



Course Syllabus

Ethics of Technology

Web-Based

PHI 2647 / CRN: 85515 / Fall 2026

A Session (8/17/26 – 12/10/26)

Credit Hours: 3

Pre-requisites: ENC1101 with a minimum grade of "C." (Meets Philosophy/Religion Humanities requirement.)

Contact Information

Instructor

Ryan Hubbard, PhD
Associate Professor
Rhubbard2@gulfcoast.edu
850-769-1351 ex. 2834

Office: Social Sciences 227
Office Hours:
Monday: 8:30 - 11:00, 12:15 - 2:15
Tuesday: 8:30 - 9:30, 12:15 - 1:15
Wednesday: 8:30 - 11:00
Thursday: 8:30 - 9:30
Response Time: 24-48 hours

Division Chair

Robert Saunders, Jr., PhD.
Professor and Chair
rsaunder2@gulfcoast.edu
850-872-3826

Division Administrative Assistant

Ms. Jody Walton
Senior Administrative Assistant
jwalton1@gulfcoast.edu
850-872-3825

Course Information

Important Note

For any syllabus posted prior to the beginning of the term, the instructor reserves the right to make minor changes prior to or during the term. The instructor will notify students via e-mail or Canvas announcement when changes are made in the requirements and/or grading of the course.

Catalog Description:

Prerequisite: This course extends critical thinking and ethical reasoning to issues concerning technology. Students will investigate and evaluate questions about topics such as the direction and purpose of technological development, problems connected to artificial intelligence, robotics, enhancement technologies, virtual reality, and the risks associated with existing and emerging technologies.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

1. Students will apply critical thinking skills and ethical principles to resolve ethical issues regarding technology, such as enhancement technology, artificial intelligence, social media, and technology in business.
2. Students will develop critical thinking skills, including identifying, evaluating, and crafting arguments.
3. Students will identify and analyze ethical questions regarding technology.

Course Materials & Resources:

Gregory Robson & Jonathan Tsou, [Technology Ethics: A Philosophical Introduction and Readings](#), Routledge (2023)

Delivery Method:

This is a web-based course. All online courses at GCSC utilize the Canvas Learning System. Students should read all information presented in the Canvas course site and should periodically check for updates—at least every 48 hours.

Remember: This course is not one in which students may work at their own pace. Each week there are learning modules, assignments, online lectures, online discussions, and/or online exams with due dates. Refer to the schedule within this syllabus and within Canvas for more information.

Attendance and Make-Up Policies for this Course

Attendance Policy:

Although physical class meetings are not part of this course, participation in all interactive learning activities is required. Students “attend” class by listening to each of the lectures as assigned and taking thorough notes on each of them.

Make-Up Work Policy:

Assignments will not be accepted late. If you believe there are extenuating circumstances please contact the instructor.

AI Policy for this Course

Limited Assistive Use Only

Students may use basic assistive technologies for spelling, grammar, and formatting (e.g., PaperRater or SpellCheckPLUS); however, the use of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, Grammarly's AI function, etc.) for generating, rewriting, or enhancing content is not permitted. All work must reflect the student's original ideas and writing. Representing work created by AI as one's own is a violation of academic integrity and may result in penalties, including a zero on the assignment and additional disciplinary actions as outlined in the college's academic integrity policy.

Student Expectations

Communication and feedback within the course will occur through various channels, including GCSC email, Canvas Inbox, Canvas Announcements, Canvas Discussions, Microsoft Teams or Zoom, assignment feedback, and/or instructor office hours.

Additionally, as a student at Gulf Coast State College, you are expected to:

- **Adhere to Course Guidelines:** Follow the instructions within the course syllabus along with any additional instructions provided by the instructor. Be certain you understand the course objectives, grading criteria, and academic policies.
- **Maintain Regular Contact:** Keep in touch with your instructor via your GCSC email or other designated communication channels. Regular contact helps clarify doubts, share ideas, and foster a collaborative learning environment.
- **Active Participation:** Engage actively in the course and submit assignments on time. Your active participation is crucial for your academic success and contributes to a deeper learning experience.

As your instructor, my commitment to you is to:

- **Provide Timely Feedback:** I will review and provide feedback on your assignments and submissions promptly. My goal is to help you understand your strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Respond Via Canvas Inbox:** I will respond to your emails or messages within 24-48 hours – excluding weekends -- unless otherwise noted. I understand the importance of clear and timely communication in addressing your questions and concerns.

- **Post Regular Announcements:** Announcements will be posted to keep you updated and help you manage your time. These reminders will include important dates, upcoming assignments, and any changes to the course schedule.
- **Maintain Weekly Office Hours:** I will maintain regular weekly office hours, but I can also be available by appointment. This is to ensure I'm available for any questions or concerns that may come up during the week.

Course Requirements:

Students enrolled in this course will be required to:

- Read all of the textbook pages assigned with each Learning Module;
- Listen to and take thorough notes on the digital lectures assigned with each Learning Module,
- Complete any quizzes, discussions, or assignments in each Module;
- Complete exams AS SCHEDULED (see the course schedule below).
- Contact the instructor via email at once with any problems or issues.

Assignments/Assessment Instruments

- Quizzes & Assignments: 20%
- Reflective Project: 10%
- Final Exam: 20%
- Essay Exam 1: 15%
- Essay Exam 2: 25%
- Philosophy Journal: 10%

Assessment Detail:

- *Assignments:* Assignments & quizzes cannot be made up. If you believe there are extenuating circumstances, then please contact me.
- *Essay Exam:* The essay exam will require the Respondus Lockdown browser and a webcam. You will be able to download Respondus when you navigate to the exam in Canvas.
- *Final Exam:* The final exam will be cumulative and multiple-choice. You will take it online.
- *Discussion:* For most modules, you will be required to reply to a discussion question as well as reply to at least two other students' posts. Points will be

taken off your discussion assignment grade if you fail to respond to two other students' posts. Be respectful in your discussion posts.

Disclaimer: Canvas course grades may not be 100% accurate.

Course Schedule

Week	Day	TOPIC	ASSIGNED READING	DUE
1		Introduction & Argumentation		
2		Ethical Theory	Pg 62, <i>Ethical Theory and Technology</i> , Jonathan Tsou & Kate Walsh	
3		Def. Technology	Pg 6, <i>The Definition of Technology</i> , Val Dusek	
4		Technological Determinism	Pg 18, <i>The Values Built into Technologies</i> , David Morrow;	

5		Disagreeing Well	Pg 73, <i>Disagreeing Well about Technology</i> , Daniel C. Russell	
6		Fake News	Pg 185, <i>Fake News: There's No App for Truthfulness</i> , Axel Gelfert	
7		Psychotherapy Robots	Pg 152, <i>Ethical Issues Surrounding Artificial Intelligence Technologies in Mental Health: Psychotherapy Chatbots</i> , Serife Tekin	
8		Bio-Enhancement	" <i>Genetic Interventions...</i> " Julian Savulescu	
		Bio-Enhancement	<i>The Case Against Perfection</i> , Michael Sandel	
9		Ethical Design		Ethical Tech Redesign Project due 3/29

10				
11		Privacy	Pg 160, <i>Privacy, Security, and Surveillance</i> , Adam D. Moore	
12		The Ethics of AI		
13		AI and Human Flourishing		
14		Hedonism and the Experience Machine		Experience Machine Article Assignment Due 4.26
15		Social Media & The Good Life	Pg 204 "Social Media Firms, Echo Chambers, and the Good Life," Gregory Robson	

16		The Algorithmic Self	"The Algorithmic Self: how AI is reshaping human identity, introspection, and agency" Jeena Joseph [external source]	
17		Final Exam		FINAL EXAM DUE

Grading

Grading Scale

All grades will be posted in the student grade book in Canvas and will be assigned according to the following scale:

- A 90%-100%
- B 80%-89%
- C 70%-79%
- D 60%-69%
- F 59% and below

Calculation of Grades

- Quizzes & Assignments: 20%
- Reflective Project: 10%
- Final Exam: 20%
- Essay Exam 1: 15%
- Essay Exam 2: 25%
- Philosophy Journal: 10%

Incomplete Grades

Grades of Incomplete in any course can only be assigned to students who have an emergency arise during the last two weeks of the course. To receive an Incomplete, students must:

- Submit a written request to the instructor prior to the last face-to-face class meeting. For online courses, a written Incomplete request must be received no later than the week before the Final Exam period begins.

- Have completed no less than sixty percent of the course requirements and be passing the course at the time the request for an Incomplete is submitted.

Important Note: The Incomplete option provides 30 days from the date grades are due to make up any missing work; if all remaining work is not submitted during this period, the grade will automatically change to an “F.”

General GCSC Course Policies

Accessibility Statement

Gulf Coast State College supports an inclusive learning environment for all students. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that hinder your full participation, reasonable accommodations can be arranged. Prior to receiving accommodations, you must register with Student Accessibility Resources. Appropriate academic accommodations will be determined based on the documented needs of the student. Please visit [GCSC's Student Accessibility Resource \(SAR\) webpage](#) to learn more. For information regarding the registration process, email sar@gulfcoast.edu or call 850-747-3243.

GCSC Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance and participation are significant factors that help to promote success in college. Students are expected to attend all class meetings of all courses for which they are registered.

You are expected to know the instructor's specific attendance policy as stated in the syllabus for each course. In the event of absence, you should contact your instructor as soon as possible to indicate the reason and to inquire whether make-up work is possible. (Make-up work is offered solely at the discretion of your professor.)

If your absences in a class become excessive, as stated in the course syllabus, your professor can withdraw you from a course for excessive absences without your permission.

Instructors will monitor attendance at the beginning of each semester. If you are not in attendance during this period, you may be withdrawn from the course. You will be financially responsible for the course and a "W or NS" will appear on your transcript. Withdrawal from a course may also have implications for financial aid.

Withdrawal Policy

Two withdrawals are permitted per credit course. After that, a grade will be assigned. Please be concerned about withdrawals. When admitting students into certain programs, universities

may calculate withdrawals as grades. It is your responsibility to verify the effects of enrollment and/or withdrawal upon your financial assistance (financial aid, scholarships, grants, etc.).

There are two kinds of withdrawals---student and administrative.

- **Student Withdrawal (W1)** - Students wishing to withdraw must complete the online Student Withdrawal Form before the scheduled withdrawal deadline as published in the College catalog. Student withdrawals initiated prior to the scheduled withdrawal deadline will be recorded as a grade of "W." The withdrawal deadline for an off-term or condensed term is one week after midterm.
- **Administrative Withdrawal (W2)** – A faculty member may withdraw a student up to the published withdrawal deadline for violation of the class attendance policy in which case the student will receive a grade of "W." The withdrawal deadline for an off-term or condensed term is one week after midterm.

Students cannot withdraw from developmental studies courses (college-preparatory classes) after the drop/add period without written permission from their instructor and/or their academic advisor.

Academic Integrity

Honest participation in academic endeavors fosters an environment in which optimal learning can take place and is consistent with the college's mission. Academic misconduct, including cheating or plagiarism, is destructive to the spirit of an educational environment. GCSC professors report every instance of student academic misconduct to the college for inclusion on the student's records.

Most course syllabi include an academic honesty policy and the consequences for violating this policy. Familiarize yourself with course policies regarding authorized or unauthorized use of AI to avoid the pitfalls of academic dishonesty.

The following definitions will apply:

"Cheating" includes but is not limited to use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; the acquisition without permission of tests or other academic materials belonging to a member of the College's faculty.

"Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment as well as the purchase of papers or projects. It can also include overuse of an editing program like Grammarly or submitting work written by an Artificial Intelligence (AI) generator like ChatGPT. Make certain to consult your course syllabi for your instructor's guidelines of AI material.

"Self-plagiarism" occurs when a student submits the same or considerably similar document to fulfill requirements in different classes. For example, if a student submits a term paper in Religion they originally wrote for an English class, this is self-plagiarism. Once a paper receives a grade in one class, it cannot be submitted again for another class.

"Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)" is technology that uses machine learning to create new content, such as text, images or code, based on user input. These systems are trained on vast amounts of data, including large language models and image or code generators. Common examples include ChatGPT, GitHub, Copilot, Google Gemini, Perplexity, and the Grammarly AI function.

Sanctions for incidences of academic misconduct, depending on the severity of the incidence and/or its repetition, may range from receiving an F grade (or 0) for the test, assignment, or activity, to failure of the course, to suspension or dismissal from the college.

Classroom Recording

In accordance with federal and state privacy laws, students may record class lectures for their own personal educational use, in connection with a complaint to the college, or as evidence in internal or external legal proceedings. Students may not publish or upload the recordings or any components thereof without the knowledge and written permission of the faculty member.

Failure to obtain permission to publish could lead to the students' having to pay damages, attorney fees, and court costs. For more information about what can be recorded, please see the guidelines in the GCSC Student Handbook.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

The use of generative AI tools in academic work requires clear guidelines to maintain academic integrity. Please review the policy selected for this course regarding the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT, Copilot, Grammarly's AI features, and similar platforms for assignments, research, and other coursework.

See the student handbook for further information. Students with questions about acceptable use should consult their instructor.

Anti-Discrimination Policy

Gulf Coast State College does not discriminate against any person in its programs, activities, policies or procedures on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, marital status, religion, age, gender, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, disability, or veteran status.

All questions or inquiries regarding compliance with laws relating to non-discrimination and all complaints regarding sexual misconduct or discrimination may be directed to Amanda Reed, Executive Director of Human Resources/Title II/504/Title IX Coordinator and Employment Equity Officer, Gulf Coast State College, 5230 W. US Highway 98, Panama City, FL 32401; 850-769-1551, ext. 3516. Rules, policies, fees, and courses described in this catalog are subject to change without notice.

Student Support Resources

Gulf Coast State College is committed to providing you with the resources you need for success as a student and beyond. View all the academic and student support resources provided at GCSC on the [Student Services web page](#).

Course Technology & Support

To successfully participate in this online course, students must have basic computer and digital information literacy skills and meet the following technology requirements:

- Computer: Up-to-date web browser that supports the Canvas learning management system; please refer to the system requirements for compatibility and information on using the Canvas app on mobile devices.
- Internet Speed: Minimum bandwidth of 8 Mbps upload/download speed to effectively engage in online activities and access multimedia.
- Office 365 software: Available for free download through GCSC Information Technology Services (ITS).
- If you need technical support, contact the ITS Help Desk, available 24/7 at (850) 913-3303.