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C S598- Ethics
First Semester 1434/1435H

[ETHICAL ISSUES IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY]

REPORT GUIDELINES

Overview

The term report and presentation, offer a discussion on the current ethical issues in selected information technology topics as an essential team-based activity of the course works.

In the report, you will investigate and report on some issue related to the course material that involves some controversy; that is, some social, legal, or ethical aspect of computers or computing and information technology. The report should be long enough to cover the background/history of the topic, state the different sides of the issue with arguments and counter arguments, and draw your conclusions. The material discussed in the report required to be presented each week regarding the covered materials in the course.

Objective

- 1.** To challenge students to think critically and draw their own conclusions on issues of specific topics in information technology.
- 2.** To prepare students to become responsible, ethical users of future technologies.
- 3.** To empower the students' presentation and research skills.

Submissions Date and Time

- 1.** Reports should be submitted as hard copy on your presentation day.
- 2.** Presentations will be held on the every week (Sunday, October 27 -to- Thursday, December 5).

Implementation

Each team is appointed to report and present a certain topic, according to the following regulations:

- a. Each team must have 4, 5, 6 students.
- b. All team members should be from the same section.
- c. Each team should select a specific topic from *the suggested topics in the Appendix* or have their own topic after getting their instructor agreement.
- d. Each topic should not be selected twice in the same section; thus check the previously selected topics before booking yours.
- e. All group members have to present the material.

Guidelines & Specifications

Remember that the focus of this course is on social, legal, and ethical issues. Don't just give technical descriptions, or material that is purely factual or historic. On the other hand, be sure to give enough facts to support your opinions. Explain how your topic relates to material covered in the textbook and/or in tutorial discussions. Try to include an explanation of the major course-related issues.

If your topic is covered in the textbook, do not use the textbook as a main source. Report in more depth and/or on newer or other aspects of the topic. Your report should also include your own analysis and evaluation; after you have presented the major arguments. Select some course-related issue about which there is controversy or disagreement. Summarize the different points of view on this issue; giving appropriate citations.

The report should cover all sides of an issue, whether you agree with the arguments or not. All arguments should be presented completely and in an unbiased manner. Then evaluate the arguments on the different sides, give counter arguments, and state and justify your own position. Be sure to support your position with convincing arguments and facts; try to write in a way that would make someone who initially disagreed with you think about the issue more carefully.

Be sure to use a variety of reference sources and a variety of sources types. If you can, include at least two resources from peer-reviewed journals (please ask if you do not know what a peer-reviewed journal is) or books.

Quote where appropriate. Give citations for facts and quotations, indicating the sources for the material you are using. However, you should not just copy paragraphs from other sources. Explain the material as clearly as you can in your own words.

Report Structure

The organization of your report will depend somewhat on the topic you select. However, the organization of a typical report might look like this:

- 1.** Cover page that should include: report title, names, affiliation and university logo.
- 2.** Overview of the topic and issues discussed.
- 3.** Background, history, and/or importance of the topic.
- 4.** Explanation of issues related to the course material, detail arguments on all sides of the issue, include counter arguments where appropriate.
- 5.** Your analysis and evaluation on some issue about which there is disagreement.
- 6.** Summary and conclusions.
- 7.** List of references used and cited.

Warnings and Reminders

- 1. Start early.**
 - 2. Write an outline.** One of the most common problems with reports is poor organization. Organize your thoughts. You may want to use section headings to indicate the topic or purpose of sections of the report.
- **Pay attention to the quality of your sources.** If you use articles from the Web as sources, give the URL. There's a lot of junk and unsupported opinion on the Web.
 - **Plagiarism.** Now and then a student hands in a report he or she did not write at all, or in which large segments are copied from other sources. Please don't do this. It is dishonest, unfair to your fellow students, and unpleasant for both you and me. Cases of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course. Write in your own words. Ask us if you have any questions about what is appropriate.

Report and Presentation Formats

Please note that while preparing your report and presentation you should follow consistent and professional style and format. You can find many online resources that advise you by the best practices and principles for preparing presentation and reports. In addition, note the following:

1. Presentation submission in either PPT doc or PDF formats.
2. Report submission in either MS doc or PDF format.
3. Report should be about 4-5 pages excluding the cover page and including all figures, tables, and references.

Grading Criteria

The grade in general is based entirely on the quality of your report and how well you present the different sides of the issue as well as your conclusions.

Report grading criteria:

- a. Discussion of background or history of the topic.
- b. Presentation of issues related to the course material.
- c. Quality of argument and analysis.
- d. Structure and organization.
- e. Clarity of writing.
- f. Absence of grammatical/spelling mistakes.
- g. Originality.
- h. Clarity of content presentation.
- i. Sufficient references and using IEEE referencing style.
- j. Professional formatting.

2. Presentation grading criteria:

- a. Structure and organization.
- b. Applying good presentation principles and formatting.
- c. Good understanding of concepts, facts and issues.
- d. Excellent gestures, good audience attention and eye contact.
- e. Avoidance of reading either from cards or slides.
- f. Time management; presentation time NEVER exceed 15 Minutes.

APPENDIX

Suggested Sample Topics

Each team can select one of the sample topics mentioned below, or discuss their own suggested topics with their instructor for agreement.

The below suggestions include brief comments and questions for each topic to spark your imagination and get you started.

1. Devices to assist people with disabilities:

Report on computer-based technologies that assist people with disabilities. Consider blind people, deaf people, people who use wheelchairs, people with limited use of their hands and arms, etc. Describe some of the new tools and their impact. Discuss issues such as cost, any problems with these devices, etc.

2. Identification and biometrics:

A company sells an identification chip that is implanted under a person's skin. About the size of a grain of rice, it contains personal information and emits a radio signal that identifies the person. Give examples of where the chip is currently used. Discuss beneficial uses, potential problems and abuses, and appropriate guidelines for use of such a chip and other identification technologies, including various biometrics.

3. Privacy on the Web:

What's happening now? Recent abuses and improvements. Describe and evaluate Web site policies and technical and policy privacy protections provided by the market, and current proposals for government regulations.

4. Children on the Internet:

There are several problem areas: availability of material not appropriate for children, contact with people who seek to abuse children, and privacy risks from game sites that ask children for extensive personal and family information (for marketing purposes). How serious are these problems? What is being done about them? Evaluate various solutions. Do benefits for children on the Net outweigh risks? Can we arrange to have the benefits without the risks?

5. The Global Economy:

What are the roles and impacts of computers and communications technology in the increase of trans-border economic activity (e.g., eBay as a global garage sale; customer service workers in other countries handling U.S. consumer calls; databases to track the origin of a cow with Mad Cow Disease; etc.)? What are the benefits? What are the problems? Is this aspect of increased globalization a good thing for people in Saudi Arabia, for people in other countries, for humanity in general?

6. Automated systems:

Study progress, safety, and social issues related to an automated system such as automated highways and self-driving vehicles.

7. Spam:

Describe and evaluate technical solutions, current legislation and regulation, and significant proposed legislation. Some people propose that the federal government create a "Do not spam" list, like the "DO not call" list for telemarketers. Discuss privacy problems that could occur with implementation of such a list. Discuss the roles of technical and legislative solutions for spam. Consider the relevance of freedom of speech.

8. Free software and open source software:

What's happening with "free" software and open-source software now? What is their impact? What are the implications for consumers? For big companies like Microsoft?

9. Identity theft:

What is the current state of the problem? Describe relevant laws. How have consumers and businesses changed behavior in response to Identity Theft? What technical solutions have developed?

10.Are Web issues really new?

Choose two other technologies or innovations, such as radio, telegraph, railroads, or electricity, and find out what ethical, social, and legal issues and controversies arose about them. Compare the problems and issues to current problems and issues about the Web. What solutions developed? How well do those solutions fit the Web?

11.Computers and the environment:

How are computers used by nature researchers and organizations? Describe applications that help protect the environment. Describe aspects of computers that cause environmental problems. What do environmentalists think of computers? Ethical Issues in IT – Report Page 9

12.Use of the Web in schools:

Are students being taught to use the Web effectively, wisely, and safely?

13.Distance learning:

What are the common uses? What will be the impact on universities? On adult education? Is cheating a problem?