



UNIVERSITÀ DI PISA  
DIPARTIMENTO DI INGEGNERIA DELL'INFORMAZIONE  
Dottorato di Ricerca in Ingegneria dell'Informazione

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Doctoral Course

**“Computer Ethics”**

Prof. Viola Schiaffonati

*Politecnico di Milano, Dipartimento di Elettronica, Informazione e Bioingegneria*

**Short Abstract:** This course deals with the application of ethical theories to problems created, aggravated or transformed by computer technology. It is intended to give students a chance to reflect on the ethical, social, and cultural impact of computer technology by focusing on the issues faced by and brought about by computing professionals.

**Course Contents in brief:**

The course will cover different topics both from a theoretical and a more practical point of view. We will start with a broad analysis of the concept of **responsibility**, in particular in an **engineering perspective**, and of **normative ethics** and its tools. We will introduce **codes of conduct**. Then **ethics in IT-configured societies** will be discussed and **technology as the instrumentation of human action** will be presented. Within this context we will focus: on **information flow**, **privacy**, and **surveillance**, on **digital intellectual property** and on **digital order**.

**Total # of hours of lecture: 20**

**References:**

- [1] Ibo van de Poel, Lambèr Royakkers, *Ethics, Technology, and Engineering: An Introduction*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
  - [2] Deborah Johnson, *Computer Ethics*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Prentice Hall, 2009.
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**CV of the Teacher**

Viola Schiaffonati (PhD Philosophy of Science) is Associate Professor of Logic and Philosophy of Science at the Department of Electronics, Informatics, and Bioengineering of Politecnico di Milano (Italy), where she teaches Philosophical Issues of Computer Science and Computer Ethics. She is particularly interested in the epistemology and methodology of experiments in computer

engineering and autonomous robotics. Recently she became more involved in the analysis of the ethical issues of intelligent and autonomous systems, where she is working on the integration of ethics with an epistemological approach.

### **Room and Schedule**

Room: *Aula Riunioni del Dipartimento di Ingegneria dell'Informazione, Via G. Caruso 16, Pisa – Ground Floor*

Schedule:

*January 21<sup>st</sup> 2019*

- 09:00 – 13:00: responsibility; normative ethics; codes of conduct
- 14:00 – 17:00: Q&A session; discussion and exercises

*January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2019*

- 09:00 – 13:00: ethics in IT-configured societies; information flow, privacy, and surveillance; digital intellectual property; digital order
- 14:00 – 17:00: Q&A session; discussion and exercises

*February 11<sup>th</sup> 2019*

- 09:30 – 12:30: students' presentations
- 13:30 – 16:30: students' presentations