INLS 776: Ethics, Values, and Society, Spring 2024  
(First updated 2024-01-10)  
Meeting Time: Wednesday, 8:00-10:45AM  
Location: 307 Manning Hall  
Instructor: Cal Lee  
Office Hours: Wednesday, 2-3pm, or by appointment  

Course Description  
In this course, we will explore ethical issues and questions relevant to the work and impact of library and information science (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 (at different scales)? What are our responsibilities to understand and respond to those impacts? How is power expressed in various sociotechnical information systems, and how does power impact who gets to decide what counts as “knowledge?” How do the values that we (intentionally or unintentionally) build into these systems help or harm? What are our obligations to “goodness,” “fairness,” “justice,” or “ethics?” What are the strengths and limitations of existing frameworks to guide decisions?  

Course Objectives  
By the end of this course you will be able to:  
- Engage in thoughtful discussion on ethical considerations and complications related to information, data, knowledge, and technology.  
- Apply ethical frameworks to an existing ethical problem in LIS  
- Identify and analyze ethical problems in existing technologies/information sources being developed or in use/circulation.  
- Design and present a panel for a research-based conference.  
- Understand how ethical principles are applied in specific LIS subfields.  

Class engagement and expectations  
A major part of professional development (including this class) is establishing and cultivating professional relationships. You’ll have many chances to interact with fellow students in this class. Our collective learning will work best if everyone comes ready to learn from each other.  
- Complete readings before each class session. Manage your time accordingly ("How to Read a Book" by Paul Edwards - https://pne.people.si.umich.edu/PDF/howtoread.pdf)  
- Written work should be of high quality. If you have concerns about writing, address them early and often.  
  - UNC Writing Center in on the lower level of the Student and Academic Services Building North (SASB), with a satellite office in Greenlaw Hall, Room 221. - https://writingcenter.unc.edu  
  - Most importantly, your peers.  
- Come to class on time  
- Participate in discussions  
- Demonstrate that you have read the material, understood and synthesized it.  
- Tell us when you do not agree. This is a discussion forum, not just a lecture session. No one in the room has a monopoly on correct answers. You are encouraged to question the assumptions of the readings, your instructor and your fellow students.  
- Practice "respectful and informed ignorance." Will Rogers said, "Everybody is ignorant, only on different subjects." This class will be most effective if everyone feels comfortable asking questions, so respect the questions of others. Bring to class your own informed questions about the week's materials (i.e. be able to convey how you've tried to understand the issues and what's still unclear to you).  
- Your comments should reflect mutual respect and should not attack individuals (including authors). Remember
that critical reasoning is not the same as simply criticizing. Whenever you encounter a reading or personal comments, consider adopting the Wikipedia principle of assuming good faith -

**Special Needs:** If you feel that you may need an accommodation for a disability or have any other special need, please make an appointment to discuss this with me. I will best be able to address special circumstances if I know about them early in the semester.

**Student Support**

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

**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/ks 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)*

**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 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.

**Using your Own Words and Attributing Others**

It is very important that you both attribute your sources and avoid excessive use of quotes. Please read the document called "In your Own Words." Be aware of the University of North Carolina policy on plagiarism. Your written work must be original. Ask if you have any doubts about what this means.

ChatGPT and other Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) can produce text, images, and other media. These tools can assist with brainstorming, finding information, and even reading and creating materials; however, they must be used appropriately and ethically, and you must understand their limitations. For this class, the guidelines for generative AI developed by the UNC Campus committee in the summer of 2023 will be in effect: Generative AI Usage Guide.

**Links to an external site** All cases of plagiarism (unattributed quotation or paraphrasing) of anyone else's work, whether from someone else's answers to homework or from published materials, will be officially reported and dealt with according to UNC policies (Instrument of Student Judicial Governance, Section II.B.1. and III.D.2, http://instrument.unc.edu, links to an external site.).

**Honor Code**

**Links to an external site** "The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has had a student-led honor system for over 100 years. Academic integrity is at the heart of Carolina and we all are responsible for upholding the ideals of honor and
integrity. The student-led Honor System is responsible for adjudicating any suspected violations of the Honor Code and all suspected instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Honor System. Information, including your responsibilities as a student is outlined in the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. Your full participation and observance of the Honor Code is expected."

**Evaluation**

All graduate students who satisfy the course requirements will receive a P. To pass this class you must submit all assignments, receive a 75% or higher on the peer assessment in your symposium participation, participate and attend the Symposium on Information and Social Good on April 26. You must also regularly attend class and engage with the material (i.e. do the reading). Missing more than two classes (unexcused) will result in a failing grade.

**Course Requirements**

- **Participation and Attendance** - The structure of this course is meant to engage and inspire you. Success of the class depends on active engagement. I expect everyone (not only those leading discussion for the week) to come to class ready to discuss the assigned readings. I recognize that participation comes in many forms so active listening, talking, sharing posts before class are all welcome. Missing more than two classes (unexcused) will result in a failing grade.

- **Case Study/Managing Class Discussion** - Once during the semester you and your research group will lead discussion. You will determine the topic, readings, and focus. This is meant to serve as preparatory work for the Symposium. These presentations are meant to be works in progress not polished run-throughs.

- **Symposium on Information and Social Good – submission and presentation.** All students in INLS 776 will participate in the Symposium consisting of 45-minute panel presentations, organized by groups of students. These panels are usually individual presentations from each participant, followed by time for question and answer. However, we also encourage you to consider other structures and formats. Your topic for your panels can focus on a current event, historical case, or other example of information ethics. Each symposium panel will:
  - Describe a topic area, professional dilemma, or current event that unites the presentations.
  - Outline pertinent problems or questions related to ethics and values.
  - Identify key stakeholders.
  - Suggest a course of action, framework for understanding, mode of practice, or other mechanism to respond to the problems identified.

**Important Due Dates/Project Milestones:**

- By Feb 7 – Form a topic and group (4-5 students) along with a 3-5 sentence summary of suggested panel.
- By March 6 – Write a 300-500 word abstract and submit a condensed reading to me for the class to read.
- March 20 - April 17 - Present in class / workshop. “Workshopping” includes creating discussion questions based on the readings selected for class and leading us through what you plan to present at the symposium.
- April 26 – Symposium in Manning Hall (all day, with specific start/end times to be announced. Students should attend at least two hours of the symposium, in addition to the time you are presenting.

**Part One: Foundational Concepts**

**Week 1 (January 10) - Why are we here? What are we doing?**

**Focal Reading:**

Week 2 (January 17) – On Being a Professional

- Lifecycles of information and associated ethical issues

Consider similarities and differences between the following (and suggest others I should have listed):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)</td>
<td>Code of Ethics</td>
<td><a href="https://bok.ahima.org/doc?oid=105098#.XtafDxNKg0o">https://bok.ahima.org/doc?oid=105098#.XtafDxNKg0o</a> [Note two other documents derived from this code are: (1) “Standards of Ethical Coding,” <a href="https://bok.ahima.org/doc?oid=302237#.X0-0BRNKg_U">https://bok.ahima.org/doc?oid=302237#.X0-0BRNKg_U</a> and (2) “Ethical Standards for Clinical Documentation Integrity (CDI) Professionals,” <a href="https://ahima.org/media/r2gmhlop/ethical-standards-for-clinical-documentation-integrity-cdi-professionals-2020.pdf?oid=301868#.X0-1TxNKg_U">https://ahima.org/media/r2gmhlop/ethical-standards-for-clinical-documentation-integrity-cdi-professionals-2020.pdf?oid=301868#.X0-1TxNKg_U</a>]</td>
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<td>ALA</td>
<td>Library Bill of Rights</td>
<td><a href="https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/">https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/</a> [Also briefly familiarize yourself with the “Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights.” <a href="https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations">https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations</a>]</td>
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<td>American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA)</td>
<td>AMIA’s code of professional and ethical conduct 2022</td>
<td><a href="https://doi.org/10.1093/jamia/ocac192">https://doi.org/10.1093/jamia/ocac192</a></td>
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<td>Association of Colleges and Research Libraries (ACRL), Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS)</td>
<td>ACRL Code of Ethics for Special Collections Librarians</td>
<td><a href="https://rbms.info/standards/code_of_ethics/">https://rbms.info/standards/code_of_ethics/</a></td>
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<td>Association for Computing Machinery (ACM)</td>
<td>Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct</td>
<td><a href="https://ethics.acm.org/">https://ethics.acm.org/</a></td>
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<td>Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD)</td>
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<td>Association of Independent Information Professionals (AIIP)</td>
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<td>Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR)</td>
<td>[This is a long document. Look through the whole table of contents and then focus your reading on 3.1 Initial Considerations (9-12). See also the one-page: Annette Markham, Appendix 1, AOIR Guidelines: Ethical Decision Making and Internet Research Ethics: 2012, <a href="https://aoir.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/aoir_ethics_graphic_2016.pdf">https://aoir.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/aoir_ethics_graphic_2016.pdf</a>]</td>
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<td>Association for Information Science &amp; Technology (ASIS&amp;T)</td>
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<td><a href="http://cmjcenter.org/documents/Peer-Power-Storytelling-Ethics.pdf">http://cmjcenter.org/documents/Peer-Power-Storytelling-Ethics.pdf</a></td>
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<td>Datapractices.org (Linux Foundation)</td>
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<td>Data Science Association</td>
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<td>Institute of Electronics, Information and Communication Engineers (IEICE)</td>
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<td><a href="https://www.ieice.org/eng_r/about/charter_of_ethics.html">https://www.ieice.org/eng_r/about/charter_of_ethics.html</a></td>
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<td>International Council of Museums (ICOM)</td>
<td>Code of Ethics for Museums</td>
<td>[Note: This is quite long, but this is largely due to the formatting. Familiarize yourself with all the main elements. See also the one-page summary of principles at: <a href="https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/110825_Checklist_print.pdf">https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/110825_Checklist_print.pdf</a>]</td>
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<td>International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA)</td>
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<td>Special Libraries</td>
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<td><a href="https://www.sla.org/about-sla/vision-mission-core-value/">https://www.sla.org/about-sla/vision-mission-core-value/</a></td>
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Week 3 (January 24) – Values in Design

Focal Readings:


Other Related Readings:


Part Two: Applying Concepts

Week 4 (January 31) – Being on the Record: Capture, Collection and Extraction

Focal Readings:

Cifor, Marika, Patricia Garcia, TL Cowan, Jasmine Rault, Tonia Sutherland, Anita Say Chan, Jennifer Rode, Anna Lauren Hoffmann, Niloufar Salehi, and Lisa Nakamura. “Feminist Data Manifest-No.” 2019. [https://www.manifestno.com](https://www.manifestno.com) [Peruse the entire site and then specifically read: [https://www.manifestno.com/home](https://www.manifestno.com/home)]

Foote, Kenneth. "To Remember and Forget: Archives, Memory, and Culture." *American Archivist* 53, no. 3 (1990): 378-93. [https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.53.3.d87u013444j3g6r2](https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.53.3.d87u013444j3g6r2)


Week 5 (February 7) – Description and Representation

Focal Readings:


Other Related Readings:

Broussard, Meredith. "Why Poor Schools Can’t Win at Standardized Tests." in Artificial Unintelligence: How


**Week 6 (February 14) – Access to Data and Information: Restriction and Facilitation**

**Focal Readings:**


**Week 7 (February 21) – Analytics and Data Processing**

**Focal Readings:**


**Other Related Readings:**


Week 8 (February 28) – Systemic Biases and Prejudices - Recognition, Remediation, Repair

Watch in class: Coded Bias (excerpts)

Focal Readings:


Other Related Readings:


Noble, Safiya. “Google search: hyper-visibility as a means of rendering black women and girls invisible.” *InVisible
Week 9 (March 6) – The Limits of Justice, Fairness, and Equality

Focal Readings:


Other Related Readings:


Week 10 / Spring Break (no class on March 13)

Before we leave for break – Form groups and submit reading for your week

Part 3 – (Un)Ethical Action – Case studies, examples, symposium workshops

Week Eleven / March 20 – Group 1 Leads Class
Week Twelve / March 27 – Group 2 Leads Class
Week Thirteen / April 3 – Group 3 Leads Class
Week Fourteen / April 10 – Group 4 Leads Class
Week Fifteen / April 17 – Group 5 Leads Class
Week Sixteen / April 24 - Wrap-up session

Part 4 – Symposium – April 26

Acknowledgement: This syllabus and course build on materials from Melanie Feinberg, Amelia Gibson, Francesca Tripodi and Megan Winget. I would like to express my gratitude to all of them.