

**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Western University, Canada
Undergraduate Course Outline
Philosophy 2078G
Digital Humanities 2126G**

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<http://publish.uwo.ca/~sbrennan/>
<http://ethicsforadigitalworld.wordpress.com/>

Thursdays 2:30-3:30, Location: TC 141

Two additional online hours of your choosing per week—this course is a *blended course* with both in person and online components

Office Hours: Thursdays 1-2 pm

Description

Through social media, computer gaming, and virtual communities, we spend a considerable portion of our lives in the digital world. What moral considerations ought to guide our conduct as digital citizens? This class will consider the ethics of life online, exploring questions such as the following: What are our rights and responsibilities in the digital world? How is social media changing our relationships? How do we balance copyright claims against demands for open access? How do we trade off anonymity and accountability? What's the relationship between our virtual identities and our physical identities? What constraints, if any, shape our digital identities? Is piracy always wrong? Does a hacker's code of ethics make any sense? Is cyber bullying worse than other forms of bullying? How should we respond to sexism, racism, homophobia and other forms of hate and exclusion in online communities? Ethically speaking, are there events that we ought not to tweet about? Where do and don't smart phones belong? Are there constraints on how we edit and present images online? Students will explore these questions and others through a study of both ethical theory and a series of cases in the burgeoning and important field of digital ethics.

TEXTS

All readings will be accessible through OWL.

REQUIREMENTS

Online participation, short writing assignments, questions, and responses (assignment details will posted on the OWL site)

40%

Two short essays due 6th and 12th week of the semester. There will be different topics for those taking this class as a Philosophy credit and those taking it as DH credit.

60%

AUDIT

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://www.uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.