CS 493 Seminar in Professional Practices
Syllabus

Prof. Caristi
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Texts: Handouts and readings
Office hours: Mon. & Wed.: 9:00-10:00 and 3:00-4:00
Thurs.: 11:00-12:00

Goals
The purpose of this class is for you, an educated computer technologist, to become aware of and formulate your own informed opinions on the professional, ethical, legal, and social issues raised by computing technology. You already know things that most people don’t know, you have ways of thinking that most people don’t have. You should have a lot to bring to public discussion. You will also be learning how to make formal presentations, a skill that is necessary for all professionals.

Procedures
Most classes will be oriented around discussing texts, either a reading for everybody, a book presented to the class by a student, a written assignment based on a reading, or an in-class debate. For most classes, one or several students will be assigned to participate, for example as discussion leaders or debaters. You will each give several presentations to the class, including one formal presentation of at least half a class period. There will often be short quizzes on the readings.

Grading
30% class participation
30% written assignments
30% presentations
10% quizzes.

The Honor Code applies. Do not write each other’s assignments or plagiarize others’ writing. It is important to cite sources.

Possible Topics (others may be suggested as you wish)
The Vioxx case
Regulation
Cathedral and Bazaar
Gnu Public License and alternatives
ACM Code of Ethics
Donald Knuth and the 3:16 Project
Don Norman on Design of Everyday Things
Internet domain name assignment controversy
Wiretapping and other privacy issues
Freedom of speech