for this class, so the presentations will be used to get feedback on your ideas before you finalize them in a written report.

- Format: Oral presentation and accompanying slides
- Submission: Slides submitted to Canvas before the in-class presentation

Reflections (15%)

After each presentation, you will write a short 1-page reflection on the presentation that includes your argument, the discussion and feedback received, and what you learned.

- Format: Short paper
- Submission: Submit electronically via Canvas after your in-class presentation.

Final Presentation (15%)

You will give one long-form presentation to teach the class about a topic you think is interesting related to ethics and computer science. You can pick a topic not covered in class, or you can go deeper into a topic that was covered at a high level in class. You will use all you learned from prior presentations and discussions to present a topic of interest and facilitate a full-class discussion.

- Format: Oral presentation and accompanying slides.
- Submission: Submit slides electronically via Canvas before your in-class presentation.

Final Presentation Reflection (10%)

Similarly to all other presentations, you will submit a short reflection on your experience giving the final presentation. You will summarize your presentation, the feedback and discussion, and reflect on what you learned.

- Format: Short paper
- Submission: Submit electronically via Canvas after your in-class presentation.

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

Course Materials

Course Text

All course readings will be provided via Canvas.

Additional Materials/Resources

Additional resources will be provided via Canvas.

Course Policies, Expectations, & Guidelines

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. [Review Georgia Tech's Honor Code](#) and the [student Code of Conduct](#).

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, [contact the Office of Disability Services](#) (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Attendance and/or Participation

Active participation is essential for productive discussion and learning. You are expected to be active in class, both during small-group sessions and full-class activities. Remember to support your own position with logical arguments and facts, and remember to truly listen to your classmates and do your best to genuinely understand their position. Recall that the goal of class is not to 'win' an argument, it is to have a

fruitful discussion that leads to the intellectual growth of you, your co-conversators, and any onlookers to the conversation. Attendance is mandatory for all courses that are part of the Berlin Summer Study Abroad program.

Collaboration & Group Work

Collaborative discussions is a necessity of the course. Partner work will be clearly indicated. For all other assignments, discussions with classmates are encouraged, but submitted work should be completed individually.

Extensions, Late Assignments, & Re-Scheduled/Missed Exams

You have **one** free late day to be used at your discretion throughout the semester. That means you may extend the deadline of any assignment by 24 hours once. *The late day may not be used on in-class assignments like quizzes and presentations.* To use your late day, comment on the Canvas assignment submission before the official deadline stating that you are using your late day and extending the deadline to XX/XX at XX:XX. After the late day is exhausted, you will receive a 20% penalty per day. Absences due to sickness or GT-approved travel do not count against the late day or late penalty.

Inclement Weather and Digital Learning Days

Should we need to cancel class last minute, you will be alerted through Canvas. Class will then be held asynchronously online.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. [The Student-Faculty Expectations](#) articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Student Use of Mobile Devices in the Classroom

Your success in this class will hinge in part on your attention to in-class discussion and content. Please refrain from using your device during class except at designated times and do your best to focus on the task at hand.

Campus Resources for Students

A list of resources for undergraduate students' academic success and information about advising can be found at [Success at Tech](#). At Georgia Tech, we are concerned about your overall physical, social, and mental well-being. A [comprehensive list](#) of wellness related resources has been compiled and maintained by the Office of the Vice President for Student Engagement and Well-being ([student-resource-guide@gatech.edu](#))

Additional Syllabus Components

Use of ChatGPT and other Large Language Models

We treat AI-based assistance, such as ChatGPT, Copilot, GPT-3, GPT-4, or similar (generally understood to be a language model with over 1 billion parameters) the same way we treat collaboration with other people: you are welcome to talk about your ideas and work with other people, both inside and outside the class, as well as with AI-based assistants. However, all work you submit must be your own. You should never include in your assignment anything that was not written directly by you without proper citation (including quotation marks and in-line citation for direct quotes).

This includes anything you did not write in your assignment without proper citation will be treated as an academic misconduct case. If you are unsure where the line is between collaborating with AI and copying from AI, we recommend the following heuristics:

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- Never hit "Copy" within your conversation with an AI assistant. You can copy your own work into your conversation, but do not copy anything from the conversation back into your assignment. Instead, use your interaction with the AI assistant as a learning experience, then let your assignment reflect your improved understanding.
 - Do not have your assignment and the AI agent open at the same time. Like above, use your conversation with the AI as a learning experience, then close the interaction down, open your assignment, and let your assignment reflect your revised knowledge. This heuristic includes avoiding using AI directly integrated into your composition environment: just as you should not let a classmate write content or code directly into your submission, so also you should avoid using tools that directly add content to your submission.
 - In the likely event that Google Docs, Overleaf, or Microsoft Word (or any word processor you use for your assignment(s)) integrates LLM capabilities, it is recommended that you do not activate this function. You will learn more by trying to put your own ideas in your own words independently.
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Deviating from these heuristics does not automatically qualify as academic misconduct; however, following these heuristics essentially guarantees your collaboration will not cross the line into misconduct.
