

COM5513: AI COMMUNICATION ETHICS AND GOVERNANCE

Effective Term

Semester B 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

AI Communication Ethics and Governance

Subject Code

COM - Media and Communication

Course Number

5513

Academic Unit

Media and Communication (COM)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

The quick development of AI technologies and their applications in the human communication process has fostered ethical controversies and governance challenges. This course aims to teach students the fundamentals, principles, practices, and theories of ethics and governance of AI applications for human communication and digital media, such as Generative AI, algorithm-powered platforms, robotic journalists, virtual influencers, chatbots, and content recommender systems. Students can understand how to design and evaluate AI systems that align with human values and manage human digital records effectively and responsibly. Through lectures, seminars, assignments, and case studies, students will examine various ethics and governance issues such as AI alignment, algorithm and culture, algorithmic auditing, AI-related ethics, and digital governance. The students can fit various positions in the public sector, NGOs, media organizations, technical companies, and start-ups as AI ethics consultants and content editors to support and manage the decision-making process.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Analyze from a historical and comparative approach of communication ethics issues, with a focus on the US, the EU, mainland China, and Hong Kong	20	x		
2	Demonstrate a good understanding of the core principles of AI alignment and digital government frameworks	20	x		
3	Identify the major challenges and conflicts of AI governance in the human communication process	20	x	x	
4	To crucially and systematically analyze AI communication ethics and government issues and cases in real-world situations	20		x	x
5	Develop evidence-based problem-solving skills for AI communication ethics and governance	20		x	x

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 real-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.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures/seminars	- Lectures on reviewing the core principles of AI communication ethics and governance in the US, the EU, mainland China, and Hong Kong. - Investigation of political, economic, and cultural factors that shape the AI ethics and governance challenges - Guest lecture or seminar on AI ethics and governance	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	11 weeks
2	Presentation / assignments	- Class discussions on the ethical and governance controversies on AI and its application to human communication - Present the analytical paper	2, 3, 4, 5	5 weeks

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Class participation	1, 2, 3, 4	20	-	Yes
2	Essays	1, 2, 5	30	-	Yes
3	Quizzes	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	30	-	No
4	Group-based case study and presentation	3, 4, 5	20	The students will work on a group project of their choice throughout the semester. The project themes may be a case analysis of issues and cases related to AI ethics and governance in the human communication domain. AI tools can only be used to brainstorm ideas.	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Class participation

Criterion

Ability to demonstrate independent thinking in learning course material and to complete, with accuracy and clarity, in-class exercises and online discussions.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Actively participated in all of the related class activities.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Actively participated in most of the related class activities.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Rarely participated in the related class activities.

Marginal

(D) Occasionally participated in the related class activities.

Failure

(F) Did not participate in any of the related class activities.

Assessment Task**2. Essays****Criterion**

Ability to demonstrate and explain accurately and clearly the basic concepts and theories in the lectures and to apply theories to some real-life cases and scenarios related to AI and ethics and governance

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellently completed all the essays.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Adequately completed the essays.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Completed the essays with much room for improvement.

Marginal

(D) Completed the essays, but writing was inaccurate or poorly reasoned.

Failure

(F) Did not complete the essays.

Assessment Task**3. Quizzes****Criterion**

Ability to demonstrate and explain accurately and clearly the basic concepts and theories in the lectures and to apply theories to some real-life cases and scenarios related to AI and ethics and governance.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellently completed all the quizzes.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Adequately completed the quizzes.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Completed the quizzes with much room for improvement.

Marginal

(D) Completed the quizzes, but answers were mostly inaccurate.

Failure

(F) Did not complete the quizzes.

Assessment Task

4. Group-based case study and presentation

Criterion

Demonstrating the ability of coherent and cogent academic writing on a related topics. Ability to use appropriate conceptual and methodological tools in completing the project.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) The presentation and the paper demonstrated full understanding of the concepts and theories covered in the class.

Good

(B+, B, B-) The presentation and the paper demonstrated solid understanding of the concepts and theories covered in the class.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) The presentation and the paper demonstrated minimal understanding of the concepts and theories covered in the class.

Marginal

(D) The presentation and the paper demonstrated superficial understanding of the concepts and theories covered in the class.

Failure

(F) The presentation and the paper demonstrated little or no understanding of the concepts and theories covered in the class.

Additional Information for AR

Not applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2025/26

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

AI ethics, AI alignment, digital governance, human-centered AI, machine learning, algorithm auditing, content management, privacy, intellectual property, data security, cybercrime, Generative AI, Web3 regulations, technology for social good, intervention

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

	Title
1	Crawford, K. (2021). <i>The atlas of AI: Power, politics, and the planetary costs of artificial intelligence</i> . Yale University Press.
2	Noble, S. U. (2018). <i>Algorithms of oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism</i> . New York University Press.
3	Napoli, P. M. (2019). <i>Social Media and the Public Interest: Media Regulation in the Disinformation Age</i> . Columbia University Press.
4	Moore, R.L., Murray, M.D., & Youm, K.H. (2021). <i>Media Law and Ethics</i> (6th ed.). Routledge.
5	Helberger, N. (2021). On the democratic role of news recommenders. In <i>Algorithms, Automation, and News</i> (pp. 14-33). Routledge.

Additional Readings

	Title
1	Diakopoulos, N., Bandy, J., & Dambanemuya, H. (2023). Auditing Human–Machine Communication Systems Using Simulated Humans. <i>The SAGE Handbook of Human–Machine Communication</i> , 178.
2	Gorwa, R. (2019). What is platform governance? <i>Information, communication & society</i> , 22(6), 854-871.
3	Möller, J., Trilling, D., Helberger, N., & van Es, B. (2020). Do not blame it on the algorithm: an empirical assessment of multiple recommender systems and their impact on content diversity. In <i>Digital media, political polarization and challenges to democracy</i> (pp. 45-63). Routledge.
4	European Commission. (2022). <i>A European approach to artificial intelligence</i> .