INLS 776 - Ethics, Values and Society

- **Class Time:** Tuesdays 5:45pm - 8:30pm - Online/Synchronous
- **Zoom Link**
  (https://unc.zoom.us/j/97291718983?pwd=QlRJUzlZcWJ2Und6a3ZyUDREM3kwdz09)
- **Schedule a meeting with me via Calendly!** https://calendly.com/megan-winget/15min
- **Hypothesis Invite Link**: https://hypothes.is/groups/DPX5zz1Q/inls776-sp23-tuesday
  Work With Me Calendly: https://calendly.com/megan-winget/work-with-me

Introduction

In this course, we will explore ethical issues and questions relevant to the work and impact of LIS professionals: How should our values and beliefs be expressed in our information and data systems and services? What impact does our work have on people? What is our responsibility to understand and respond to those impacts? How is power expressed in various sociotechnical information systems, and how does power impact our conception of "knowledge?" How do the values that we (intentionally or unintentionally) build into these systems help or harm? What is our obligation to "goodness," "fairness," "justice," or "ethics?" What are the limitations of these frameworks?

Course Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Engage in a combination of public and private thought and discussion on issues related to information, data, knowledge, and technology in various individual, community, and societal contexts.
- Describe and apply a series of formal frameworks for ethical reasoning.
- Examine issues relevant to information and data systems and services through collective consideration of recent cases.
- Identify ethical problems in existing technologies/information sources being developed or uses of data/tech already in circulation.
- Develop a panel presentation for a research-based conference.

Course Structure

This course meets once a week for two hours and forty-five minutes.

Our time together will be oriented around discussion. Generally, the first half of class will focus on the week's assigned readings, while the second half of class will be oriented

around practical dilemmas and debates—what-if scenarios, analysis of current events, and ongoing professional challenges related to the week's theme.

In the final five weeks of class, in preparation for the Symposium for Social Good, we will shift the structure. During these weeks, each project group will have one class session to "workshop" your panel presentation. (More details are in the Symposium Project section of this syllabus.)

This class will use the Canvas learning management system.

The Semester Calendar (below) provides an overview of each week.

Grades

In collaboration with the other professors teaching this course, we have decided that students will receive either a P (Pass) or F (Fail) grade. We do this to alleviate stress and allow for a more equitable grading system across sections.

Basic expectations:

All students are expected to participate in class discussions to the best of their ability, and to attend class consistently. However, I do not take roll, and I do not have a metric for "grading" a student's participation. If it gets to the point where I notice and feel resentful that students are not participating in class discussion, or attendance becomes embarrassing, we - as a class - will have a discussion about what that means in terms of the learning environment.

There are two metrics for assessing student success in this class.

1. Mutual Aid Points
2. Assignments

To get a **P** in this course, graduate students must:

- Accrue 6 mutual aid points.
- Complete the Group Project Assignments to a minimum level of expectation (that is: students must follow the instructions, turn in all of these assignments, and include all components of the project in their deliverables). This project is to investigate a topic of your choice related to ethics, society, and values in the information professions, culminating in a panel presentation at the semester-end Symposium for Social Good.
- Attend two hours (in addition to your panel discussion) of the Symposium for Social Good conference to be held on Friday April 21.

Course Policies

Keep in Mind

Email Policy

It's very difficult to explain course material via email. If you need help with course content or assignments, the first step is to make an appointment for office hours, which are always online, and can be made here: https://calendly.com/megan-winget/15min Links to an external site.) I love to receive emails that share interesting information (videos, news as it relates to class).

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty and trustworthiness are important to all of us as individuals and are encouraged and promoted by the honor system. More information is available at http://www.unc.edu/depts/honor/honor.html. Links to an external site.The web site identified above contains all policies and procedures pertaining to the student honor system. We encourage your full participation and observance of this important aspect of the University.

Late work

There are no penalties for late work. I do ask, however, that if you have to turn in your assignments more than 2-3 days late, please let me know when you think it will be in, and any plans you have for finishing it before the end of the semester.

Covid Policies

- Once we return to face-to-face instruction, it is likely that some of us may get sick, whether with COVID or with more "normal" things like colds and the flu. **If you are feeling unwell, please do not attend in-person classes.** The lectures are online, you will miss the discussion but the scribes will hopefully provide notes on interesting topics and ideas we trade in class.
- If more than 25% of class (in this class that means 5 people) is are out sick while we will have a discussion about how the class would like to handle that. We may continue meeting in person, we may decide to go online for a week or two. If more than 50% of students are sick, we will need to go remote for the following two weeks, with weekly check-ins on whether to return.
- If I get sick, or if anyone in my family is sick and I am their caregiver, I will have to switch the class to online-synchronous.

Services and Student Support

Please utilize me as a resource if you are having difficulty with the material or there are outside circumstances impeding your ability to learn (for example, housing insecurity, food insecurity, emotional insecurity, or need physical or mental health services). **You should also know that I am a mandatory reporter if you choose to confide in me**.

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- **Mental Health:** "CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs." Go to their website: https://caps.unc.edu/ Links to an external site. or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more. *(source: Student Safety and Wellness Proposal for EPC, Sep 2018)* - I understand that some students have had negative experiences with CAPS. My recommendation is that students can use CAPS as a resource for referrals to professionals in the area who take student insurance.
- **UNC Peer2Peer**: https://www.uncpeer2peer.com/ Links to an external site."Peer2Peer is an organization that promotes free one on one peer support for UNC students. Our Peer Responders are here to listen and support individuals, especially during these uncertain times. We hope with the diverse range of experience, backgrounds, and topics of interest, our Responders are able to provide a peer perspective."
- **Heels Care Network**: https://care.unc.edu/ Links to an external site."The Heels Care Network website is a place for all Tar Heels — undergraduate, graduate and professional students, and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff — to come together in support of each other and access the many mental health and well-being resources at Carolina."
- *Basic needs security.* Any student who faces challenges affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in this course, is encouraged to contact the Office of the Dean of Students. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide other resources I may know of. Other resources you may find helpful:
    - Student Support: Office of the Dean of StudentsLinks to an external site.
    - Carolina Cupboard: Community Food Pantry (on-campus)Links to an external site.
    - Groceries for Neighbors in NeedLinks to an external site.
    - SILS food pantry: The SILS break room (on the second floor) is stocked with food and hygienic supplies for all students.

Accommodations: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for

students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability, or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs, and activities. Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: https://ars.unc.edu Links to an external site. or email ars@unc.edu.

Title IX: Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Please contact the Director of Title IX Compliance (Adrienne Allison – Adrienne.allison@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

Diversity & Inclusion: My intention as an educator is to provide a safe and inclusive environment for all learners. I work hard to include course materials and activities that promote diversity but Information & Library Science (and most disciplines in the academy) were founded by those from a privileged background. As a cisgender, straight, white, able-bodied woman, my standpoint may exclude important points of view. It is also possible that I will make unintentional mistakes. If this happens, please come, and speak to me directly. I promise to acknowledge your concerns as valid and learn from critiques. Likewise, I'm always looking for new scholarship by women, BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and non-Western thinkers – please share resources you think would be useful. Suggestions and improvements are encouraged and appreciated.

There are two major assessments in this class

1. Participation & Mutual Aid;
2. Symposium on Information and the Social Good, which includes a group-led workshopping session with the class.

Participation & Mutual Aid

Be excellent to each other

Our time together will be oriented around discussion. Generally, the first half of class (5:45-6:45) will focus on the week's assigned readings, while the second half of class (7-8:30) will be oriented around practical dilemmas and debates. I expect everyone to participate in these discussions to the extent possible, and participation in these discussions must be respectful, well-reasoned, and should demonstrate knowledge of the topic (and/or the readings). This kind of participation is integral to the success of this

class **and** will not be formally assessed. My expectation is that because we all want to have a successful, interesting, engaging class – each of us will do our best to participate in the discussion. Some guidelines for successful discussions (thanks Melanie Feinberg!):

- Complete all readings before class and be ready to discuss them.
- Adopt the Step Up/Step Back principle: consider who has been speaking and how often, and "step back" if you've been talking more than your share, or "step up" if you haven't been contributing.
- Contribute actively to discussions:
    - Initiate conversations by asking questions of others.
    - Volunteer your thoughts, feelings, impressions, and examples.
    - Where appropriate, support your opinions and claims with evidence.
    - Speak up when you are confused or uncertain. (For instance, it's absolutely fantastic to begin a conversation by saying "I'm not sure about the difference between ethics and values, can someone help me out?")
    - Retain focus on matters germane to the course.
    - Maintain confidence that your contributions are valuable, no matter your background or level of previous knowledge or expertise.
- Listen carefully and respond thoughtfully.
    - Maintain respect and compassion for your classmates.
    - Demonstrate that you value others' contributions. (For instance, use verbal and nonverbal cues to show that you're paying attention to your classmates. When someone makes a good point, say so.)
    - If someone else's perspective is different from yours, attempt to understand it rather than dismiss it. (For instance, ask questions or request explanations.)
    - Disagree constructively. (For instance, volunteer a counter-example to consider or refer everyone to the text of a reading.)

Again, I'm just going to assume that everyone will participate in the discussions to the extent possible. I don't have a list with checkmarks to see who is talking and who isn't.

To assess participation more formally, I've tried to re-think why I think it's important to participate in a class, and therefore what it means to develop community. Towards that end, I'm trying out the idea of measuring what I'm calling "Mutual Aid." At the end of the semester, students will be asked to give themselves points based on the ways they take care of each other in class.

Some examples of how to get mutual aid points:

- **Scribes**: Every class, we have two notetakers who will come together and post their notes online. This will include keeping track of discussion, finding any links mentioned in discussion, and providing an overview of upcoming due dates.
- **Timekeeper**: I will post the "Script" for a class session up with the timing of each step at the beginning of class, and this person will help me stay on-time. I'll ask at the beginning of class who wants to be the timekeeper. First to answer gets the job that week.

- **Class Contract**: Participate in making a class contract for shared expectations for how we all want to be treated (this is facilitated in the first two classes)
- **Work with me**: This involves doing the reading, thinking about it, and meeting with me before class (15-30 minutes) to have a brief discussion about what the class discussion questions might be. If class is on Tuesdays, best meeting day is Monday, but I'm flexible. Two people per class session.
- **Suggest readings**. If you know of an interesting reading (or ethical standard that I've missed) please let me know via the "Suggested Readings Discussion Board" and I'll look it over and may add it to the syllabus next semester!
- **Write a letter to future students**: on the last day, write a letter to next semester's students with tips and tricks for navigating the course (& my teaching/grading style) you wish they knew at the start. Letters from former students are HERE.
- **Annotator**: Many people read texts better when they are marked up with highlights, definitions, notes, etc. Students will annotate via the hypothsi.is web app. All of the PDF links to documents on this site can be annotated through this process. This process will require students to 1) download a bookmarklet or chrome extension from hypothes.is; and 2) create an account with hypothes.is. Additionally, in order to get credit, BEFORE annotating, students will need to join the annotation group. The URL for this course's annotation group should be on the home page for this course. Directions are here: https://web.hypothes.is/quick-start-guide-for-students/
- **Discussion group reporter**: volunteer to take notes in the breakout rooms / small-group discussions and then report back for the group when we return to the main room.
- **Unanticipated awesome person**: Do something that helps your peers that this list did not anticipate. I am sure that we will have more items for the list every semester.
- **Perfect Attendance!** Remember how gratifying it was to have perfect attendance in elementary school? Here's your chance to get that same warm fuzzy feeling again! (self-reported)
- **Sharing is Caring**: If you're out in the world, reading stuff, looking at TikTok, reading some article somewhere and it seems relevant to this class, share it on the "Sharing is Caring" Discussion Forum! Students will get a point for sharing an article and/or commenting on a post where someone has shared an article.
- **Shiny Happy People**: While I'm not grading participation, I will give points to students who I believe are helping to make large group discussion interesting and engaging. I will contact students who have gone above and beyond normal discussion expectations.

Students will keep track of their mutual aid points throughout the semester and provide a review at the end of class. I will not be keeping track of these mutual aid points! Minimum level of expectation will be 6 points. Students must accrue 6 mutual aid points to pass the class.

(These ideas for grading mutual aid come from Dr. Max Liboiron on twitter: https://twitter.com/MaxLiboiron Links to an external site.)

Symposium for Social Good

Overview

All students in all sections of INLS 776 will participate in the Symposium for Social Good on April 22 from 8:30 am - 5:30 pm. The symposium will consist of 45-minute panel presentations, organized in 5 research groups of 6-7 students each.

Each research group will host a symposium panel, which will:

- Describe a matter of concern: a topic area, professional dilemma, or current event.
- Outline pertinent problems or questions related to ethics and values of that dilemma/event.
- Identify associated stakeholders.
- Suggest a course of action, framework for understanding, mode of practice, or other mechanism to respond to the identified problems or questions.

Panels often take the form of brief individual presentations from each participant, followed by time for questions and guided discussion with the audience.

The symposium will be held on Friday, April 21, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., with both in-person and digital sessions. Students will be expected to attend at least two hours of the symposium, in addition to the time they are presenting.

To prepare for a successful panel at the symposium, your group will engage in a sustained investigation of your topic area over the course of the semester.

Project milestones will include:

1. Forming the group and selecting a topic.
2. Writing a 300-500 word abstract for your panel.
3. Preparing a content outline and annotated bibliography of sources.
4. "Workshopping" your panel by facilitating discussion for one session of our class:
   1. Selecting a set of appropriate readings.
   2. Leading us through your panel.
   3. Guiding the class in discussion based on the readings you selected and the ideas that you shared.
5. Presenting the panel at the symposium.
6. Writing a concluding reflection based on your experiences working on the panel and attending the symposium.

Group Formation & Topic Selection

Students will form their own groups based on interests, prior relationships, similar professional goals...I will provide time at the beginning of class for the first few weeks for

students to meet each other and explore the opportunities in group formation. Once the group forms, students will be able to discuss what their specific interests are, and come to an agreement on the general topic of their panel. An example from a previous semester: panel topic was "Toxicity in the Library" and individual presentations were things like toxic mold / toxic masculinity / toxic waste / toxic words / toxic attitudes…in the library. Assignments and due dates are in the modules section of this syllabus.

Abstract & Content Outline

- Each research group will provide a 300-500 word abstract for their panel to be included in symposium organizational materials (like schedules and brochures and whatnot). Abstracts include:
    - o The title of your panel,
    - o The names of the research group members, and
    - o A general statement setting up the problem you'll be addressing in your 45 minute time-slot.
      Examples of previous years' abstracts can be found at this link: https://info4socialgood.web.unc.edu/panel-abstracts/ Links to an external site.
- The content outline is a brief outline of your panel: The panel topic, and each presentation title (and author) listed in the order that makes most sense, with a very brief description (15-25 words) of what each author will be addressing in their 5-7 minutes of presentation time.
- In preparation for your panel, students will be doing significant research into their topic area. In the annotated bibliography, each research group will provide an annotated list of the materials they've found most useful. For the purpose of this exercise, I'd like 3-5 citations per student in the research group, with a total of no more than 35 citations. The bibliography can be organized by group, or by student, or by themes within the group.
- Finally, research groups will have the chance to workshop their panel during class time in the final weeks of the class. Please provide a list of readings for the class (maximum of 5).

Annotated Bibliography & Selected Readings

- Create an annotated bibliography, 4-6 citations per student in the research group, with a total of no more than 30 citations. The bibliography can be organized by student, or by themes within the group.
- Each citation will include
    - o Bibliographical citation (APA format)
    - o The names, titles, and place of employment for each author of the work.
    - o What type of article is it:
        - ▪ Scholarly journal article (what journal)
        - ▪ Scholarly conference article (what conference)
        - ▪ Blog post (provide a description of the blog.)
        - ▪ Presentation (where was it presented, what date)

- Newspaper article
- Magazine article
  - How many people have cited this resource / the nature of the resource (I want you to recognize that citing a blog post is different from citing the New York Times, which is different from citing an academic article)
  - 1-3 paragraph description of the article
    - What is the author arguing for?
    - What methodology are they using?
    - What are the argument's strong points?
    - What are the argument's weak points?
    - What is interesting / valuable for you in this article?

Workshopping Your Panel

We can work on what this means as a class. My vision is that the research group will provide readings that will give the class an opportunity to understand the context of the problem. On the day of the workshop, each student/theme/sub-topic in the research group will have 5-10 minutes to present what they're working on, what they're thinking, and how they're approaching the problem. Students may do this live, or they may turn in a video that we can watch. Some examples of what you might include in a workshopping session:

1. **Tell the story**: Give a detailed description of the immediate dilemma / situation / conflict. Who are the key and secondary stakeholders? What is the context? What issues are at stake? Why is this important?
2. **A brief description of the relevant history** associated with the issue. What history do we need to know to understand what is happening now, why it might be happening the way it is, and why at this point in time?
3. **(From the group) An ethical/moral question**: This might be one large question or 2-3 smaller questions. These questions will frame our class discussion for that week.

I expect workshopping sessions to last between an hour and an hour and a half. Students will "Work With Me" (mutual aid point) to plan their workshopping session.

Presenting the Panel at Symposium

We will have more information about the Symposium for Social Good as the semester continues. Students in the remote classes may present remotely or in person. In addition to presenting at the conference, all students must attend at least two hours at the symposium.

Wrapping Up! The Final Week

We have one last class after the symposium and I'd like to use it to wrap up what we've learned in class. I don't know what it looks like yet, but there'll be nothing to turn in.