Computer Ethics

Presentations, papers and more

Viola Schiaffonati

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- Grading of this course is on the following basis

  - **50%** final project (**written paper or class presentation**)

  - **50% oral questions** concerning the topics presented in the course

Class presentations

- If you want to do the **class presentation** in class you have to send me an email by Tuesday **October 17th**

- Schedule of the class presentations (**provisional**)

  - Tuesday **November 26th**

  - Thursday **November 26th**

  - Tuesday **December 3rd**

  - Thursday **December 5th**

  - Tuesday **December 10th**

  - Thursday **December 12th**

Class supervisions

- Topics for the presentations/papers will be proposed by you and then discussed **individually** with the instructor

- Schedule of presentations and papers supervision (**in class**)

    - Tuesday **October 15th**

    - Thursday **October 31st**

    - Tuesday **November 14th**

    - Thursday **November 21st**

    - Thursday **December 17th** (only for papers)

More on presentations

- Class **presentations** will be approximately between **20** to **30** minutes long (depending on their number)

- **5** or **10** minutes for **Q&A**

- You can use slides or other supports during your presentation

- Presentations have to be in **English**

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Written papers

- As an **alternative** to a class presentation you can write an **essay** on an original topic

- This **essay** constitutes **50%** of the grading of this course

- The other **50%** is constituted by **oral questions** about the topics presented in the course (papers on the course web page) and taking place the date of the exam

- Both paper and oral exam can be either in **English** or in **Italian**

  - Even mix options (paper in English and oral exam in Italian)

Papers are due 1 week before the exam

- Papers are due a **week before** the date of the exam (no exceptions admitted)

- Sessions: dates will be communicated and posted on the webpage of the course

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Papers: places

- Papers have to be delivered **both electronically and by hand**

- Electronically as pdf attachments in an email sent to

    - viola.schiaffonati@polimi.it

    - The pdf document must be named with **Surname** and **Name** of the student

- By hand as printed documents

    - Either at the instructor's office (DEIB building 20 I floor, room 150, ext. 3622)

    - Or at the porter's lodge (portineria DEIB building 20 ground floor) with a clear indication of the instructor's name (hours: 9:00-18:00)

Some rules

- If you are not officially enrolled in this course, you **cannot** do the exam

- If you are not officially registered for an exam date, you **cannot** do the exam

- If you decide to reject your final grading, you are required to write **another paper** on a **different topic** (also if the paper was graded as sufficient or more)

- You can submit your paper for an exam date, and then decide that you will do the oral examination in another date (just let me know if you can)

- No restrictions are applied in the case you do not pass the exam (**only**: you have to rewrite the paper on a different topic)

Your paper

- The paper is required to be around **3500 words**

- The paper has to be written just by **one person** (no group)

- The topic of the paper must be **officially approved** by the course instructor

  - After you have selected it you are required to send an email to **viola.schiaffonati@polimi.it** and wait for approval

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What the paper/presentation is about?

- These tips are valid also for class **presentation**

- The paper must offer an **argument**, so you have to defend the claims you present

- It can't consist in the **mere report** of your opinion, nor in the mere report of the opinions of others (even if these others can be considered authorities)

  - Yes: '*My view is that P. I believe this because …*' or '*I find that the following considerations … provide a convincing argument for P.*'

  - No: '*My view is that P.*'

- You have to explicitly present **reasons** for the claims you are making

How to choose the topic

- Don't be over-ambitious: a good paper/presentation is modest and makes a **small point**, but it makes it **clearly** and **straightforwardly**, and it offers **good reasons** in support of it

- The aim of your paper/presentation is to show that you **understand** the material presented in this course and you're able to **critically think** about it

  - So your paper does have to show some **independent thinking**

  - No necessity to come up with your own theory, but **merely summarizing** what others have said **won't be enough**

Don't focus on title but on content!

- Focus on what you want to state in the paper and on the way in which you will argue in favor of it

- The title will come …

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Steps

- Once you have selected the topic and defined the **provisional** title (remember: you need the official approval of instructor) you can start to work at the paper/presentation

- Structuring the paper

- Stages of writing

- Bibliography

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Structuring the paper (1)

- Begin by formulating your **precise thesis**

  - State your thesis clearly and concisely in your introduction

  - Get the point quickly and without digression

  - Don't try to introduce your argument within a grand historical narrative

Structuring the paper (2)

- **Define technical** or **ambiguous** terms used in your thesis or argument

  - Define for your reader any special or unclear terms

  - Think of an imaginary reader that has some knowledge on these topics, but she/he is not an expert (e.g. ,a colleague of you in this course)

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Structuring the paper (3)

- If necessary, **motivate** your thesis (explain to your reader why they should care about it)

  - Try to clarify why a reader would care about the truth of the claim you are arguing for

  - Try to explain why your thesis is interesting

Structuring the paper (4)

- Explain briefly how you will argue in favor of your thesis

  - At the beginning **indicate how you will proceed** in claiming for your argument

Structuring the paper (5)

- If necessary, explain the argument you will be critiquing

  - This means to explain the argument in **your own words** and according to your own understanding of the steps involved in it

  - You need to be very clear on the **precise logical** structure of an author's argument

  - Stick to explaining **only the details that are essential** to the author's argument for the particular thesis and for your own argument for your thesis

  - Take care to clearly indicate when you are speaking in your own voice and when you are explicating someone else's argument or point of view

Structuring the paper (6)

- Make an argument to support your thesis

  - To make the strongest possible argument **do not skip any steps** and try not to rest your argument on any premises that your reader might not be willing to accept

  - In presenting your argument, be straightforward in your language and **say precisely what you mean**

Structuring the paper (7)

- In order to strengthen your argument **anticipate** and **answer objections** to it

  - It helps support your main argument and makes it more compelling

  - When you present an objection, you must always present a reason or reasons for thinking it true

  - The simple negation of a thesis is not an objection to it

Organize your paper in sections

- Abstract
    - What you did in a nutshell

- Introduction (Section 1)
    - What your thesis is and why you are discussing it

- Sections (Sections 2-n)
    - All the necessary steps to support your thesis (arguments and counterarguments)

- Conclusions (Section n+1)
    - Summary and discussion of your result, and possible future directions

- References
    - Works you have referred to

Abstract

- The abstract is **only** text

- Write your abstract using concise, but complete, sentences, and get to the point quickly

- Maximum length should be 200-300 words, usually in a single paragraph

- The abstract **should not** contain

  - lengthy background information

  - references to other literature

  - elliptical (i.e., ending with ...) or incomplete sentences

  - abbreviations or terms that may be confusing to readers

  - any sort of illustration, figure, or table, or references to them

Introduction

- **Blueprint** for the entire paper

- Introductions usually have three parts

  - presentation of the problem or the research inquiry

  - purpose and focus of the current paper

  - summary or overview of the writer's position or arguments

- Introduction (Section 1)

  - What your thesis is and why you are discussing it

- Because introductions are so highly structured, you may actually write your introduction **last**

What is a bibliography?

- A listing of the **sources** you used and consulted to write your paper

- Includes items such as: books, journal/magazine/newspaper articles, dissertations, theses, websites, book reviews, speeches, etc.

- It is located at the end of the paper

- It is arranged in alphabetical order - typically by the creator (such as author or editor)

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Why do I need a bibliography?

- **Follow-up**: It allows readers to consult the sources you used to write your paper

- **Acknowledgement**: To give credit to ideas or works created by someone else. If you fail to do this you are plagiarizing - this is a reality whether you are doing this intentionally or unintentionally

Citation style

- While it may be hard to believe, there are hundreds of different citation styles in existence!

- When you choose one style, be **coherent** and use it through the whole paper

- For your type of paper I suggest the following style: **(Author year)**

- Example

  - In the text: … *as discussed in (Godfrey-Smith 2003)*

  - At the end: in the Bibliography/References section

    Godfrey-Smith, P. (2003), *Theory and Reality*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Direct quotation

- If you use the **precise words of an author**, you have to add the page number in the text

  - In the text: "… *The short answer is that"* (Godfrey-Smith 2003, 76).

Types of references

- **Books**

  - Hacking, I. (1983). *Representing and Intervening*, Cambridge University Press.

- **Articles in journals**

  - Lenhard, J. (2007). "Computer simulation: the cooperation between experimenting and modeling", *Philosophy of Science*, 74, 176-194.

- **Articles in books**

  - Hartmann, S. (1996). "The world as a process: simulations in the natural and social sciences" in Hegselmann, R. et al. (eds.) *Simulation and Modeling in the Social Sciences from the Philosophy of Science point of view*, Theory and Decision Library, Kluwer, 77-100.

- **Articles in conference proceedings**

  - Querrec, G., Rodin, V., Abgrall, J.F., Kerdelo, S., Tisseau, J. (2003) ."Uses of multi-agents systems for simulation of mapk pathway", *Proceedings of the Third IEEE Symposium on Bioinformatics and Bioengineering* (BIBE03), 421-425.

- **Websites**

  - www.harvard.edu (last access October 2016)

References

- Harvard College Writing Program, "A Brief Guide to Writing the Philosophy Paper", Harvard College www.fas.harvard.edu/~phildept/files/ShortGuidetoPhiloso phicalWriting.pdf

- Prior, J. , "Guidelines for Writing a Philosophy Paper", www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html

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