HU3710 Engineering Ethics  
Spring semester, 2008

Instructor: T. Lockhart  
Office: 326 Walker  
Office Hours: 1–2 PM Monday, 2–3 PM Wednesday; 9:15–10:15 AM–noon Friday,  
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Textbook: Harris, Charles E., Pritchard, Michael S., Rabins, Michael J. Engineering  

Course Content

This course will address some of the important ethical questions that arise for individual  
engineers and for the engineering profession. We shall study some general theories of ethics and  
see what light they can shed on the ethical problems of engineering. We shall study a number of  
real and hypothetical cases that raise questions about such topics as whistle-blowing,  
confidentiality, conflicts of interest, safety and public health, environmental protection, loyalty,  
and honesty. We shall also examine the published codes of ethics of several professional  
engineering organizations.

Examinations

There will be 2 major exams during the semester. The first will occur sometime near mid-term,  
and the second will occur near the end of the semester, probably around the 12th or 13th week.  
There will also be an optional final exam during final exam week, April 24–28.

Course Paper

Your will write a formal course paper on some topic in engineering ethics. A list of topics will be  
provided. Each topic will raise some question of engineering ethics. In your paper, you will  
consider and evaluate arguments on both sides of the question you have chosen and then present  
and defend your own views on that question. Your grade on your paper will depend largely on  
how thoroughly you explore the question and how convincingly you support your conclusions.  
Your paper should be no longer than is needed to cover your topic adequately—to discuss the  
pertinent arguments and to present and defend your own views on the ethical question. Typically  
this turns out to be about 5–7 double-spaced typewritten pages. However, your grade will not be  
fected by how long or short it is.

You may, if you choose, submit a draft of your paper to the course instructor for his  
comments and suggestions prior to turning in your final paper. Specific directions and guidelines  
for the final papers will be provided later.
Quizzes

Short quizzes on reading assignments and material presented in class may occasionally be given. Your quiz grades will be part of your class participation grade. (See below.)

Class Attendance and Participation

You are expected to attend class regularly and to participate in class activities. You are also expected to come to each class prepared to discuss the topic of the day. It is your responsibility to determine what material was covered and what announcements were made if you miss a class.

You will be allotted 3 absences for the course. If you miss more than 3 classes, then your excess absences must be excused in order for you to avoid penalty. Refer to your MTU Student Handbook for the criteria used to determine an absence is excused or unexcused.

Final Course Grade

Your final grade in the course will depend on (1) your grades on the two major exams, (2) your course paper grade, (3) your class attendance and participation grade, and (4) your final exam grade, if you choose to take the final exam. If you choose not to take the final exam, then the percentages for your final course average will be as follows:

- Major Exam 1: 25%
- Major Exam 2: 25%
- Course Paper: 30%
- Class Attendance and Participation: 20%

If you choose to take the final exam, then your final exam grade will determine 50% of your final course grade and the three items above—course paper, class presentation, class activities—will determine the other 50% (in the same proportions as above).

For the purpose of computing a final course average, letter grades will be converted to numbers. Course averages will be interpreted as follows: A: 93–100, AB: 88–93, B: 83–88, BC: 78–83, C: 73–78, CD: 68–73, D: 63–68, F: 0–63. Numerical grades will not be curved.

Records

You should keep all written work affecting your course grade (e.g., graded exams, course paper) until after the course is completed and you have received your final grade for the course. This will enable us to resolve any questions about your grades that may come up.

Disclaimer

Although the instructor will endeavor to follow the above-stated policies and procedures closely, he reserves the right to make reasonable changes if circumstances warrant. Any such changes will be announced in class and the reasons for making the changes will be given.