

Syllabus: Ethics and Values in Design GBDA 306

Contact Information

Instructor: Jennifer R. Whitson, PhD. *In your emails and communications, please call me Dr. W, Prof, or JW.*

This class is scheduled for *Wednesdays*. This does not mean that you must do the activities and assignments on that day (other than, of course, attend class). It means that on Wednesdays your instructor will be fully present to assist you should you have any questions about the week's topic. The weekly modules will be released on Wednesday morning at 9 AM EST.

- Synchronous portion of class: Wednesdays 10:00-11:20 AM on [WebEX](#) (through LEARN). Yes. You are expected to attend. It will be fun.
- Asynchronous discussion forums: Each module runs Wednesday 9:00am - Tuesday 11:30pm.
- Drop in hours: Wednesdays from 2:00-3:00pm on [WebEX](#)
- Meeting times with Instructor: Wednesdays, booked through [Calendly](#).

See the below "Contact Us" Table for more information.

Announcements

I will use the Announcements widget on the Course Home page during the term to communicate new or changing information regarding due dates, any instructor absences, etc., as needed. You are expected to read the announcements on a regular basis. To ensure you are viewing the complete list of announcements, you may need to click Show All Announcements.

Discussions

Most of our course content, including links to readings, will be found in one central place: the LEARN discussion forums. It's odd, I know. But keeping everything in one place on one site makes it MUCH easier for everyone to keep on top of things.

I have provided a **Community Forum** discussion site for class-wide discussions, which -along with other gems- includes an "Ask the Instructor" discussion forum. Use the "[Ask the Instructor Forum](#)" when you have a question that may benefit the whole class. Also, check this forum to see if your question has already been answered before reaching out to me.

To extend the classroom experience, some of your coursework and discussion will take place within forums dedicated to weekly modules. There are 12 modules total. The class will be divided into smaller groups to facilitate more engaged discussion. These groups will change and be randomly re-assigned every 4 modules.

Discussions can be accessed from the Course Home page by clicking "Connect" and then "Discussions" on the course navigation bar.

Contact Us

Who and Why	Contact Details
Instructor and TAs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course-related questions (e.g., course content, deadlines, assignments, etc.) 	<p>Post your course-related questions to the Ask the Instructor discussion topic. This allows other students to benefit from your question as well.</p> <p>Questions of a personal nature can be directed to your instructor.</p> <p>Instructor: Jennifer R. Whitson, PhD jwhitson@uwaterloo.ca</p>

Who and Why	Contact Details
<p>Instructor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions of a personal nature <p>TAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews of draft writing before submission, cat photos, etc. 	<p>TAs: Krystle Shore</p> <p>kshore@uwaterloo.ca</p> <p>Stacey Colliver</p> <p>scollive@uwaterloo.ca</p> <p>Learning online asynchronously can be isolating, so come visit! Weekly Drop in Hours are Wednesdays 2:00-3:00pm using the WebEX meeting function in LEARN.</p> <p>Every student is encouraged to introduce themselves to me before March 31 by attending a drop-in session and saying hello, or booking a 15 min one-on-one appointment via Calendly or email. Both Drop ins and one-on-ones may count as your “one-on-one” grade (see below).</p> <p>We check email and the Ask the Instructor discussion topic frequently and will make every effort to reply to your questions within <i>48 hours</i>, Monday to Friday. When emailing us, please indicate the course code in the subject line.</p> <p>*Discussion topics can be accessed by clicking Connect and then Discussions on the course navigation bar above.</p> <p>Weekly Drop in Hours are Wednesdays 2:00-3:00pm, using the WebEx meeting function in LEARN.</p> <p>Calendly Meeting Booking: https://calendly.com/jwhitson-uw/15min</p>
<p>Technical Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical problems with Waterloo LEARN 	<p>learnhelp@uwaterloo.ca</p> <p>Include your full name, WatIAM user ID, student number, and course name and number.</p> <p>Technical support is available during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM (Eastern Time).</p> <p>LEARN Help Student Documentation</p>
<p>Student Resources</p>	<p>Student Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic advice • Student success • WatCards • Library services and more

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

Course Description

This course will explore the ethical responsibilities that emerge from the nexus of design, business, and globalization. Students will critically reflect upon the ethical considerations behind contemporary business and design practices.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand how values and biases come to be embedded in everyday technologies, the impact of these values and biases, and the role of designers and creative workers in these processes.
2. Identify Dark Design Patterns and the contexts behind their increasing deployment.
3. Assess and evaluate different approaches that promote more ethical design, such as professional, legal, and socio-cultural methods.
4. Develop ethical reasoning skills via textual analysis, discussion, case studies, and debate.
5. Reflect on how one's research, writing, and debate activities have shaped one's decision making and practices.
6. Recognize one's own structural position as a designer, the strengths, limitations, and responsibilities that come with this position, and develop a personal code of ethics.

Grade Breakdown

The following table represents the grade breakdown of this course.

Activities and Assignments	Due Date	Weight (%)
Complete the Pre-Course Survey	Jan 19	2%
Attend a Drop-in Session or one-on-one session with your instructor.	Any time before Wed Mar 31	2%
Book or Multimedia Review	Proposal Due Feb 4th. Review Due March 11	10%
Weekly In-Class Activity Participation or Alternate Asynchronous Activity (12 at 2% each)	Weekly.	24%
Participation in Module Discussion Groups (Best 10 of 12 at 3% each)	Weekly.	30%
Weekly Module Reflection Assignments (assessed every 4 modules)	Weekly. (Due dates for marking are Feb 9, Mar 18, Apr 13)	30%
Complete the Mid-Course Survey	Mar 2	2%

* For those unable to attend the synchronous lectures, the lecture component will be recorded and an alternate written activity, to be submitted to the appropriate Dropbox in LEARN will constitute your grade for that week.

Final Assessment

There are no exams or major term tests in this course. Successful completion of the course relies on consistent weekly participation, both in terms of your group forums and in completing individual weekly module reflections.

I, the instructor, reserve the right to alter marks for individual students based on their contributions to group discussions on LEARN and in our asynchronous sessions. Group forums and activities are meant to initiate discussion. If you post once and leave, or do not engage with other classmates, your mark will reflect this. We do not learn alone.

Your Instructor



I am an Associate Professor in the [Department of Sociology & Legal Studies](#) and at the [Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business](#). I study the secret life of software, mostly at the nexus of digital games and Surveillance Studies. I have been researching surveillance for over 15 years, and have been conducting ethnographic fieldwork with game developers since 2012. Past projects included work on digital media surveillance, social influences on software development processes, and gamification. You can find more of my work at [IndieInterfaces.com](#) and [jenniferwhitson.com](#). This is my pre-COVID hair.

Your Teaching Assistants



Stacey Colliver is a PhD candidate at the University of Waterloo in the Sociology department. Her areas of research include online governance and content moderation policy development. She is also currently a sessional instructor at the University of Guelph in the Political Science department and has worked in the fields of restorative justice and poverty law. Stacey obtained her MA from the University of Guelph in Criminology & Criminal Justice Policy, and her BA in Political Science, also from the University of Guelph.



Krystle Shore is a PhD Candidate at the University of Waterloo in the Department of Sociology & Legal Studies. Her research interests broadly concern the fields of policing and surveillance, and more specifically include critically examining the use of police surveillance technologies (e.g., police body-worn cameras, wearable location tracking devices). Krystle's dissertation research explores the obscuring of protective and security-based surveillance practices and how these practices relate to broader trends in power and governance. She is specifically examining the deployment of wearable location tracking technology by police in order to track people who have cognitive impairments. In addition, Krystle is interested in the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic dimensions of various trends within academia, such as the contemporary push for research collaboration and knowledge mobilization.

Materials and Resources

All readings and course resources are accessible within the class discussion forums via hyperlinks.

Resources

[Library COVID-19: Updates on library services and operations.](#)

Course and School Policies

Ethical Design and Research

All members of the University are required to adhere to [UW Policy 33: Ethical Behaviour](#), and as members of the Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business community we are committed to ethical design and practice. The projects we work on, including our course projects, services, and business ideas, are grounded in principles of fairness, accessibility, equity, and fundamental respect. Any learning or research activities involving human participation, including observation, usability testing, and the use of data, are to be conducted in a manner that is sensitive to the inherent worth of all human beings and the respect and consideration that they are due. If your work requires the use of human participation, please let your instructor know what activities you are planning to ensure that you are engaging in methods that help you gain the insights you need while maintaining the integrity, safety and well-being of your participants. For more information on research conducted with human subjects, please refer to the [Office of Research Ethics' guidelines](#).

How to Hand in Assignments

- All assignments must be submitted electronically via LEARN. Unless otherwise specified, **they are due by 11:30 pm**.
- Keep electronic copies of any assignments you submit. Be sure to back up your work (both locally and to network/cloud drives) as you write.
- Reflections should employ proper APA format. This should include a cover sheet that indicates your name, student number, title, instructor's name, course number, and word count. Word count should **not** include your references. Papers should have page numbering, one inch margins, be double spaced, and use 12 point, Times New Roman (default) font.
- Make sure your bibliography on submitted work (including your book/multimedia review) is perfect, including citing any images, sound clips, or visual elements incorporated in your work. If you are unfamiliar with APA citation style you should consult one of the many books in the library that will provide guidance on academic styles. Perdue also has online guides found here: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Late Policies and Extension Requests

- There are generally no extensions granted for discussion forum activities.
- Individual written assignments submitted late have a grace period of 72 hours. After that, they will be docked up to 10% per day.
- Extensions longer than 72 hours require:
 - special permission for an extension from the Instructor. Special permission requests must be submitted by email to the Instructor **before** the due date. I generally support extensions, as long as they are requested in advance.
 - a medical note from a doctor explaining that you could not complete the assignment; or
 - an explanatory note from AccessAbility Services, (See Note for Students with Disabilities, below).
- Failure to complete or hand in a written assignment earns a zero on that project.

University Policies

Academic integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.]

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For

information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](#).

Note for students with disabilities: [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit alternate assignment.

University policies are from the course outline template: June 15, 2009 (updated March 2018)

Remote Teaching and Learning: Student Notice of Recording

Activities for this course involve recording, in partial fulfillment of the course learning outcomes. You will receive notification of recording via at least one of the following mechanisms: within the Learning Management System (LEARN), a message from your course instructor, course syllabus/website, or other means. Some technologies may also provide a recording indicator. Images, audio, text/chat messaging that have been recorded will be available on LEARN, and be made available for students unable to attend synchronous sessions. Breakout sessions will not be recorded. Recordings will be managed according to the University records classification scheme, WatClass, and will be securely destroyed when no longer needed by the University. Your personal information is protected in accordance with the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), as well as University policies and guidelines and may be subject to disclosure where required by law.

The University will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of the recorded information, but cannot provide a guarantee of such due to factors beyond the University's control, such as recordings being forwarded, copied, intercepted, circulated, disclosed, or stored without the University's knowledge or permission, or the introduction of malware into computer system which could potentially damage or disrupt the computer, networks, and security settings. The University is not responsible for connectivity/technical difficulties or loss of data associated with your hardware, software or Internet connection.

By engaging in course activities that involve recording, you are consenting to the use of your appearance, image, text/chat messaging, and voice and/or likeness in the manner and under the conditions specified herein. (In the case of a live stream event, if you choose not to have your image or audio recorded, you may disable the audio and video functionality (see: [Student privacy during live events](#)). Instructions to participate using a pseudonym instead of your real name are included where the feature exists; however, you must disclose the pseudonym to your instructor in advance in order to facilitate class participation.) If you choose not to be recorded, this notice serves as confirmation of your understanding that this will preclude you from participating in synchronous classroom sessions.

You are not permitted to disclose the link to/URL of an event or an event session recording or copies of recording to anyone, for any reason. Recordings are available only to authorized individuals who have been directly provided the above instructions/link for their use. Recordings for personal use, required to facilitate your learning and preparation of personal course/lecture notes, should not be shared with others without the permission of the instructor or event coordinator. Review the University's [guidelines for faculty, staff and](#)

[students entering relationships with external organizations offering access to course materials](#) for more information on your obligations with respect to keeping copies of course materials. For more information about accessibility, connect with [AccessAbility Services](#).

Coronavirus Information

[Coronavirus Information for Students](#)

This resource provides updated information on COVID-19 and guidance for accommodations due to COVID-19.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage you to seek out mental health supports and resources when they are needed. You can reach out to [Campus Wellness](#) and learn about the variety of services available to promote your mental health and wellbeing.

Territorial Acknowledgement

“We acknowledge that we live and work on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.”

Credits and Copyright

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