**Engage.EU Certificate in Digital Transformation**

**Digital Ethics**

**Course Syllabus**

**Martin Kornberger**

**5 – 6. May 2023 & 26 – 27. May 2023**

**Course Abstract**

Digital Ethics reflects on and intervenes in the zone where technological innovation, economic organization and moral responsibility overlap. At the interface between these domains new questions, challenges and dilemmas of ethics emerge: how does decision making change when AI-powered machines frame and structure the decision making process? Who is accountable for actions when technology mediates decisions and enhances capacity to act such as in drone warfare? In how far are digitally mediated platform organizations responsible for actions of its users? How do trust and transparency ensure or undermine the legitimacy of digitalization? And how do we negotiate boundaries between surveillance and freedom in data-driven public and private systems? In this course we will focus on these concerns through (1) developing a vocabulary that allows to articulate challenges and dilemmas and through (2) enhancing our repertoire to act on these challenges and dilemmas. The course acts as bridge between ethics, technology and economy, providing tools for thinking about and working with digital ethics.

**Course Objectives**

* The course teaches students knowledge of the most recent research in the field of ethics and digitalization.
* Students will learn to critically discuss and decide on issues of digital ethics.
* The course provides students with the relevant knowledge, perspectives, and practical skills needed to lead responsibly in the digital age.
* System thinking competence: Ability to holistically analyse complex systems and identify, formulate and analyse sustainability problems
* Futures-thinking competence: Ability to anticipate futures states and dynamics of complex systems and sustainability problems and create visions of futures related to sustainability issues and sustainability problem-solving frameworks
* Value thinking competence: Ability to comprehend how complex systems evolved, function and might further develop, recognize the normative nature of "sustainability" and provide normative orientation related to sustainability issues
* Think critically about the conditions and consequences of digitalization for business and society.

**Evaluation and Grading**

Participants’ grade will be composed of

* 40% Team assignment/presentation (team grade)
* 40% Reflection essay (individual grade)
* 20% Active participation and presence during class

Team assignment (40%)

The team assignment will consist of a short presentation (max 10 slides) and a podcast (10 min) about one of the challenges the course focuses on. Details will be announced in a briefing session prior to the beginning of the course.

The evaluation of teamwork is based on the following criteria:

* Argumentation: The essential information in the case is used to answer the questions.
* Analysis and conclusions: Convincing analysis and conclusions supported by facts and logical argumentation.
* Link to the course: Use of appropriate data management concepts and procedures discussed in the course.
* Presentation: Well-structured discussion with a clear flow and effective answers to the above questions.

Written essay (40%)

Students will write an individual reflection essay on the contents taught in the course. Details of the essay and due date will be announced in the lecture.

Active participation and presence in class (20%)

Students‘ active participation in each session will be expected and form part of the grade.

**Sessions**

**20.04.2023: 16:00 - 17:00**

**Briefing Session**

* Introduction
* Modes of collaboration and learning
* Establish groups for group work

**5.5.2023: 12:00 - 18:00**

**Course Opening: Introduction Digital Ethics**

* Core concepts of digital ethics
* Relevancy for organizations and society, significance for research and science

**Conversation 1: Foundations of ethics**

* Conceptual clarification & definitions
* Frameworks and key ideas

**Conversation 2: Ethical theories: tools for thinking**

* Approaches to ethics and morality
* Dilemmas, questions, problematizations
* Application of theories to digital context

**6.5.2023: 09:00 - 16:00**

**Conversation 3: Doing Ethics**

* Propositions to build (digital) ethical organizations
* Ethics in practice
* Managerial implications

**13:00-16:00 self-organized study**

**26.5.2023: 12:00 - 18:00**

**Challenge # 1: AI & decision making**

* Case study self-driving cars
* Problematizing decision making and algorithms
* Work in break out rooms
* Presentation and discussion of Case Solutions

**Video content**

**Challenge # 2: Ethics of platform organizations**

* Case Study Spotify
* Problematizing digitally enhanced organizational forms and responsibility of organizational actors
* Work in break out rooms
* Presentation and discussion of Case Solutions

**Video content**

**27.5.2023: 09:00 - 16:00**

**Challenge # 3: Ethics, technology and responsibility**

* Case study drones
* Problematizing technology as action at distance and accountability
* Work in break out rooms
* Presentation and discussion of Case Solutions

**Video content**

**Challenge # 4 – Digital technology and surveillance capitalism**

* Case study Facebook
* Problematizing digital technology, control and power
* Work in break out rooms
* Presentation and discussion of Case Solutions

**Video content**

**Readings**

Websites featuring interesting content, debates and further links

<https://www.moralmachine.net/>

<https://www.techuk.org/shaping-policy/digital-ethics.html>

<https://edps.europa.eu/data-protection/our-work/ethics_en>

<https://dataethics.eu/eus-digital-ai-and-data-strategy/>

<http://www.oxford-aiethics.ox.ac.uk/>

<https://www.ted.com/playlists/329/new_tech_new_morals>

<https://ethicsandtechnology.eu/research-static/>

<https://hai.stanford.edu/>

<https://mintlab.site/>

<https://ethics.harvard.edu/>

<https://uchv.princeton.edu/>

<https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/search?q=Artificial+intelligence>

<https://cyber.harvard.edu/>

**Readings for Conversation**

* Winner, Langdon. "Do artifacts have politics?." Computer Ethics. Routledge, 2017. 177-192.
* Coeckelbergh, M. (2020). AI Ethics. MIT Press.

# Reid Blackman, 2020, A Practical Guide to Building Ethical AI, Harvard Business Review

# Reid Blackman and Beena Ammanath, 2022, Ethics and AI: 3 Conversations Companies Need to Have, Harvard Business Review

# Ochigame, Rodrigo, 2019, The Invention of “Ethical AI”. How Big Tech Manipulates Academia to Avoid Regulation. Available at the https://theintercept.com/2019/12/20/mit-ethical-ai-artificial-intelligence/

**Video and podcast content for Conversations**

* Introduction to ethics:

<http://justiceharvard.org/themoralsideofmurder/>

https://www.ted.com/talks/michael\_schur\_how\_ethics\_can\_help\_you\_make\_better\_decisions

* On Aristotle’s virtue ethics: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSLsUO6uK4M&list=RDLVZOoJ9Cq3oKM&index=8>
* On utilitarism: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIK3T6MRs2k&list=RDLVZOoJ9Cq3oKM&index=3>
* On Kantian ethics: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOoJ9Cq3oKM>
* Mark Coeckelbergh on his book AI Ethics <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_KyeqjEG6Y>
* Jennifer Strong <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/in-machines-we-trust/id1523584878>

Episode Encore: When an Algorithm Gets It Wrong

* Cathy O'Neil | The era of blind faith in big data must end see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\_2u\_eHHzRto&list=RDLVgdCJYsKlX\_Y&index=2

**Readings for challenge # 1: AI & decision making**

* Véliz, C. (2021). Moral zombies: why algorithms are not moral agents. AI & SOCIETY, 36(2), 487-497.
* Burrell, J. (2016). How the machine ‘thinks’: Understanding opacity in machine learning algorithms. Big Data & Society, 3(1), 2053951715622512.
* Mittelstadt, B. D., Allo, P., Taddeo, M., Wachter, S., & Floridi, L. (2016). The ethics of algorithms: Mapping the debate. Big Data & Society, 3(2), 2053951716679679.
* Ananny, M. (2016). Toward an ethics of algorithms: Convening, observation, probability, and timeliness. Science, Technology, & Human Values, 41(1), 93-117.
* AI Now Institute 2019, DISCRIMINATING SYSTEMS Gender, Race, and Power in AI available at <https://ainowinstitute.org/discriminatingsystems.pdf>
* Elish, M. C. (2019). Moral crumple zones: Cautionary tales in human-robot interaction (pre-print). Engaging Science, Technology, and Society (pre-print).
* EU Ethics guidelines for trustworthy AI, https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/ethics-guidelines-trustworthy-ai

**Video content for challenge # 1: AI & decision making**

* Nick Bostrom, <https://www.ted.com/talks/nick_bostrom_what_happens_when_our_computers_get_smarter_than_we_are?referrer=playlist-new_tech_new_morals&autoplay=true>
* Cathy O'Neil | Weapons of Math Destruction – see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdCJYsKlX_Y>

**Readings for challenge # 2: Ethics of platform organizations**

* Kornberger, M., Pflueger, D., & Mouritsen, J. (2017). Evaluative infrastructures: Accounting for platform organization. Accounting, Organizations and Society, 60, 79-95.
* Prey, R. 2020. “Locating power in platformization: Music streaming playlists and curatorial power.” Social Media + Society 6 (2): 1-11. doi: 10.1177/2056305120933291.
* Fourcade, M., and K. Healy. 2013. “Classification situations: Life-chances in the neoliberal era.” Accounting, Organizations and Society 38 (8): pp. 559-572.
* Seaver, N. (2019). Captivating algorithms: Recommender systems as traps. Journal of Material Culture, 24(4), 421-436.

**Video / podcast content for challenge # 2: Ethics of platform organizations**

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**Readings for challenge # 3: Ethics, technology and responsibility**

* Brunstetter, D., & Braun, M. (2011). The implications of drones on the just war tradition. Ethics & International Affairs, 25(3), 337-358.
* xxx

**Video / podcast content for challenge # 3: Ethics, technology and agency**

* Luban, David (2013, 8 September). Podcast - Drones: the law and ethics of drone strikes <http://podacademy.org/podcasts/drones-the-law-and-ethics-of-drone-strikes/>
* Hugh Gusterstone, The Ethical Implications of Drone Warfare – see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=seFWxWdD5bc>

**Readings for challenge # 4: Digital technology and surveillance capitalism**

* Zuboff, S. (2019, January). Surveillance capitalism and the challenge of collective action. In New labor forum (Vol. 28, No. 1, pp. 10-29). Sage CA: Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.
* Zuboff, S., Möllers, N., Wood, D. M., & Lyon, D. (2019). Surveillance Capitalism: An Interview with Shoshana Zuboff. Surveillance & Society, 17(1/2), 257-266.
* Gasser, Urs et al. (2020): Digital tools against COVID-19: taxonomy, ethical challenges, and navigation aid. The Lancet 2: 425-434. <https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S2589-7500%2820%2930137-0>
* Creemers, Rogier (2018): "China's social credit system: an evolving practice of control." <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3175792>
* Liang, Fan, et al. (2018): "Constructing a data‐driven society: China's social credit system as a state surveillance infrastructure." Policy & Internet 10/4: 415-453. <https://doi.org/10.1002/poi3.183>
* Doctorow, Cory (2020): How to Destroy Surveillance Capitalism. <https://onezero.medium.com/how-to-destroy-surveillance-capitalism-8135e6744d59>

**Videos / podcasts for challenge # 4: Digital technology and surveillance capitalism**

* Shoshana Zuboff on 'surveillance capitalism', <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QL4bz3QXWEo> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AvtUrHxg8A>
* Nick Couldry on Data colonialism <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5tcK-XIMQqE>
* Kwame A. Appiah: Exploring Questions of Ethics and Identity: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yao9zb7PD2I

**About the Lecturer**

**Martin Kornberger**

Martin Kornberger is Professor for Ethics in Management at the Vienna University of Economics and Business and a Visiting Professor at the Stockholm School of Economics. After receiving his doctorate in philosophy from the University of Vienna in 2002 he lived and worked in Australia (University of Technology Sydney), Denmark (Copenhagen Business School), France (EM Lyon) and Edinburgh (University of Edinburgh). In his research he explores strategies for collective action, new organizational architectures and their ethics. His latest books are *Strategies for Distributed and Collective Action: Connecting the Dots* (Oxford University Press, 2022).