Course Outline

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Course Details

Course Code	COMP4920
Course Title	Professional Issues and Ethics in IT
Convenor	Wayne Wobcke (/users/z9601422)
Admin	Wayne Wobcke (/users/z9601422)

Classes	<table><tr><th>Seminar</th><th>Room</th><th>Facilitator</th></tr><tr><td>Tue 3.00-5.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>Ali Darejeh</td></tr><tr><td>Wed 10.00-12.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>Ihsanullah</td></tr><tr><td>Wed 10.00-12.00 (B)</td><td>Online</td><td>Levi Chayboub</td></tr><tr><td>Wed 12.00-2.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>Ihsanullah</td></tr><tr><td>Wed 12.00-2.00 (B)</td><td>Online</td><td>Sidra Malik</td></tr><tr><td>Wed 2.00-4.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>Sidra Malik</td></tr><tr><td>Wed 2.00-4.00 (B)</td><td>Online</td><td>Ali Darejeh</td></tr><tr><td>Wed 4.00-6.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>Jingying Gao</td></tr><tr><td>Wed 4.00-6.00 (B)</td><td>Online</td><td>Anna Trofimova</td></tr><tr><td>Thu 9.00-11.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>Levi Chayboub</td></tr><tr><td>Thu 11.00-1.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>Guntur Dharma Putra</td></tr><tr><td>Thu 11.00-1.00 (B)</td><td>Online</td><td>Ihsanullah</td></tr><tr><td>Thu 1.00-3.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>Guntur Dharma Putra</td></tr><tr><td>Thu 1.00-3.00 (B)</td><td>Online</td><td>Levi Chayboub</td></tr><tr><td>Thu 3.00-5.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>Ali Darejeh</td></tr><tr><td>Fri 9.00-11.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>Sahil Punchhi</td></tr><tr><td>Fri 11.00-1.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>Anna Trofimova</td></tr><tr><td>Fri 11.00-1.00 (B)</td><td>Online</td><td>James Gray</td></tr><tr><td>Fri 1.00-3.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>James Gray</td></tr><tr><td>Fri 3.00-5.00 (A)</td><td>Online</td><td>Ali Darejeh</td></tr><tr><td>Fri 3.00-5.00 (B)</td><td>Online</td><td>Sahil Punchhi</td></tr></table>
Consultations	TBA
Units of Credit	6
Course Website	https://www.unsw.edu.au/~cs4920/ (https://www.unsw.edu.au/~cs4920/)
Handbook Entry	http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au/undergraduate/courses/2020/COMP4920.html (http://www.handbook.unsw.edu.au/undergraduate/courses/2020/COMP4920.html)

Course Summary

COMP4920 covers practical aspects of professional issues and ethics, and as such is critical preparation for the workforce, in addition to being essential for accreditation of the Computer Science degree programme.

The specific objective of the course is for students to appreciate the responsibilities of an IT professional and understand the ethical dimensions of the IT industry as applied to specific issues such as software quality, privacy and security, intellectual property and legal obligations of IT practitioners.

Students enrolling should be in the final year of study or nearing completion of their computing degree.

Assumed Knowledge

Students are assumed to be in the final year of study (or nearing graduation) of a computing degree **and** completed some of their Stage 3 courses, so are assumed to have reasonable knowledge and maturity in Computer Science.

Course Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students will:

1. Compare, critically evaluate and apply ethical frameworks to make professional judgements
2. Demonstrate understanding of several topical professional issues at the level of a starting professional engineer or computer scientist, such as software quality, intellectual property, data privacy, legal frameworks
3. Demonstrate the communication skills needed to present reasoned arguments

This course contributes to the development of the following graduate capabilities:

Graduate Capability	Acquired in
Scholars capable of independent and collaborative enquiry, rigorous in their analysis, critique and reflection, and able to innovate by applying their knowledge and skills to the solution of novel as well as routine problems	1–3
Entrepreneurial leaders capable of initiating and embracing innovation and change, as well as engaging and enabling others to contribute to change	1–3
Professionals capable of ethical, self-directed practice and independent lifelong learning	1–3
Global citizens who are culturally adept and capable of respecting diversity and acting in a socially just and responsible way	1–3

Teaching Strategies

The course has a mixture of guest lectures on topics of interest and seminars focusing on particular professional issues and case studies. The emphasis is on practical applications and case studies.

Lectures provide an overview of one particular aspect of software project management or professional and ethical issues. Guest lecturers are able to provide expertise in a variety of areas and the lectures provide an essential foundation to apply in seminars and the company case study. **Guest lecturers generally give permission for lectures to be recorded. However, due to the commercially sensitive nature of some of the material, these recordings cannot be redistributed outside the course cohort.**

Seminars provide students an opportunity for more in-depth discussion on particular topics and, in student seminars, enable students to develop skills in expression, critical analysis and presentation.

Essays enable students to study a range of professional issues in a specific context and promotes the development of critical thinking, analytical reasoning and written communication skills.

Teaching Rationale

COMP4920 is an important course to ensure students are "job ready". The course covers professional issues and ethics as related to the IT industry. Students benefit by having the opportunity to interact with industry experts, hence **attendance at lectures is very important** , especially as the course focuses on "soft skills".

Teaching is based on seminar-style discussion groups, encouraging students to express their ideas and form their own judgements on specific issues relating to the IT industry on the basis of rational arguments. Seminars also promote team organization and presentation skills through team-based student seminar(s). Critical thinking is developed through researching and writing a case study in the form of an in-depth analytical essay covering a range of professional and ethical issues of relevance to the industry.

Time management is an important aspect of this course. It is expected that each student attends **all** lectures and seminars, prepares for each seminar by reading the relevant material **in advance** , contributes actively to discussion in seminars, and spends roughly 30 hours on seminars, 20 hours on the lecture summaries

(including attendance), 25-30 hours on the student seminars, and 35-40 hours on the company case study. Note that the workload of a standard 6 UoC UNSW course is expected to be 150 hours (https://student.unsw.edu.au/glossary#W) .

Student Conduct

The **Student Code of Conduct** (Information (https://student.unsw.edu.au/conduct) , Policy (https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentcodepolicy.pdf)) sets out what the University expects from students as members of the UNSW community. As well as the learning, teaching and research environment, the University aims to provide an environment that enables students to achieve their full potential and to provide an experience consistent with the University's values and guiding principles. A condition of enrolment is that students *inform themselves* of the University's rules and policies affecting them, and conduct themselves accordingly.

In particular, students have the responsibility to observe standards of equity and respect in dealing with every member of the University community. This applies to all activities on UNSW premises and all external activities related to study and research. This includes behaviour in person as well as behaviour on social media, for example Facebook groups set up for the purpose of discussing UNSW courses or course work. Behaviour that is considered in breach of the Student Code Policy as discriminatory, sexually inappropriate, bullying, harassing, invading another's privacy or causing any person to fear for their personal safety is serious misconduct and can lead to severe penalties, including suspension or exclusion from UNSW.

If you have any concerns, you may raise them with your lecturer, or approach the School Ethics Officer (mailto:ethics-officer@cse.unsw.edu.au) , Grievance Officer (mailto:grievance-officer@cse.unsw.edu.au) , or one of the student representatives.

Plagiarism is defined as (https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism) using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. UNSW and CSE treat plagiarism as academic misconduct, which means that it carries penalties as severe as being excluded from further study at UNSW. There are several on-line sources to help you understand what plagiarism is and how it is dealt with at UNSW:

- Plagiarism and Academic Integrity (https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism)
- Plagiarism Management Procedure (https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/plagiarismprocedure.pdf)

Make sure that you read and understand these. Ignorance is not accepted as an excuse for plagiarism. In particular, you are also responsible that your assignment files are not accessible by anyone but you by setting the correct permissions in your CSE directory and code repository. Note also that plagiarism includes paying or asking another person to do a piece of work for you and then submitting it as your own work. *Copying* (taking ideas and/or text from other students or the Internet and presenting them as your own) and *collusion* (working together on an assignment, or sharing parts of assignment solutions) are forms of plagiarism. In COMP4920, this applies particularly to the company case study, which must be written in your own words, and with properly cited sources.

UNSW has an ongoing commitment to fostering a culture of learning informed by academic integrity. All UNSW staff and students have a responsibility to adhere to this principle of academic integrity. Plagiarism undermines academic integrity and is not tolerated at UNSW.

If you haven't done so yet, please take the time to read the full text of

- UNSW's policy regarding academic honesty and plagiarism (https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism)

The pages below describe the policies and procedures in more detail:

- Student Code Policy (https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentcodepolicy.pdf)
- Student Misconduct Procedure (https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf)

- Plagiarism Policy Statement (https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/plagiarismpolicy.pdf)
- Plagiarism Management Procedure (https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/plagiarismprocedure.pdf)

You should also read the following page which describes your rights and responsibilities in the CSE context:

- Essential Advice for CSE Students (https://www.engineering.unsw.edu.au/computer-science-engineering/about-us/organisational-structure/student-services/policies/essential-advice-for-cse-students)

As applied to COMP4920, copying or sharing material from the Internet such as slides or text (that is, without proper citation) counts as plagiarism and is unacceptable. In the student seminar, movie analysis and company case study, all material must be in the student's own words (except quotations, which should be kept to a minimum and must be clearly identified as such). References must be from primary sources (i.e. do not cite *Wikipedia* articles or the like). Submissions will be run through *turnitin* for plagiarism detection.

Assessment

Item	Topics	Due	Marks	Contributes to
Seminar Participation	Ethics	Weeks 1-5,7-10	20%	1–3
Lecture Summaries	Ethics	Weeks 4,7	10%	1–3
Student Seminars	Ethics	Weeks 7–10	30%	1–3
Company Case Study	Ethics	Weeks 8,10	40%	1–3

The component marks for the course are added together according to the above weightings to give a mark out of 100.

Important: There is a hurdle of 50% on the company case study, otherwise a grade of UF is returned.

Late submission policy for assignments: There is no provision for a late penalty; assessment items submitted late receive a 0 mark. The reason for this is to minimize delays in providing feedback.

Course Schedule

Week	Lectures	Seminars	Assignments
1	Introduction to Project Management and Ethics	Engineering as a Profession	
2	Theoretical Underpinnings of Ethics	Killer Robot	
3	–	Ethical Reasoning	
4	Moral Reasoning and Professional Ethics	Student Seminars	Lecture Summaries
5	Legal Perspectives on the Software Industry in a Surveillance Economy	Student Seminars	
6	–	–	
7	Intellectual Property and Software Patents	Student Seminars	Lecture Summaries

8	–	Student Seminars	Essay Plan
9	–	Student Seminars	
10	–	Student Seminars	Company Case Study

Resources for Students

There is no set text for this course. Resources will be provided on a weekly basis.

Course Evaluation and Development

Computer Science and Engineering courses are evaluated by student survey each time they are taught. The survey includes standard questions asked of all comparable courses so that it is possible to compare a course with other relevant UNSW courses, and also includes space for free-form comments. Survey responses are anonymous. The completed survey forms are analysed statistically by someone independent of the course staff, and the results, including free-form comments, are made available to the lecturer in charge *after* grades have been reported and released.

The 2019 course offering under the new 10-week term structure highlighted two main issues with the course: (i) the number of assessment items, with due dates around the same time as a consequence of there being fewer weeks to spread the load, and (ii) the overlap between the project management component of the course and COMP3900. The overlap with COMP3900 has been addressed by removing project management from COMP4920 and expanding the coverage of professional issues and ethics, while ensuring that agile project management tools are covered in COMP3900 to the same extent as in SENG4920. Compared to previous offerings of CSE ethics courses, we have removed the "debate" activity and the final exam. Another change for 2020 is to introduce a course forum and scheduled lecturer consultations for general questions about the course which should improve communication with such a large number of students.

Resource created about a year ago (Monday 25 May 2020, 04:29:36 PM), last modified 2 months ago (Friday 30 April 2021, 02:29:28 PM).