CSC 302-02

Syllabus

Spring 2016

Instructor: Chuck Dana
Office: 14-228
Office hours: Mon.3:00-3:50pm, Thurs:4:10-5:00 pm
Course Web site: http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/~chdana/302
Email addresses: (take your pick)
chdana@calpoly.edu chdana@wildcat.csc.calpoly.edu
etc.

TEXTS:
Possible handouts in class.

PREREQUISITE: Completion of GE area B and junior standing

GE CREDIT: Area F

GRADING SCHEME:
Informal Oral Presentations ...... 12%
Notebook .............................. 18% ± 5
Weekly Assignments ............ 25% ± 10
Group Project(s)................... 10% ± 10
Class Participation ............. 15%
Final ................................ 20% ± 5

The final may cover all material in the course or it may deal with only selected material. My choice will be announced in class at least one week before the final.

All written material will be graded for clarity and content. Note that poor spelling and grammar affect the clarity of the material. The instructor is not a proof reader and may not catch all of your spelling or grammar errors. Those that he does find will, however, cause deductions in the grade.

The instructor reserves the right to assign different individual grades on a group project based on an individual’s contribution to that project.

Failure to follow directions may result in a grade of 0 on a project or assignment.

The above percentages are my initial guess as to what a fair weighting among the categories would be. If the number of assignments in a category are very different from what I expect, I may change the weightings within the bounds given above. Any change would be announced in class before the end of the quarter.

*The above percentages notwithstanding, the instructor reserves the right to give a failing grade in the class if*

a. any grading category is missing

b. You flunk the final

c. You do not participate in CSC 302 (as shown in class & documented in your notebook).
COURSE CONTENT:

The course is titled “Computers and Society”. Both parts of that title are extremely broad areas. As such, we will only be touching the surface of what could be covered. Certainly part of the effect on society is how people in that society are expected to behave, so besides the social implications of the use of computers, we will also cover the general ethical implications of computer use by people. And since society affects the use of computers, we will also discuss some of the regulatory and legal issues that affect computer use.

The course is intended to make you aware of issues. When we discuss topics, especially the ethical topics, I will not be presenting you with a prescribed set of beliefs, opinions, or ethical values. In other words, I will not generally be telling you what you should do in a particular situation. One point of the course is for you to know the range of ethical or social or legal questions involved in a situation so that you can then apply your own ethics and beliefs to the facts of the situation.

Finally, you should have fun (yes, I said fun) with this course. I expect spirited discussions, even controversies to pop up in class. The oral presentations should just be the starting points for further discussion.

CLASS COMMUNICATION

The best communication medium is our classroom; there will be lots of time available to ask questions and for discussion of the topics. Indeed, class participation is a full 15% of your grade.

Electronic mail is another medium for communication with me. Please be sure to include “CSC 302” (or at least “302”) in the subject line of your email message so that it is clear the question is about CSC 302. I may miss or delay reading messages that have blank or ambiguous subject lines.

Last, but not least, are the class Web pages. There you will find assignments and other information. The web pages will not be static entities. As the course progresses, new items will be added. For example, the descriptions of the readings, projects, and assignments for the quarter will grow during the quarter; the content you see now will not describe the entire quarter’s work. Note the address above; the web page is not currently reachable from the department home page via my name among the faculty.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Each student is required to give oral presentations in class as follows:

- **Two (for full credit) informal oral presentations of about 2 minutes.**
  The presentations can be on anything pertinent to the topics of the course. Informal presentations are not scheduled but are limited to 8 (or fewer at the discretion of the instructor) per two-hour-long class period. Ideas: press releases, news articles, history tidbits, TV shows, journal articles, jokes, Dilbert cartoons, ... Topics cannot be presented by more than one student except as a response or to present additional information that became available after the initial presentation on the topic. You may give only 1 two-minute talk per class period -- plan ahead.

  Keep a short abstract of each presentation clearly marked (including the date you presented it) in your notebook (see below). Also, on the day of your talk, hand in to me some hardcopy representation of the source of your talk. This could be a newspaper clipping (or photocopy),
printout of a web page, copy of a picture, etc. Be sure you have your name and the date on this!
Without any hardcopy and any indication in your notebook of you giving the presentation, it will
not be counted. At least one presentation must be completed or the “Informal Oral Presentation”
grade category will be deemed missing and you will therefore fail the course (see above). You may
give up to three of these 2-minute talks. Additional credit will be given for the additional
presentation.

These presentations will not be scheduled, but you are responsible for completing all of them. Note
that with discussion following a presentation much more than two minutes may be taken up with
these “two-minute” talks. Indeed, some class periods may be completely taken up with discussion
of topics raised by the two-minute talks. I expect participation; that, too, is part of your grade.

Credit for these presentations will be based on the quality of your presentation and the relevance
and timeliness of the topic to the class.

SCHEDULING LIMITATIONS

No more eight 2-minute talks will be allowed per class period. No more than one 2-minute talk
per day per person. These are maximums. On some days there very well may NOT be enough time
for five 2-minute talks in 50 minutes; I will not halt an on-going discussion on some topic in order to
accommodate more in an “assembly line” basis. If you put off your 2-minute talks to the end of the
quarter, you may not be able to get them all done just due to time limitations. (See above for the
consequences of not getting all talks in.)

There also may be some guest speakers. On those days 2-minute talks may be limited to zero to
efficiently use the time for us to interact with the guest.

GROUP PROJECT

There will be at least one group project. Each group will give joint presentations to the class on
their results. Details of the project and the forming of the groups will occur later in the quarter. Note
that the day(s) on which groups present their work, the number of 2-minute talks may be reduced,
likely to zero!

COURSE NOTEBOOK

Each student is required to maintain a course notebook containing the material listed in the
following bullets. Notebooks will be collected on a sporadic basis during class periods. The specific
day that material is due in the notebook for a specific weekly assignment will be specified with the
assignment on the assignment web page. In general, I expect that notebooks will be due on a Monday
so they can be returned on the following Wednesday. In any given week, the instructor may collect all
notebooks, a random selection, a semi-random or even capricious selection, or ask for voluntary
submissions. (If voluntary submissions are collected, collections subsequent weeks may be additional
voluntary submissions, or a “catch up” request for all notebooks not already volunteered.) The point
for you to remember is that you must do the work each week and be prepared to hand it in on the due
date, even if your notebook is not collected that week.
Material in the notebook must be organized chronologically, **by week -- first week first**, so it is easy to find. The assignment web page lists reading assignments, weekly assignments (questions from the reading), and in general summarizes what should be added to your notebook each week. Material in the notebook can be handwritten if your handwriting is legible.

**NOTE that this “notebook” is NOT the same as the notes you would be taking in class for your own use. It should contain just the things requested. You should maintain separate books or pages for your own use for taking notes in class.**

- **Reading reactions**
  Write informal comments, in complete sentences, giving your reaction to each week’s assigned reading. **Do NOT summarize** the reading; **I want you to react to what you read**. And please don’t do bullet writing! The comments should include some or all of the following depending on your interest or reaction:
    a. Your reaction to key ideas
    b. Ideas you find surprising or new
    c. Evidence given for or against the author's arguments
    d. Relationship of the material to other articles or class discussion
    e. Problems you see with the author's arguments

A reading reaction is required for each weekly reading assignment and must be a minimum of 200 words (that really isn’t that much). In some cases, more words may be required to express your thoughts.

You do not need to react to each topic within a given week’s assignment or separately to each section of a reading. You may react to the reading as a whole or pick out some particular issue raised and react just to that.

- **Weekly Assignments**
  You will receive a number of individual assignments during the quarter; these are to be completed by yourself. Most of these will be exercises from the book with the answers to be placed in the notebook (see the assignments web page for specific details).

- **Informal Oral Presentation summaries**
  Write a short summary of each two minute report you give in class including the date and the topic discussed. **This will be part of the documentation that you in fact gave the talk (along with the written artifact you must give me). Without this documentation the 2-minute talk will not be counted as being given.**

- **Other Participation (1 entry per week)**
  Document anything that demonstrates your active participation in CSC 302. Participation activities might include outside reading or active class participation.
Possible Grading Non-linearity

Please note that in those grading areas where a number of repetitions of an item are required, (class participation, notebook handins, two-minute talks, and individual assignments) the grade if there are missing repetitions may not be linear. For example, handing in the notebook only half the time it is requested will NOT necessarily get you half the points for the notebook category, but likely fewer than half.

PLAGIARISM

Cooperative work is an important part of learning and especially this course. You are encouraged to study together, discuss the class and its many issues, but all assignments and tests are expected to be your own individual work. Failure to do so is cheating. Copying work from outside sources without credit is also cheating. Cheating may result in penalties as severe as failure of the course or worse, depending on the severity of the cheating.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

While the specifics of this syllabus are mine, I am indebted to Professor Dan Stearns for the basic design and the original definition of the course from which I borrowed this syllabus. I more recently have also stolen a refinement or two from Professor Clark Turner’s syllabus.