UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Juridical and Social Issues in Information Society

2526-1-F1802Q109

Aims

The course "Juridical and Social Issues in Information Society" is divided into two modules: one focuses on the ethical and legal questions arising from the transformation of society into an Information Society (Professor Ricci), and the other addresses social issues (Professors Masiero and Bellini).

Regarding the module on ethical and legal issues (Professor Ricci), the course aims to provide students with theoretical and argumentative tools that are useful for developing critical thinking in students who will be directly working with technologies in the field of the Information Society. Discussing ethical cases will be an integral part of this objective. Additionally, since ethics also encompasses the law, regulations concerning the main aspects of interest for Data Science students will be analyzed. Specifically, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the proposed Artificial Intelligence Act (AIA) will be examined.

The goal of the module "Social Issues in Information Society" (Professors Roberto Masiero and Camilla Bellini) is to prepare students to understand the impacts and confront the challenges posed by the Data Revolution on the economy and society. This module plays a crucial role in providing students with a comprehensive understanding of the domains that will benefit the most from the Data Revolution and in assisting them in pursuing a successful professional career path in the future. While students will progressively learn to use the methodologies and technical tools that constitute the main content of the overall Master of Science in Data Science, the module should also equip them to seek, identify, and comprehend the meaningful patterns of social, environmental, and economic phenomena, as well as the philosophical and ethical implications associated with the Data Economy.

Contents

The module "Juridical Issues in Information Society" analyzes the ethical and legal questions that arise from the pervasive use of technology in the process of informatization and digitalization across various sectors of society, with particular reference to the areas of bioethics, personal data protection and artificial intelligence.

Social Issues in Information Society, Prof. Roberto Masiero e Camilla Bellini
The module covers the following topics:

introducing key social issues in the information society
exploring the impact of digital innovation on employment and wealth distribution
addressing challenging social and philosophical issues in the information society
examining the evolving role of the data scientist, including new job opportunities and future industries
The Game: A discussion on the technological and mental revolution that has brought us from the vision of the 1900s to the concept of "Augmented Humanity".

Detailed program

Juridical Issues in Information Society, Prof. Stefano Ricci
The course will be divided into two parts:
• A general part that deals with distinguishing and identifying technical and ethical-legal problems. It will explore philosophical perspectives that support different conceptions of technological development and its influence on the law-making process in this field. It will also cover specific domains benefiting from the data revolution, such as medicine.
• A special part dedicated to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the proposal for the Artificial Intelligence Act.

Social Issues in Information Society, Prof. Roberto Masiero e Camilla Bellini
The module addresses the following topics:

Lecture 1 - Course Introduction: Main objectives, contents, and methodology - From the Cognitive Revolution to the Information Society
Lecture 2 - The relationship between technology and society (part 1)
Lecture 3 - The relationship between technology and society (part 2)
Lecture 4 - Automation, information and platforms in the economy and society (part 1)
Lecture 5 - Automation, information and platforms in the economy and society (part 2)
Lecture 6 - How ICTs are changing the philosophy, ecology and ethics of information
Lecture 7 - Technological revolutions, scientific revolutions and mental revolutions . The fourth revolution and beyond
Lecture 8 - Politics, democracy and society in the digital age. Has politics become a form of marketing? Can the digital improve social cohesion or does it enhance social inequalities?
Lecture 9 - The impact of the digital innovation on growth, employment and wealth distribution
Lecture 10 - Theoretical, Social and Ethical Issues related to Artificial Intelligence . The Big Data Revolution Correlation, Datafication, The End of Theory? AI from predictivity to generative to transformational
Lecture 11 - The Impact of AI on business models and personal lives. «Human in, on or out of the loop?" – The role of humanity in automated decision making. The ethics of Artificial Intelligence In Defense and the challenge of the AWS (Autonomous Weapon Systems)
Final presentations of the projects of the working groups

Prerequisites

Basic understanding of legal concepts and principles.
Familiarity with the social and ethical implications of technology (ex. mobile, cloud, social networks, big data, IoT).
Knowledge of the digital transformation and its impact on society.
Understanding of data science and its relevance to the information society, awareness of key regulations and laws

related to data protection and artificial intelligence.
Interest in exploring the intersection of law, ethics, and technology in the information society.

Teaching form

Juridical Issues in Information Society, Prof. Stefano Ricci:
The course will be delivered via the e-learning platform, where the content of the lectures will be available; face-to-face lectures; discussion of ethical-legal cases; and expert interventions on specific topics. There will be a minimum of 6 hours of interactive didactics, including the following activities FAQs, practical cases and/or exercises. The remaining 15 hours will be taught by traditional lectures.

Social Issues in the Information Society, Prof. Roberto Masiero and Camilla Bellini:
• Lectures
• E-learning platform
The module includes both lectures (90%) and interactive teaching sessions (10%)

Textbook and teaching resource

Juridical Issues in Information Society, Prof. Stefano Ricci:

Andrea Rossetti - Stefano Ricci, Legal Issues in the Information Society (2024 - in corso di pubblicazione) - Ed. Giuffrè Editore
The text provides an overview of the main legal issues that will be addressed in class.
Optional: Luciano Floridi, The Fourth Revolution: How the Infosphere is Reshaping Human Reality (2016) - Ed. OUP Oxford
Luciano Floridi's text provides an introductory overview of the subject, which will be explored in depth with reference to bioethics, personal data protection and the regulation of artificial intelligence.
The material to pass the exam is therefore the book and the slides presented in class.

Social Issues in Information Society, Prof. Roberto Masiero and Camilla Bellini

Luciano Floridi, The Fourth Revolution: How the Infosphere is Reshaping Human Reality (2016) - Ed. OUP Oxford
Luciano Floridi, The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence -- Principles, Challenges and Opportunities, 2022
Alessandro Baricco, The Game, Einaudi, 2018
A detailed list of additional papers and articles will be provided during the course.

Semester

Assessment method

Juridical Issues in Information Society, Prof. Stefano Ricci:
• There are no partial exams.
• The exams will consist of eight multiple-choice questions and three open questions.
• Each correct answer is worth 3 points. Eleven correct answers result in a grade of 30 cum laude. Optional oral at the request of either the student or the lecturer.

• Important information: For students who enrolled in the course in previous years, the exam will be conducted in the language of their year of enrollment, which could be English or Italian. However, the program remains the same as outlined in this syllabus.
• The final grade will be recorded once the student has taken the exam for both modules (Juridical and Social/Ricci-Masiero). Students must register separately for each module and preferably take both exams in the same session.

**Social Issues in the Information Society **, Prof. Roberto Masiero and Camilla Bellini:
The exam will be a written exam with six open questions. Extra points to be added to the written exam grade can be obtained with a take-home assignment (optional).

Office hours

Sustainable Development Goals