

## New Core Component Proposal

Date Submitted: 11/08/18 8:48 am

Viewing: **PHIL 282-GE : Ethics in a Digital Age**

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Changes proposed by: lradzik

Faculty Senate Number FS.36.263

Contact(s)

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Course Prefix PHIL Course Number 282

Academic Level UG

Complete Course Title Ethics in a Digital Age

Abbreviated Course Title ETHICS IN A DIGITAL AGE

Crosslisted With

Semester Credit 3  
Hour(s)Proposal for:  
Core CurriculumHow frequently will the  
class be offered?  
Every fall and spring semesterNumber of class 1  
sections per semesterNumber of students 30  
per semester

Historic annual enrollment for the last three years

Last year: Previous year: Year before:

### Core curriculum

Foundational  
Component Area  
Core Lang, Phil, Culture(KLPC)

TCCN prefix/number

### Foundational Component Area: Lang, Phil, Culture

How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

"Ethics in the Digital Age" explores the intersection between ethical and social theories, principles, and values and the interconnected digital world. The course is designed to give students the tools to evaluate digital technologies using ethical theories from various cultural origins. We consider how technology affects different understandings of what it means to live a "good life" or to "do the right thing." We also ask the political question of "how should we live"? Unlike traditional settings, where political or geographical boundaries often limit political concerns, digital technologies disregard many spatial, temporal, and cultural separations.

Core Objectives:

### In Workflow

1. PHUM Department Head
2. LA College Dean UG
3. CCC Preparer
4. CCC Chair
5. Faculty Senate Preparer
6. Faculty Senate Preparer
7. Provost II
8. President
9. Curricular Services

### Approval Path

1. 11/08/18 1:10 pm  
Clare Palmer  
(c.palmer): Approved for PHUM Department Head
2. 11/08/18 4:13 pm  
Steve Oberhelman (s-oberhelman): Approved for LA College Dean UG
3. 11/12/18 12:49 pm  
Barbara West  
(barbwest): Approved for CCC Preparer
4. 11/20/18 12:15 pm  
Barbara West  
(barbwest): Approved for CCC Chair
5. 11/26/18 1:28 pm  
Betsy Peterson  
(betsypeterson): Approved for Faculty Senate Preparer
6. 12/12/18 9:24 am  
Betsy Peterson  
(betsypeterson): Approved for Faculty Senate
7. 01/16/19 10:17 am  
Cathy Cordova  
(ccordova): Approved for Provost II
8. 01/25/19 4:05 pm  
Cathy Cordova  
(ccordova): Approved for President

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information):

Students are taught to analyze ethical issues into factual, conceptual, application, and moral components. Students are asked to synthesize material from a variety of sources on a number of different technologies, which themselves are rapidly changing. Students are taught to identify the audience of the ethical conflict (any party that might be affected or impacted) and to identify aspects of the obvious resolutions (to do X or not to do X) that impact these parties. They are taught to assess and analyze these impacts based on moral theories and to evaluate the choice between different resolutions and the adequacy of the theories. Students' critical thinking skills are developed through regular small group discussion. They are evaluated through two exams, two analysis papers, regular journal entries, and an oral group presentation.

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication):

Students will write two analysis papers and regular journal entries. Students will be given the opportunity to improve their performance on the analysis papers in response to feedback from the instructor. The two exams will also include essay questions. Students will develop both their oral and visual communication skills by working in groups on a multi-media presentation. Each member of the group is required to orally present material.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

Communication in cyberspace can span the interpersonal, local, regional, national, and global levels, and the issues associated with it do as well. We spend several weeks investigating the broader social effects of technology and computing and networked products. We study issues of diversity and inclusion, and highlight cultural differences as well as international differences in the design, production, and use of computing devices and platforms. Topics of social responsibility constitute most of the questions on the second examination. Most writing assignments (the two analysis papers and the journal entries) have to do with either social or personal responsibility. Students are given a choice on presentation topics, but all of them deal with issues related to either social or personal responsibility. The course includes the study of professional ethics for computing professionals, including topics such as prohibitions on performing unnecessary work and the obligation to protect public health and safety.

Personal Responsibility (to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision - making):

We spend several weeks providing a framework that students can use to understand how developed dispositions, actions, and habits can lead to an ethical life. We also emphasize how personal responsibility may be masked, but still exist, when individuals participate in vast sociotechnical systems, where co-workers, collaborators, suppliers, and customers can be located anywhere around the globe. We discuss the agency that citizens, and especially professionals, have in determining the social effects of technology. Theories, concepts, and applications of personally responsible decision-making are tested primarily on the first exam. They also arise in the second exam, where students are asked to connect personal responsibility with social responsibility. Students will investigate ideas related to personal responsibility in many of their journal entries. Presentation topics are assigned, but all of them deal with issues related to either social or personal responsibility. For computing professionals, the importance of personal responsibility is also conveyed through the study of their professional codes of ethics, which involve concerns such as conflicts of interest and the fair treatment of all persons.

Additional Comments      This course was recently created as PHIL 382, and we expect to teach 40 students in the spring semester of 2019. We have revised PHIL 382 as a 200-level course in order to apply for inclusion in the core curriculum. One we attract an audience for the course, we hope to greatly increase the number of sections offered.

Approved for core?      No

**Please ensure that the attached course syllabus sufficiently and specifically details the appropriate core objectives.**

Attach Course Syllabus      [PHIL\\_282\\_ver2.docx](#)  
    [FS\\_Jan19.pdf](#)

Reviewer Comments      **Cathy Cordova (ccordova) (01/25/19 4:05 pm):** Approved on behalf of President's Office, approval memo dated 1/11/19, received 1/24/19.