

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Information Systems  
with effect from Semester A in 2017 / 2018**

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Course Title:** Social, Legal and Ethical Issues of the Internet

**Course Code:** IS4546

**Course Duration:** One Semester (13 weeks)

**Credit Units:** 3

**Level:** B4

Arts and Humanities

**Proposed Area:**  
*(for GE courses only)*

Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations

Science and Technology

**Medium of Instruction:** English

**Medium of Assessment:** English

**Prerequisites:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

**Precursors:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

**Equivalent Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

**Exclusive Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* IS4542 Legal and Ethical Issues in Information Systems  
IS4545 Legal, Security and Risk Management Issues for IS  
JC4002 Legal, Ethical & Security Issues in MIM

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

(A 150-word description about the course)

This course is about the social, legal and ethical issues in using information technology (IT) for business purposes. The course introduces the implications and impacts of the internet on social, legal and ethical issues that information systems (IS) professionals can expect to encounter at work. You will learn how to evaluate the controversies and alternative points of view with respect to the privacy and protection of personal data, the reliability of information systems used in organisational contexts, the risks involved with the use of information systems, freedom of speech, intellectual property rights and duties, computer crimes and a variety of other work, social and professional issues. At the end, you will gain strong awareness and clear understanding of professional issues and challenges faced by contemporary information systems professionals, and how they can best deal with these issues.

### 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be in a position to think and act as (junior) Information Systems Professionals, fully aware of the basic set of social, legal and ethical responsibilities and in a position to deal with ethical dilemmas and legal challenges that they can expect to face when they start work.

No.	CILOs <sup>#</sup>	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Discover and describe the professional principles and responsibilities of an information systems practitioner.	20%			
2.	Assess how to deal effectively with professional challenges that may affect their work.	20%			
3.	Propose creative solutions to multi-criteria problem situations, so as to create justifiable solutions that are innovative, relevant and rigorous.	20%	✓	✓	
4.	Assess the impacts of their proposed solutions.	20%			
5.	Identify and evaluate the legal, ethical, and security issues and principles that are critical to professional conduct in Information Systems.	20%			
		100%			

\* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

<sup>#</sup> Please specify the alignment of CILOs to the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning outcomes (PILOs) in Section A of Annex.

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

### 3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.					Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	
TLA1: Seminar	IS4546 is taught as a 3-hour seminar. Seminars usually contain a mix of "lecture" and "discussion", the latter often supported by case analysis and discussion.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Seminar: 3 Hours/Week
TLA2: Semester Group Project	The semester project requires each group to choose an ethical dilemma of a real-world organisation not discussed in class (ideally based in Hong Kong or China), but one that involves course concepts and issues, and is based on publically available documentation (e.g., newspaper articles, journal articles, web site articles). Each group will write up their synthesis and overview of the case problem, then analyse the situation, and their recommend solutions based on a professional IS perspective and course principles.  More details on the assignment will be provided during the semester.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.					Weighting*	Remarks <sup>#</sup>
	1	2	3	4	5		
Continuous Assessment: 60%							
<b>AT1. Seminar Exercises and Homework</b> Each seminar will include case or scenario-based analysis and discussion activities to clarify the course concepts; thus, attendance and active student participation are critical.  Key to this learning, occasional group or individual homework and computer-based learning assignments will be given, such as short case analyses. Additionally, each group will present a short presentation on a pre-assigned topic once during the semester.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	30%	
<b>AT2. Group Semester Project</b> One semester group project, as previously described.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	30%	
Examination: 40% (duration: one 2-hour exam)							
<b>AT3. Examination</b> A written examination is developed to assess student's competence level of the taught subjects.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	40%	
* The weightings should add up to 100%.						100%	

<sup>#</sup> Remark: Students must pass BOTH coursework and examination in order to get an overall pass in this course.

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task (AT)	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
AT1. Seminar Exercises and Homework	Ability to accurately describe and assess the relative impact of all key issues & responsibilities relevant to IS professionals, with a high level of detail and appreciation of the ethical and legal subtleties involved.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
	Ability to accurately describe how professional challenges at work can be dealt with. Engage in an intellectually sophisticated debate on the salience of the topic, demonstrating a deep awareness of professional responsibilities.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
	Capability to creatively propose solutions that are innovative, relevant and rigorous to multi-criteria problem situations.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
	Ability to rigorously and comprehensively assess the impacts of proposed solutions on various stakeholders.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
	Ability to accurately identify and critique the legal, ethical, audit and security issues that are critical to professional conduct in Information Systems.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
AT2. Group Semester Project	Ability to accurately describe and assess the relative impact of all key issues & responsibilities relevant to IS professionals, with a high level of detail and appreciation of the ethical and legal subtleties involved.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
	Ability to accurately describe how professional challenges at work can be dealt with. Engage in an intellectually sophisticated debate on the salience of the topic, demonstrating a deep awareness of professional responsibilities.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
	Capability to creatively propose solutions that are innovative, relevant and rigorous to multi-criteria problem situations.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels

	Ability to rigorously and comprehensively assess the impacts of proposed solutions on various stakeholders.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
	Ability to accurately identify and critique the legal, ethical, audit and security issues that are critical to professional conduct in Information Systems.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
AT3. Examination	Ability to accurately describe and assess the relative impact of all key issues & responsibilities relevant to IS professionals, with a high level of detail and appreciation of the ethical and legal subtleties involved.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
	Ability to accurately describe how professional challenges at work can be dealt with. Engage in an intellectually sophisticated debate on the salience of the topic, demonstrating a deep awareness of professional responsibilities.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
	Capability to creatively propose solutions that are innovative, relevant and rigorous to multi-criteria problem situations.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
	Ability to rigorously and comprehensively assess the impacts of proposed solutions on various stakeholders.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
	Ability to accurately identify and critique the legal, ethical, audit and security issues that are critical to professional conduct in Information Systems.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels

**Part III Other Information** (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

**1. Keyword Syllabus**

*(An indication of the key topics of the course.)*

Ethics; IT ethics; Ethical decision making; Data privacy; Information security; Intellectual property; Accountability; Reliability; Liability; Computer crimes; Computer abuse; IT risks; Information systems; Security policies.

**2. Reading List**

**2.1 Compulsory Readings**

*(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)*

1.	<u>Ethics for the Information Age</u> by Michael Quinn, Pearson Education (7th Edition), 2017.
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**2.2 Additional Readings**

*(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)*

1.	Baase, S., <u>A Gift of Fire: Social, Legal, and Ethical Issues for Computing and the Internet</u> , 4th Edition, Pearson, 2013.
2.	Hunton, J., Bryan, S. and Bagranoff, N., <u>Core Concepts of Information Technology Auditing</u> , John Wiley & Sons, 2004.
3.	Langford, D., <u>Internet Ethics</u> , Macmillan, 2000.
4.	Journal of Business Ethics.
5.	Ethics and Information Technology.