

Management
Course Number: 22:620:697
Course Title: Ethical Challenges In The Digital Economy

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of ethical challenges in the digital economy. It addresses the most important accounts of ethical decision-making in business, as well as key ethical concepts related to digitization: privacy, trust, and humanity. Using these resources, students explore ethical issues arising from major technological advancements in the digital economy: artificial intelligence, driverless cars, big data, and blockchain.

COURSE MATERIALS

All course materials are available via the Rutgers Libraries Website: <http://libraries.rutgers.edu>. You can also access them via our course homepage: <http://canvas.rutgers.edu>. Readings are taken from sources such as *Business Ethics Quarterly*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, and *Harvard Business Review*. Details listed in weekly schedule.

LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to help students develop an understanding of ethical issues in the digital economy. Students who successfully complete this course will demonstrate:

1. An understanding of the major decision-making theories used to evaluate ethical issues in business.
 2. An understanding of the major values implicated by ethical issues in the digital economy: privacy, trust, and humanity.
 3. An understanding of the ways in which these values are involved in, and potentially challenged by, various business ventures in the digital economy: artificial intelligence, driverless cars, big data, and blockchain.
 4. An ability to use ethical decision-making strategies, along with the concepts of privacy, trust, and humanity, to anticipate and proactively develop strategies for successfully addressing ethical issues in the digital economy.
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PREREQUISITES

None

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I do NOT tolerate cheating. Students are responsible for understanding the RU Academic Integrity Policy (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>)

I will strongly enforce this Policy and pursue *all* violations. On all examinations and assignments, students must sign the RU Honor Pledge, which states, “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination or assignment.” I will screen all written assignments through *SafeAssign* or *Turnitin*, plagiarism detection services that compare the work against a large database of past work. Don’t let cheating destroy your hard-earned opportunity to learn. See business.rutgers.edu/ai for more details.

GRADING POLICY

1.	Attendance and participation	20%
2.	Group presentations on privacy, trust, and humanity	30%
3.	Final paper, presentation, and responses	50%
Total		100%

Attendance and Participation

50 points per class; 200 total points. Students are expected to attend and participate in every meeting. To have an absence “excused,” students must provide documentation that excuses the absence (religious observance, a Rutgers-approved activity, illness, or family emergency/death) within one week of their return to class.

Students are expected to spend six hours per week preparing the assigned readings and assignments. Preparation includes both completing and reflecting on the readings. Discussion is central to the course, and you should come to class ready to ask questions, raise objections, and be an active participant in discussions.

Attendance and participation grades will be assessed as follows: **45-50 points** for active (i.e., at least 5 comments per class) and high-quality participation (i.e., demonstrating knowledge of the assigned materials); **40-44 points** for active (i.e., at least five comments per class) and midquality participation (i.e., participating in discussions but without demonstrating knowledge of the assigned materials) OR partial (i.e., 1-4 comments per class) and high-quality participation; **36-39 points** for partial (i.e., 1-4 comments per class) and mid-quality participation; **35 points** for attendance without participation. The exact point value reflects the quality of the student’s participation as assessed by the instructor. Students lose **5 points** for arriving late or departing early.

Group Presentations

100 points per class; 300 total points. Students will present on one reading each week in weeks 2-4. Student groups will consist of 2-4 students, depending on class size. Student groups should upload PowerPoint slides for their presentation to Canvas Discussions before class; students will spend 5-10 minutes presenting the slides at the beginning of our discussion of that reading. Slides should include a summary of the reading along with two actions from the reading to be evaluated using ethical theories. (We will evaluate those actions together as a class following each presentation.) Summaries will be graded according to the criteria of *accuracy, thoroughness, interest, and cohesion*, 20 points per criterion. Actions will be graded according to their suitability for evaluation using our ethical theories, 10 points per action (20 points for both actions). I have provided examples in my PowerPoint slides for Week 1, posted under Module 1.

	18-20 points	14-17 points	0-13 points
Summary: accuracy	Presentations cover the article in an accurate way, making no significant errors	Presentations cover the article in a basically accurate way but make 1-2 important errors	Presentations make three or more important errors
Summary: thoroughness	Presentations cover the main points of the article	Presentations neglect 1-2 main points of the article	Presentations neglect most main points of the article
Summary: interest	Presentations relay interesting material and relate it to the course	Presentations relay material in a dull way or do not relate it to the course	Presentations relay mostly irrelevant or unrelated material
Summary: cohesion	The different parts of the presentation fit together well	The presentation is partially cohesive but hard to follow	The presentation is largely disjointed and hard to follow
Action(s)	Students present ethically controversial actions that are well suited for ethical evaluation	Students present actions that are somewhat well suited for ethical evaluation but uncontroversial	Students present actions that are well suited for ethical evaluation

Final Paper

400 points. The final paper ethically evaluates a case study involving artificial intelligence, driverless cars, big data, or blockchain using one of the ethical theories we have covered (utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, or virtue ethics). A selection of case studies reflecting current issues in artificial intelligence, driverless cars, big data, and blockchain is available on Canvas; students may also select their own case study (with instructor approval). The final paper should be 1,500-2,000 words and include the following parts: an introductory paragraph in which you introduce the paper, explain what you will do in the paper, and state a thesis; a case description of the particular issue or decision you will evaluate; an ethical evaluation in which you use the ethical theory you have selected to explain what would be the right thing to do in the case; an objection to the ethical evaluation; a discussion of your considered view of the issue or decision (i.e., whether it is ethical or unethical) in light of the evaluation and objection; and a

concluding paragraph that summarizes your argument and provides any relevant extrapolation. Each of these parts will be graded individually: **50 points** for each of the introduction, case description, evaluation, and conclusion; **100 points** for the objection and discussion.

The final **100 points** of the paper's grade comes from students' web-based presentations and responses to other students' web-based presentations. To share their research with the course, students will record 5-10-minute videos of themselves presenting the 6 parts of their paper (with a focus on the ethical evaluation, objection, and discussion) and post them on our Discussions tab on Canvas (**50 points**). Students must watch one another's presentations and write one paragraph responses to each in which they critically evaluate (positively or negatively) one aspect of the presentation. These responses will comprise the last **50 points** of the grade for the term paper, presentation, and responses.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Ethical Theories

Readings:

- Gustafson, A. 2013. In defense of a utilitarian business ethic. *Business & Society Review*.
- O'Neill, O. 1993. Kantian ethics. *A Companion to Ethics*.
- Solomon, R. 1992. Corporate roles, personal virtues: An Aristotelean approach to business ethics. *Business Ethics Quarterly*.

Week 2: Privacy

Readings:

- Flyverbom, M., Deibert, R., & Matten, D. (2017) The governance of digital technology, big data, and the internet: New roles and responsibilities for business. *Business & Society*.
- Andrew, J. & Baker, M. (2019). The general data protection regulation in the age of surveillance capitalism. *Journal of Business Ethics*.
- Martin, K. (2018). The penalty for privacy violations: How privacy violations impact trust online. *Journal of Business Research*.
- DeCew, J. "Privacy." *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. (Recommended)

Week 3: Trust

Readings:

- Wicks, A. C., Berman, S. L., & Jones, T. M. (1999). The structure of optimal trust: Moral and strategic implications. *Academy of Management Review*.
- Hawlitschek, F., Notheisena, B., & Teubner, T. 2018. The limits of trust-free systems: A literature review on blockchain technology and trust in the sharing economy. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 29: 50-63.
- Werbach, K. 2018. Trust, but verify: Why the Blockchain needs the law. *Berkeley Technology Law Journal*. (pp. 489-512 required; pp. 512-550 recommended)
- McLeod, C. Trust. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. (Recommended)

Week 4: Humanity

Readings:

- Kim, T. W., & Santiago, M. (2019). From Artificial Intelligence to Artificial Wisdom: What Socrates Teaches Us. *IEEE Computer*.
- Davidow, W. H., & Malone, M. S. (2014). What happens to society when robots replace workers? *Harvard Business Review*.
- Scharding, T. K. (2020). Recognize everyone's interests: An algorithm for ethical decision-making about trade-off problems. *Business Ethics Quarterly*.
- Buss, S. (2012). The value of humanity. *Journal of Philosophy*. (Recommended)

Week 5 (online): Term Paper Presentations

SUPPORT SERVICES

If you need accommodation for a **disability**, obtain a Letter of Accommodation from the Office of Disability Services. The Office of Disability Services at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, provides student-centered and student-inclusive programming in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1998, and the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu.

[Rutgers University-New Brunswick ODS phone (848)445-6800 or email dsoffice@echo.rutgers.edu]

[Rutgers University-Newark ODS phone (973)353-5375 or email ods@newark.rutgers.edu]

If you are *pregnant*, the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy.

[Rutgers University-New Brunswick Title IX Coordinator phone (848)932-8200 or email jackie.moran@rutgers.edu]

[Rutgers University-Newark Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance phone (973)353-1906 or email TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu]

If you seek *religious accommodations*, the Office of the Dean of Students is available to verify absences for religious observance, as needed.

[Rutgers University-New Brunswick Dean of Students phone (848)932-2300 or email deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu]

[Rutgers University-Newark Dean of Students phone (973)353-5063 or email DeanofStudents@newark.rutgers.edu]

If you have experienced any form of *gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment*, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides help and support. More information can be found at <http://vpva.rutgers.edu/>.

[Rutgers University-New Brunswick incident report link: <http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/concern/>. You may contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance at (848)932-1181]

[Rutgers University-Newark incident report link: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?RutgersUniv&layout_id=7 . You may also contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance at (973)353-1906 or email at TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. If you wish to speak with a staff member who is confidential and does **not** have a reporting responsibility, you may contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance at (973)353-1918 or email run.vpva@rutgers.edu]

If students who have experienced a temporary condition or injury that is adversely affecting their ability to fully participate, you should submit a request via <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu> .

If you are a military *veteran* or are on active military duty, you can obtain support through the Office of Veteran and Military Programs and Services. <http://veterans.rutgers.edu/>

If you are in need of *mental health* services, please use our readily available services.

[Rutgers University-Newark Counseling Center: <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/>]

[Rutgers Counseling and Psychological Services–New Brunswick: <http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/>]

If you are in need of *physical health* services, please use our readily available services.

[Rutgers Health Services – Newark: <http://health.newark.rutgers.edu/>]

[Rutgers Health Services – New Brunswick: <http://health.rutgers.edu/>]

If you are in need of *legal* services, please use our readily available services: <http://rusls.rutgers.edu/>

Students experiencing difficulty in courses due to *English as a second language (ESL)* should contact the Program in American Language Studies for supports.

[Rutgers–Newark: PALS@newark.rutgers.edu]

[Rutgers–New Brunswick: eslpals@english.rutgers.edu]

If you are in need of additional *academic assistance*, please use our readily available services.

[Rutgers University-Newark Learning Center: <http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/rlc>]

[Rutgers University-Newark Writing Center: <http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter>]

[Rutgers University-New Brunswick Learning Center: <https://rlc.rutgers.edu/>]

[Optional items that many faculty include:

- Students must sign, date, and return a statement declaring that they understand the RU Academic Integrity Policy.

- Students must sign, date, and return a statement declaring that they understand this syllabus.]