Course Description and Goals

In the professional community of engineers it is widely held that there is an urgent need to foster ethical sensitivity in engineering students. This is not exclusive to engineers of course, in the worlds of science and technology, and business we are also hearing a call for the cultivation of what is commonly referred to as an "ethical imagination." This suggests that while professional codes and rules can serve as important guidelines, they do not go far enough in creating the best kind of student (and future professional), that is, one who is able to understand, articulate and act on their individual and collective sense of moral obligation. To this end, this course will use a variety of sources for student reflection. The main text has been used to teach Engineering Ethics at Texas A&M University for the past decade. We will supplement this text with readings dealing with ethics and science and technology in general. The need for this well expressed by David R. Haws from the Department of Civil Engineering at Boise State University: "Expert testimony comes from the primary writings of ethical theory—and as academically foreign to engineering students as these treatises might seem, there is NO efficient way to eliminate or minimize their prominence in anything we might rightfully call a course in engineering ethics."

It is critical that students complete the assigned readings on time and come to class prepared to discuss the themes and concepts presented in these readings. To encourage students to keep up with the reading schedule there will be 8 in-class reading quizzes – the best 5 will count toward your final grade. (You will be expected to read about 26 pages per week on average.)

Required Reading Materials
TENTATIVE READING SCHEDULE

WEEK 1
M Jan/9 - Introduction
F Jan/13 – Guest Lecturer (no readings)

WEEK 2
M Jan/16 – Martin Luther King Day – No Class
W Jan/18 – EE, Chapter 5, pp. 90-114.

WEEK 3
W Jan/25 – Article posted on BB: “The Computer Does Not Impose on Us the Ways it Should Be Used.” George Grant.
F Jan/27 – Discussion of readings to date.

WEEK 4
M Jan/30 – EE, Chapter 6, pp. 115-134.
*First Assignment Due today. (Short essay on Latour or Grant)
W Feb/1 - Documentary Film: Inside Job (No Readings)
F Feb/3 - Documentary Film: Inside Job (No Readings)

WEEK 5
M Feb/6 – EE, Chapter 2, pp. 22-46.

F Feb/10 - Winter Carnival - No Classes

WEEK 6


W Feb/15 – Book Chapter posted on BB: *The Ethical Imagination* M. Somerville

F Feb/17 – Discussion (no extra readings)

*Second Assignment Due Today*

WEEK 7

M Feb/20 – *EE*, Chapter 3, pp. 47-70.

W Feb/22 – Article posted on BB

F Feb/24 – Review and Discussion (no extra readings)

WEEK 8


W Feb/29 – Article posted on BB.

F Mar/2 – Spitzer recommendations on BB. Discussion.

WEEK 9

M Mar/5 - Spring Break - No Class

W Mar/7 – Spring Break – No Class

F Mar/9 – Spring Break – No Class

WEEK 10

M Mar/12 – The Environment - *EE*, Chapter 9, pp. 191-210

W Mar/14 – Book Chapter posted on BB (Thomas Fisher)

F Mar/16 – Article Posted on BB. (Priyan Dias)

*Third Assignment Due Today*

WEEK 11

M Mar/19 – Design and Ethics readings TBA

W Mar/21 – Book Chapter posted on BB.

F Mar/23 – Discussion

WEEK 12

M Mar/26 - Whistle Blowing etc. *EE* Chapter 8, pp. 165-190.

W Mar/28 - Documentary Film: 'The Specialist: Portrait of a Criminal'

F Mar/30 - Documentary Film: 'The Specialist'
WEEK 13
M Apr/2 – International Engineering EE, Chapter 10, pp. 211-228.
F Apr/6 – Discussion
*Fourth Assignment Due Today.

WEEK 14
M Apr/9 – This week’s readings TBA.
W Apr/11
F Apr/13 –
*In-class Test Today.

Week 15
M Apr/16 – This week’s readings TBA.
W Apr/18
F Apr/20 –
*Hand in Final Paper Today

Grading Scheme
Class Attendance and Participation 20%
Homework Assignments (Short Essays) 4 x 10%
Reading Quizzes 10%
In-class test 10%
Final Paper 20%

Late Assignments
Late Assignments will not be accepted unless a student can provide documentation confirming that late submission was due to circumstances beyond their control.

Grading System
A – excellent - 93% & above – 4.00 grade points
AB – very good – 88 - 92% - 3.50 grade points
B – good – 82 - 86% - 3.00 grade points
BC – above average – 76 - 81% - 2.50 grade points
C – average – 70 - 75% - 2.00 grade points
CD – below average – 65 - 69% - 1.50 grade points
D – inferior – 60 - 64% - 1.00 grade points
F – failure – 50% & below – 0 grade points

College policies
Cell phones, Blackberries, iPods, PDAs or any other electronic devices are not to be
used in the classroom.

Academic integrity is essential to a student's education. Plagiarism, Cheating, Fabrication and Facilitating Academic Dishonesty are offences that will not be tolerated. Plagiarism—loosely defined as the presentation of the work of another author as if it were your own—will not be tolerated. If you are unclear about how to cite your sources properly, you are urged to discuss the matter with the instructor before submitting an assignment. Academic regulations and procedures are governed by University policy. Academic dishonesty cases will be handled in accordance with the University policy. See http://www.mtu.edu/dean/conduct/policy/academic-integrity/.

Class attendance is very important. Three unexcused absences are permitted; it is your responsibility to notify the instructor if you cannot be in class more than this. More than three unexcused absences without consultation with the professor may result in a lowering of the final course grade by at least a half letter grade, and additional unexcused absences may result in a grade of F being recorded for the entire course. See http://www.mtu.edu/dean/conduct/policy/attendance/ for more information. If you have a disability that could affect your performance in this class or that requires an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please see your professor as soon as possible so that we can make appropriate arrangements. The Affirmative Action Office has asked that you be made aware of the following: Michigan Technological University complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at Michigan Tech, please call the Dean of Students Office at 487-2212. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, Chair/Dean of your academic unit, or the Affirmative Programs Office at 487-3310.

Academic Integrity:
http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.

Disability Services:
http://www.admin.mtu.edu/dos/disability.htm