

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Please read the notes at the end of the table carefully before completing the form.

Subject Code	APSS1201
Subject Title	Ethics and Technology
Credit Value	1
Level	1
Pre-requisite/ Co-requisite/ Exclusion	Nil
Objectives	This subject aims to communicate to students basic moral concepts and theories as well as their applications to the moral issues and challenges raised by emerging technologies, e.g., social media, artificial intelligence, and social robotics.
Intended Learning Outcomes <i>(Note 1)</i>	Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to: (a) Familiarize themselves with the basic concepts and theories of morality; (b) Identify the current moral issues raised by emerging technologies; (c) Employ critical thinking skills to assess moral decisions about emerging technologies.
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus <i>(Note 2)</i>	We live in an age of technological innovation and change that raises many pressing ethical issues and challenges. This class will introduce students to the basics of several influential moral philosophies—namely, utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue ethics. We will apply these various theories to specific technologies that are changing our everyday lives—namely, social media, artificial intelligence, social robotics and autonomous vehicles. Course Overview: - Introduction to the philosophy/ethics of technology - Consequentialism and Utilitarianism - Ethics of autonomous vehicles - Deontology; Kantian ethics; Autonomy - Ethics of Social Media - Virtue Ethics - Ethics and Social Robotics - Ethics and Artificial Intelligence - Overall recap

Teaching/Learning Methodology <i>(Note 3)</i>	The class will be organized primarily around lectures, which will involve class discussions and opportunities for students to express their own views and actively participate. Feedback and guidance will be given by the lecturer throughout the class, including but not limited to consultations.																												
Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes <i>(Note 4)</i>	<table><tr><th rowspan="2">Specific assessment methods/tasks</th><th rowspan="2">% weighting</th><th colspan="3">Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)</th></tr><tr><th>a</th><th>b</th><th>c</th></tr><tr><td>1. Quizzes</td><td>40%</td><td>✓</td><td>✓</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>2. Class Participation</td><td>10%</td><td>✓</td><td>✓</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>3. Short Reflection Paper</td><td>50%</td><td></td><td>✓</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>100 %</td><td colspan="3"></td></tr></table> ▪ The grade is calculated according to the percentage assigned; ▪ The completion and submission of all component assignments are required for passing the subject; and ▪ Student must pass all component(s) if he/she is to pass the subject. Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes: 1. <i>Short Reflection Paper</i> (500–1000 words) will assess how students reflect on the ethical issues and social implications related to emerging technologies. The reflection paper will give students an opportunity to demonstrate comprehension, critical engagement, and application of key concepts from lecture. 2. <i>Quizzes</i> (x2) will assess whether students have understood basic philosophical concepts about ethics and the ethical and social issues raised by emerging technologies. 3. <i>Class participation</i> will be assessed based on in-class activities and discussion questions. These activities will ask students to connect philosophical concepts to their own use of emerging technologies and involvement in a society where these technologies are used. They will be asked to identify ethical issues in their own immediate social contexts.	Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)			a	b	c	1. Quizzes	40%	✓	✓		2. Class Participation	10%	✓	✓	✓	3. Short Reflection Paper	50%		✓	✓	Total	100 %			
Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting			Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)																									
		a	b	c																									
1. Quizzes	40%	✓	✓																										
2. Class Participation	10%	✓	✓	✓																									
3. Short Reflection Paper	50%		✓	✓																									
Total	100 %																												
	<table><tr><td>Class contact:</td><td></td></tr><tr><td> ▪ Lecture </td><td>13 Hrs.</td></tr></table>	Class contact:		▪ Lecture	13 Hrs.																								
Class contact:																													
▪ Lecture	13 Hrs.																												

Student Study Effort Expected	Other student study effort:	
	▪ Writing Reflective Journal	11 Hrs.
	▪ Studying Course Material for Quiz	11 Hrs.
	Total student study effort	35 Hrs.
Reading List and References	Suggested Course Reading: Blackburn, S. (2003). <i>Ethics: A Very Short Introduction</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Coeckelbergh, M. (2020). <i>AI ethics</i>. MIT Press. Lin, P. (2016) Why ethics matters for autonomous cars, In <i>Autonomous driving</i> (ed.) M. Mauer et. al. Springer. Nelson, L. (2018). <i>Social Media and Morality: Losing Our Self Control</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. O’Neil, C. (2016). <i>Weapons of math destruction</i>. Crown. Sandel, M. (2009). <i>Justice: What’s the Right Thing to Do?</i> New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Vallor, S. (2024). <i>The AI mirror: How to reclaim our humanity in an age of machine thinking</i>. Oxford University Press. Vallor, S. (2016). <i>Technology and the virtues: A philosophical guide to a future worth wanting</i>. Oxford University Press.	

Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes

Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon subject completion. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/Indicative Syllabus

The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time, overcrowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology

This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

Note 4: Assessment Method

This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method is intended to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.

(Form AR 140) 8.2020