

CS 4020 Computing and Social Responsibility
Spring 2006
TT 2:00–3:50 p.m. Sc N 112

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Office hours: TT 9:00–9:30 a.m. & 12:45–1:30 p.m. or by appointment.

Text: Sara Baase, *A Gift of Fire*, 2nd Edition, Prentice-Hall, 2003.

The catalog description says:

Social impact and ethical aspects of computing: responsibility of practicing professionals, effects on privacy, security, property rights of individuals and institutions, etc. Topics include system reliability, intellectual property computer crime, attacks on computer systems, and societal dependence on computers.

The class will usually approach the relevant issues from the point of view of the practicing computing professional—one who has responsibility for building, maintaining, and deploying systems. For this reason students are expected to have some basic computer science competence in order to understand technical issues involved.

Since this is a new course, the precise coverage will be partly determined by the particular interests of those enrolled. The text will serve as a guide for discussion of the issues involved. However, much supplementary material can be found elsewhere, both on-line and in print (even in the daily newspaper).

In many instances there are features of computing systems that have both *beneficial* and *harmful* aspects. Students may be asked, in teams, to defend one or the other viewpoint in classroom discussion.

There will be a paper assigned—due near the end of the quarter—which will involve some in-depth analysis of the impact of some aspect of contemporary computing. More details on this will be given later.

Grading: The course grade will be computed roughly as follows. (The date of the midterm are subject to change. Any change will be announced in class.)

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| 1. Homework, presentations, class participation (as assigned) | 15% |
| 2. Paper (Due date late in the quarter) | 10% |
| 3. One hour midterm (Thursday, May 4) | 30% |
| 4. Final exam (Thursday, June 8, 2:00–3:50 p.m.) | 45% |

Late homework will *not* be accepted. Homework is to be turned in at the *beginning* of class on the due date. Homework is to represent *individual* efforts! Any work not your own, e.g., results obtained from reference sources, should receive appropriate bibliographic *citations*. *Plagiarism* will be subject to appropriate penalties, as described in the *academic dishonesty* section of the *University Catalog*.

Written work: Any written work submitted for the course, *including in-class tests*, must be done in *ink*!

Identification: When taking tests for the course, students should be prepared to display their CSUEB student photo identification cards upon request.

Make-up policy: Make-up tests will be considered only in *unusual* circumstances, and then only if arrangements have been made in *advance*.