COSC 3400: SKILLS FOR COMPUTING PROFESSIONALS

Fall 2012
Course Syllabus – a more detailed one will be emailed to you.

Please read the entire syllabus and ask any questions you may have. Then, please complete and sign this page and submit within 4 class meetings. No assignments will be graded if this document is not returned in a timely fashion. Thank you.

XIV. _______ In Conclusion: I have read and understand this syllabus as well as the University Guide for Computer Ethics. I agree to comply with the conditions stipulated in both documents. I have a clear understanding of ethical and legal use of my computer accounts and will use them legally and ethically.

Please sign below:

___________________________________________
(signature)

___________________________________________
(date)
COSC 3400: SKILLS FOR COMPUTING PROFESSIONALS

Fall 2012
Course Syllabus – a more detailed one will be emailed to you.

Course Information:

Instructor: Professor Binkerd
Office: CI 320
Phone: 825-2397
Email: cbinkerd@sci.tamucc.edu
carol.binkerd@tamucc.edu
Office Hours: TR, 10:00-11:00
Class Time: Tues. 2:00-5:20
Thurs. 2:00-3:15
Location: CS 112, CI 230

Textbooks:

Author: Strunk
Title: Elements of Style
ISBN: 9780205632640

Author: Quinn
Title: Ethics for Information Age
ISBN: 9780132133876

Materials Needed:

Several folders
Money on Sand Dollar ID card
Spiral bound notebook
2 DVD’s – can be purchased from Career Services for $1 each
Flash drives
Others will be emailed to your islander email account.

Course Description:
This course focuses on the professional skills that computer scientists will need to be successful in their careers and lives. There are two key areas of study, communication skills needed by
computer scientists and their ethical responsibilities. Communication skills will include writing and giving oral presentations about computer science topics and life skills. Ethical issues will be explored from a computer science perspective.

Prerequisites:

ENGL 1302

Student Outcomes:

1. Describe the professional codes of ethics from the ACM, the IEEE Computer Society, and one other organization.
2. Summarize the legal basis for the right to privacy and freedom of expression in the United States and how those concepts vary from country to country.
4. Explain how the Internet may change the historical balance in protecting freedom of expression. Include discussion about the disadvantages and advantages of free expression in cyberspace.
5. Demonstrate the ability to write a research paper, using good grammar, proper sentence and paragraph construction, using proper document formats.
6. Be able to write letters, resumes, and cover letters. Learn appropriate interview skills and contract negotiation.
7. Demonstrate the skillful use of presentations as used in computer science.

Major Topics:

Professional ethics, privacy, written and verbal communication skills

Course Grades:

Grades:

A 90-100  B 80-89  C 70-79  D 60-69  F < 60

Many of the assignments will involve class and group participation. Therefore, attendance is mandatory. For each class that a student is late or does not attend, the final semester average will be docked 2%.

Percentages by type of assignment:

30% Journal:

35% Formal Presentation and Paper:
35% Class and Homework Assignments:

Class Policies:

**Attendance and Student Conduct:**

**Absences.** The student is required to attend class. If the student cannot attend class that day, it is the student’s responsibility to contact another class member to obtain handouts and information about the content that was covered. Additionally, it is the student’s responsibility to learn the material that was covered. Do not contact the professor.

Many of the assignments will involve class and group participation. Therefore, attendance is mandatory. For each class that a student is late or does not attend, the final semester average will be docked 2%.

**Contact.** All contact will be via the student’s Islander email account. Please check often

**Professional Behavior, Good Manners and Work Skills**

Students are expected to have good manners, show respect for themselves and others, and not engage in any behaviors that are disruptive or disrespectful to others. Insubordination and unprofessional conduct including sexual harassment, use of inappropriate language &/or gestures, creating a hostile environment, and so on will not be tolerated. Students who cannot conduct themselves properly will fail the course, and may be referred for counseling, requested to leave the classroom, and other. If you have any questions about what constitutes inappropriate behavior, language and so on, it is your responsibility to make and attend an appointment during the professor’s office hours.

Students are required to be on time to class. Violation of this policy will result in the student not receiving hand-outs, and possibly in having the student requested to leave the class/lab, and other. The clock in the classroom/lab (or my watch) will be used to determine the correct time.

A student will be considered to be on time if the student has already obtained a copy of that day’s handouts and is seated and ready to begin class. Walking into the classroom at the minute that the class begins, is not being on time.

Students may not have headphones, laptops, pagers, cell phones, (and so on) out during class. Students must turn off all pagers, cell phones, listening devices… before entering the classroom/lab and keep them turned off during class/lab. Violation of this policy may result in the article being confiscated and it will be returned to the student on the day of the final exam.

Students are not to speak while the professor or a recognized student is speaking. Violation of this policy may result in the student being requested to leave the class/lab for the day or a longer period of time, and other. If a student wants to be recognized to ask a pertinent question, he/she should raise his/her hand and wait until the professor calls upon him/her.

Students are not to use class time to discuss personal issues. If a student has a personal issue, he/she should make an appointment with the professor to discuss this during office hours.

Unprofessional, inappropriate behaviors will lead to the student’s final average being deducted points. Examples of disruptive behaviors are entering the classroom/lab late, speaking when the professor or another student is speaking, allowing the pager or cell to emit noise during class. Therefore, it is possible for a student to fail the course, even if he/she has a passing average on exams and labs. So, if you are late one day, speak while the professor is speaking three times in one class period on the second day, and on the third day, have your cell phone go off, you will have accrued 5 infractions, and lose 10 points off your semester average.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips and so on.

**Cheating.** Students are expected to produce original work. Plagiarism and cheating are not acceptable. Violation of this policy may result in all students involved receiving a 0% on the assignment and/or failing the course. And so on.
General but Important Stuff

Students should expect to spend a minimum of 2-3 hours outside class for every hour in class. So, for this class, outside study time should be a minimum of 12 hours per week.

Students are expected to begin assignments immediately. Do not procrastinate.

Students are expected to be prepared for class. This includes being on time, having required materials ready, having reading and written assignments completed before class begins. The professor will not assign specific chapters or pages to read from the textbook. Students are expected to read the related chapters (or pages) that correspond to the topics on the tentative agenda before the topics are covered in class.

Students are expected to discuss dropping the class with the professor during office hours. The student is often not clear about his/her current standing in the class. One bad grade is not fatal. Also, the student often feels that he/she is the only one who is confused when the majority of students feel the same way.

In addition to learning the course content, the student is expected to learn professional behavior that will be appropriate in the workplace. Once employed, you will be expected to arrive on time for work, have projects and presentations prepared by the required completion date. In this field, you will often be required to work with teams. Also, if you repeatedly engage in unprofessional behavior, you will be fired. So, a part of your education is developing strong workplace skills.

Resources

Students are expected to seek assistance from the computer science programming lab assistants before coming to the professor. The programming lab assistants are located on the third floor of the CI building. Get familiar with these locations and sign-in whenever you seek their assistance.

Students are assumed to be proficient in the following: note-taking, time-management, study skills, test-taking skills, impulse control, anger management, interpersonal communication. If a student needs assistance in developing or enhancing these skills, he/she should make an appointment with the counseling center immediately since these skills take time to learn.

Also, if the student has language difficulties, poor comprehension skills and/or special needs, the student should contact the Student Disabilities Office.

Another resource the student should use for math, writing and so on is the academic success center.

Assignments:

Late assignments are not accepted. Please submit before the due date.

Journals will be collected randomly. Please bring to every class.

Many of your assignments will be completed and graded in class. No make-ups will be given. Therefore, being late to class or absent that day will result in 0% credit.

Submission. Guidelines for submission and due dates will be emailed to your Islander account. Policies about late submission will also be emailed to your Islander account.

Failure to correctly submit assignments will result in their not being graded.

The highest grade normally assigned is A/95%. A student can earn extra points on a lab assignment by participating in various activities. As a member of the university community, students should contribute to the community through service activities. Service activities include such things as aiding in retention and recruitment activities, giving class presentations, mentoring and tutoring others. You must receive written permission to use an activity as extra-credit points prior to the activity. Please see me during office hours.

Grading is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>50 or lower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assignments will be returned (during class) as soon as possible. If you think you submitted an assignment but do not receive one when the assignments are returned, OR you feel there is a mistake in the grade, you must email the professor within 24 hours of that graded assignment being returned. You must make an appointment and confer with the professor about this assignment within one week of its being returned. Failure to do so will result in the original grade standing.

Extra-Credit/Make-up for Assignments:

Availability: Only students who consistently display professional behavior are eligible.
Assignments: With the professor’s written approval, the student may complete an extra-credit assignment to replace one assignment. Students must write complete program specifications and present them to the professor during office hours. The professor may approve or deny any assignment presented.

Computer Accounts:
Mistreatment (illegal or unethical) of any computer account will result in the student receiving an F in this class. The student will receive many directions and information via email. The student is responsible for checking email on a regular basis. (If you do not know how to use email, learn ASAP.) The professor may (or may not) add alternative email addresses to the mailing list. But, the professor will not know if other servers are down and the student will still be held responsible for the email that has been sent on Islander.

Other:

Academic Advising. The College of Science and Technology requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s advisors are located in the Faculty Center, 1st floor, 361-825-5723.

Disability Policy: The computer science program complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, and so on), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities, Driftwood 101, 361-825-5816. If you need accommodations, please make an appointment with the professor ASAP. Bring with you to the appointment your accommodation letter from the TAMU-CC Students with Disabilities Office.

Grade Appeal Process. As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he/she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is first encouraged to discuss this matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Website, http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance/guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

In Conclusion: I have read and understand this syllabus as well as the University Guide for Computer Ethics. I agree to comply with the conditions stipulated in both documents. I have a clear understanding of ethical and legal use of my computer accounts and will use them legally and ethically.

Please sign below:

__________________________
(signature)
__________________________
(date)

XIV: Tentative Agenda. Will be emailed to you. Updates will be sent via Islander account. Students should complete all textbook reading and review exercises before the class meeting.

A sample schedule follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/1</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Work Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weather Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/8</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Questions on Career Folder, Ethics Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Ethical scenario, Short speeches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/15</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Critique ethics papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>CASA, Writing Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/22</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Interview questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Bring Strunk textbook to class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work in research groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Begin research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Ethics papers due before 3:30 p.m.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/1</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Career Speaker - Jonathon Richter, Baytek International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/2</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>All Major Career Fair, 10:00-2:00, Sign-up sheet</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Career Folder due before 9:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Career Speaker- Jeremy Howard, USAA, CS 108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Career Speaker – Randy Sanchez, USAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/8</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Short Speeches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/10</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Work in research groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Journals due before 3:30 p.m.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/15</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/22</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Career Speaker - Steve Alves, TAMU-CC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Univ. Counseling Center- Theresa Sharpe, Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/29</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Mock panel interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Research day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/5</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Review research papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Review research papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/12</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Public Speaking exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Need Strunk book, journal every day from now on</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>TAMU-CC: Employee Rights. Sam Ramirez, not confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/19</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Journal due before 3:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Everyone must resubmit journal</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Formal Professional Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Final copy of research paper due. Before 3:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Formal Professional Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Formal Professional Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Binkerd- Real Estate Investor Secrets</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete evaluations of class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/3</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Last Class Day-</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Binkerd - Negotiating Salaries/Raises</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- grade consultations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Complete exit survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Final Exam: 1:45-4:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Professional presentations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**XV: Formal paper and formal presentation topics.** Will be modified. Updates sent via email.

**Topics:**

1. Discuss computer-based ethical issues from several different ethical perspectives such as:
   Subjective Relativism
   Cultural Relativism
   Divine Command Theory
   Kantianism
   Act Utilitarianism
   Rule Utilitarianism
   Social Contract Theory

   A suggested text: "Gift of Fire, A: Social, Legal, and Ethical Issues for Computers and the Internet, 2/E". Sara Baase, Prentice Hall (0130082155)

2. Summarize the legal basis for the right to privacy and freedom of expression in the United States and how those concepts vary from country to country. Cover at least 3 forms of legislation or pending/proposed legislation that would curtail your freedom.


4. Explain how the Internet may change the historical balance in protecting freedom of expression. Include discussion about the disadvantages and advantages of free expression in cyberspace. Include 3 examples of proposed methods or lawsuits that intend to curtail an individual’s freedom of expression on the internet.