



COCS 1P50: Integrity and Literacy in the Information Age

Course Information

Course Number: 1P50

Term/Year/Duration: Fall/2024/D2

Course Title: Integrity and Literacy in the Information Age

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Renata Dividino

Email: rdividino@brocku.ca

Office Locations: MC J321

Teaching Assistants: TBD

Times and Locations

Time: Monday and Wednesday from 10:00 - 11:30 (IN-PERSON)

Location: STH204

Office hours: Friday 10:00 - 11:30 at MC J321

Note: Classes at Brock University end ten minutes ahead of the hour or half hour to facilitate transfer time.

Course Calendar Description

Although this course is required for Computer Science students, it is an option for both the APCO and IASC streams. No programming skills are necessary; however, having an appreciation for what programs do and what they can be made to do is helpful.

Technology, particularly Artificial Intelligence (AI), plays an increasingly significant role in our society, transforming how we socialize, acquire knowledge, and carry out daily activities. Students rely on technology for learning and interacting with instructors and peers. Most of you, if not all, will continue to rely on technology in your future professional lives. This course aims to explore the impact of technology on our current and future lives and to discuss your responsibilities as digital citizens—whether you are students, future programmers, managers, healthcare workers, or other professionals.

1P50 is a "Science Context Course," designed to foster lively discussions among students with diverse backgrounds. We will explore the everyday use of computers and the internet, addressing important concerns about privacy, identity, and ethics. The course will emphasize information literacy and include a study of plagiarism. Lectures and seminars will cover many fundamental issues related to technology use.

Some of the topics that directly influence your daily life include:

- What are the privacy implications of using social media?
- How might what you publish on social networking sites affect your job prospects, and should it?
- How do AI and surveillance technologies impact our lives?
- What are the implications of using new smart cards?
- How can you recognize a phishing scam before your identity is stolen?
- What can legally be copied from the internet?
- What is the difference between copyright and plagiarism?

This course consists of three hours of lectures per week, and 6 weekly seminars.

Learning Outcomes

This course will increase your awareness of both the benefits and the subtle dangers of current technology. Upon completing this module, students will be able to:

- Define the requirements for academic integrity.
- Recognize the need for and value of information (especially online information), and its role in lifelong learning.
- Understand the ethical challenges related to the development and use of modern technology.
- Explain how technology use and legislation impact individual privacy and freedom of expression, particularly in relation to the use and misuse of social media.
- Identify the effects of intellectual property rights and the mechanisms used to protect them.
- Describe the issues involved in being a professional and explain the importance of adhering to professional codes of conduct.

Readings or Texts

(Optional) *A Gift of Fire: Social, Legal and Ethical Issues for Computing Technology* by Sara Baase, Timothy M. Henry; 5th Edition, Pearson, 2018. Copies are available at the Brock Bookstore for purchase. Students may also wish to check on-line for availability of eText.

Zero Tolerance

Be respectful. Zero tolerance for discrimination. Discrimination, including racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, homophobia and transphobia, has no place in our classes and seminars.

Course Communications

When emailing the instructor or course coordinator, you **MUST** include the course number AND section number at the beginning of the subject line (e.g., [1P50 - D2 - S01] Clarification on Seminar 1). Additionally, please include your student number in the body of the email.

Please be aware that emails are not typically answered immediately, but you can expect a response within 48 hours. If you do **NOT** receive a reply within that timeframe, it may be due to an issue with your email, such as an incorrect subject line, unclear content, unprofessional language, or improper grammar. Since this is email communication, text messaging conventions should be avoided—save those for more informal platforms.

All course-related emails will be sent to your official Brock email address (e.g., ab12cd@brocku.ca). For your own records, always keep copies of all sent emails. These will be date- and time-stamped for your protection.

WARNING: not following the email procedure may result in response delays.

Assessment Components and Due Dates

Table 1 Assessment Components

Assessment Component	Grade Weight
Seminar (5 out of 6)	40% (8% each)
Quizzes	6% (3% each)
Project	20%
Class Participation	16% (4x 3% + 4%)
Final Exam	18%
Research Fundamentals	1.5% (bonus point)
Total	100 + 1.5%

Seminars

- Please carefully read and follow the seminar instructions posted on the Brightspace with material provided for each seminar.
- We have 6 seminars in total (6 weeks - see schedule for more details).
- Seminar will be posted on FRIDAY@NOON
- You will submit your answer to the forum by WEDNESDAY@NOON
- You will submit comments to the answer of 2 of your peers by FRIDAY@NOON
- Note that the 5 highest grades are kept, so the lowest assignment grades will be dropped.
- Further research is required.
- No late submission will be accepted.

Quizzes

The quizzes are open book, meaning you may use your course notes, the textbook, and any materials provided by the instructor. However, you are not permitted to use any external resources that have not been provided by the instructor, nor may you communicate with classmates during the quizzes. For example, you cannot post questions on Stack Overflow or contact other students. All quizzes are individual work.

IMPORTANT: Quiz #1 is a pass/fail quiz. **You must pass Quiz #1 in order to continue in this course.**

Final Examination

The final examination is not open book, and individual work is required.

The exam period is listed on the Registrar's website. Please do not schedule vacations or trips during this time, as accommodations will only be made for extenuating circumstances.

If you wish to review your final exam after results have been posted on Brightspace, you may arrange this by contacting the course instructor.

The date and time for the final exam will be confirmed by the Registrar's Office. Please keep your schedule open for the exam period.

Project: Case Study

- Students will choose, analyze and present a case study focusing on the benefits and dangers of a specific digital society technology (e.g., AI). Teams will explore both the positive impacts and potential risks associated with the technology.
- Team of 4-5 students.
- The project includes a 5-minute in-class presentation (one slides/poster), submit a comprehensive written report, and prepare questions to other teams.
- Presence is mandatory for the 5-minute in-class presentation.
- Research is required.
- Every student of the same team will get the same note (teamwork will be graded). Detailed instructions for preparation of the debate case will be provided and posted on Brightspace.
- Project abstract is due before the presentation (please see schedule). Teams without an abstract submission won't be allowed to present their debate.
- Project documentation is due ONE week after the presentation day or the last day of class, whichever is the shorter.
- Project documentation submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.
- if you need/want to switch groups, please let me know at least in 2 weeks in advance. No switch will be allowed after this period.

Class Participation

Participation marks will be awarded based on two activities: class discussions and team presentation Q&A.

1. Class Discussion:

- Overview: We will have 4 discussion sessions focused on a specific digital society technology. During these sessions, your team will brainstorm and collaboratively create a detailed concept map or mind map that visually organizes and connects ideas related to the technology's benefits and dangers.
- Evaluation Criteria: You will be graded on the effectiveness of your collaboration, as well as the quality and completeness of your concept map. Presence is mandatory.

2. Team Presentation Q&A:

- Overview: On presentation days, your team will prepare and ask questions to other teams.
- Evaluation Criteria: You will be graded based on the relevance and quality of your questions, as well as your active engagement during the Q&A session. Presence is mandatory.

Detailed instructions for both activities will be provided and posted on Brightspace. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Late Submission Policy

No late submission will be accepted, unless accompanied by medical documentation. See Medical Exemption Policy and the medical health certificate at the [Registrar's Website \(Forms\)](#).

Important dates

Check the section on sessional or important dates in the relevant online [University Calendar](#)

The most recent listing of Important Dates for all durations is at <https://brocku.ca/important-dates/all/>

Academic Policies

Academic misconduct is a serious offence. The principle of academic integrity, particularly of doing one's own work, documenting properly (including use of quotation marks, appropriate paraphrasing and referencing/citation), collaborating appropriately, and avoiding misrepresentation, is a core principle in university study. Students should consult Section VII, "Academic Misconduct", in the "Academic Regulations and University Policies" entry in the [Undergraduate Calendar](#) to view a fuller description of prohibited actions, and the procedures and penalties. Information on what constitutes academic integrity is available at [Brock University Academic Integrity Website](#).

Penalties for Academic Misconduct in the Faculty of Mathematics and Science

The following are minimum penalties usually imposed in academic misconduct cases in FMS. Please be aware that the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs, may assign different penalties, depending on the details of individual cases. Also note that cheating on exams carries significantly higher penalties.

Penalties for misconduct in course work, including mid-term tests

First offence: Zero grade on assignment, additional penalty of 100% of the weight of the assignment to be subtracted from the final grade, mandatory completion of the AZLS Academic Integrity workshop

Second offence: Zero grade on assignment, 4-month suspension

Third offence: Zero grade in course, 1-year suspension, permanent removal from major program.

Fourth offence: Permanent suspension.

Penalties for misconduct in final exams:

First offence: Zero grade in course

Second offence: Zero grade in course, 4-month suspension

Third: Zero grade in course, 1-year suspension, permanent removal from major program,

Fourth offence: Permanent suspension.

Intellectual Property Notice

All slides, presentations, handouts, tests, exams, and other course materials created by the instructor in this course are the intellectual property of the instructor. A student who publicly posts or sells an instructor's work, without the instructor's express consent, may be charged with misconduct under Brock's Academic Integrity Policy and/or Code of Conduct, and may also face adverse legal consequences for infringement of intellectual property rights.

Accommodations

The University is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all students and will adhere to the Human Rights principles that ensure respect for dignity, individualized accommodation, inclusion and full participation. The University provides a wide range of resources to assist students, as follows:

- If you require academic accommodation because of a disability or an ongoing health or mental health condition, please contact Student Accessibility Services at askSAS@brocku.ca or 905 688 5550 ext. 3240.
- **Medical Self-Declaration Forms (brief absence up to 72 hours)**

In the case of a short-term medical circumstance, if a student wishes to seek an academic consideration, please use the [Medical Self-Declaration Form](#). The request is to be made in good faith by the student requesting the academic consideration due to a short-term condition that impacts their academic activities (e.g., participation in academic classes, delay in assignments, etc.).

The period of this short-term medical condition for academic consideration must fall within a 72-hour (3 day) period. The form must be submitted to the instructor either during your brief absence or if you are too unwell, within 24 hours of the end of your 3-day brief absence.

Medical Verification Form (extended duration)

In cases where a student requests academic consideration due to a medical circumstance that exceeds 72 hours (three days) and will impact their academic activities (e.g., participation in academic classes, delay in assignments, etc.), or in the case of a final exam deferral, the [medical verification form](#) must be signed by the student and the health professional as per process set out in the [Faculty Handbook III:9.4.1](#).

- If you are experiencing mental health concerns, contact the Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre. *Good2Talk* is a service specifically for post-secondary students, available 24/7, 365 days a year, and provides anonymous assistance: [Good 2 Talk](#) or call **1-866-925-5454**. For information on wellness, coping and resiliency, visit: [Brock University \(Mental Health\)](#)
- If you require academic accommodation on religious grounds, you should make a formal, written request to your instructor(s) for alternative dates and/or means of satisfying requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of any given academic term, or as soon as possible after a need for accommodation is known to exist.
- If you have been affected by sexual violence, the Human Rights & Equity Office offers support, information, reasonable accommodations, and resources through the Sexual Violence Support & Education Coordinator. For information on sexual violence, visit [Brock's Sexual Assault and Harassment Policy](#) or contact the Sexual Violence Support & Response Coordinator at humanrights@brocku.ca or 905 688 5550 ext. 4387.
- If you have experienced discrimination or harassment on any of the above grounds, including racial, gender or other forms of discrimination, contact the Human Rights and Equity Office at humanrights@brocku.ca.

Plagiarism software

This course may use Turnitin.com, phrase-matching software. If you object to uploading your assignments to Turnitin.com for any reason, please notify the instructor to discuss alternative submissions.