

CSI-639: Ethics in Scientific Research

Fall 2021 – Section DL2

Syllabus and Class Policies

(as of 8/22/2021)

Instructor: Dr. Christopher J. Lynch, Ph.D.

Class: Tuesdays, 7:20pm – 10pm, Zoom

Office and Office Hours:

- Dr. Lynch is NOT located on the Fairfax Campus this semester. If you wish to meet, please ask for a meeting via e-mail at clynch26@gmu.edu
- Dr. Lynch may be contacted using:
 - His GMU e-mail address, or
 - By using the “Ask the Professor” discussion on the left side of the class website. Please note that Dr. Lynch’s responses on “Ask the Professor” will be available to all class members.
- All meetings are by appointment only. Students wishing to meet with Dr. Lynch are asked to request a meeting time via e-mail. Be sure to list when you are available to meet. The preferred meeting method is via the class Zoom channel.
- Dr. Lynch endeavors to answer e-mail questions within 24 hours. Questions received during the weekends/holidays, may not be answered until the next business day.
- If Dr. Lynch will be away from e-mail for multiple days, times will be posted on the announcement tab in the Blackboard course folder.

Emails

Dr. Lynch clynch26@GMU.EDU

Course Introduction and Overview

CSI-639 Overview:

CSI-639 is an intermediate course in Ethics as it applies to a researcher and as a junior professional in the Information Technology (IT) world both within MASON and outside of MASON. The principles discussed in CSI-639 will be directly applicable in many academic and professional careers.

CSI-639 Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe many of the key ethical, legal, and social issues related to information technology
- Understand how to interpret and comply with ethical principles, laws, regulations, and institutional policies and appropriately cite resources from digital/electronic media.
- Identify the essential issues related to information security, how to take precautions and use techniques and tools to defend against computer crimes.

- Identify the essential issues related to ethical research and the basics of ethical business practices
- Students must purchase/rent/ ...:
 - REQUIRED Textbook. It is an e-text. “*Ethics in the Information Age*” (8th Edition e-Text) by Dr. M. Quinn [ISBN-13: 978-0135217726 and ISBN-10: 0135217725] (See class website)
 - Hollywood movie “*Catch Me If you Can*” (Please note that this movie is currently streamable on NetFlix)
- All class other needed materials are made available through the class website on Blackboard.
- All ‘handout’ materials are available for download and printing (and computer voice reading) in .pdf (and if available, .docx) formats.

Course Logistics

This course will occur through a distance learning format. In a typical week: (See the class schedule for ALL due dates.)

- Students are expected to be prepared for and participate in class discussions each week.
- There will be approximately 5 very short quizzes during the course plus a Final Exam. All quizzes and the Final Exam will be done on Blackboard and require using “RESPONDUS.”
- Activities and assignments will ONLY be accepted until the due date. Late items will NOT be accepted or graded.

For each week, a weekly module is provided giving links to reading/videos, and activities and assignments to accomplish in that week.

- At the end of each “**Weekly Module**” is a tab called “**What's Due – Week #X**” All assignments/quizzes/exams/... are located under this tab.

Class Schedule

CSI-639 is an online course, classes will be held per parts 2 and 3 of this syllabus (Summary Class Schedule and Detailed Class Schedule). Should MASON close the Fairfax Campus for weather, illness, or any other reason, assignments will be due as scheduled, unless otherwise notified by the instructor.

Safe Return to Campus

CSI-639 is a primarily face-to-face course. ALL students MUST 100% comply with the MASON Safe Return to Campus Plan. Students MUST do the Covid Virus screening for on-campus sessions. <https://www2.gmu.edu/Safe-Return-Campus>

Computer Requirements

For CSI-639, Students are required to provide their own computer and internet access or be able to use a GMU provided computer with access to the Internet.

Software minimums:

- MS Office suite (or equivalent) and Adobe Reader required for viewing classroom materials.
(A free copy of MS Office 365 can be downloaded from GMU IT Services at: <https://its.gmu.edu/service/office-365-proplus/>)
Adobe Reader can be found at: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
- E-mail access to @gmu.edu e-mail account. (Note: ONLY GMU.EDU e-mail accounts may be used in CSI-639. Other e-mail addresses will not be responded to.)
- RESPONDUS Lockdown Browser running on the computer when a quiz, or Final Exam is being taken. (A free copy of the RESPONDUS Lockdown Browser may be downloaded without charge from GMU/IT Services at: <https://its.gmu.edu/service/respondus-lockdown-browser-monitor/>)

Hardware minimums:

- Computer with a reliable internet connection. Students are ENCOURAGED to bring e-readers/iPads/tablet PCs with e-text to class.
- Calculators are NOT needed for CSI-639.

PLEASE NOTE: There is a folder on the "Weekly Modules" called "Computer Check" that will allow students to check their computers to make sure that all of the above hardware and software is installed correctly. EVERYTHING in that folder MUST be completed PRIOR to beginning the work with Week #1.

Email Requirements:

- All e-mails must contain "CSI-639" at the beginning of the Subject Line.
- ALL e-mails to Dr. Lynch MUST be from your @gmu.edu e-mail account. E-mail from non-gmu e-mail accounts will NOT be responded to.
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it daily. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their gmu.edu e-mail account.

Course Recordings

- The person recording any class session MUST get verbal permission from the instructor prior to beginning any recording.
- All CSI-639 materials and class sessions are considered as Intellectual Property and therefore copyrighted by the instructor. Sharing of any recorded, copied, or other class materials without the instructors written permission is STRICTLY prohibited.

Grading

Graduate Final Course Numerical Grade / Final Course Letter Grade Correspondence (per MASON Academic Policy 3.2)

A+	> 97.00	B	83.00 - 86.99
A	93.00 - 96.99	B-	80.00 - 82.99
A-	90.00 - 92.99	C	60.00 - 79.99
B+	87.00 - 89.99	F	< 60.00

Grading Items:

- **"In-Class Discusisons"** (40%):
 - Each week there will be a discussion during the class. Dr. Lynch will assign a grade on a Likert Scale of 5 (Fully participated) thru 0 (Did not participate at all) points based on participation. This grade is subjective by Dr. Lynch.
- **"Assignments"** (18%):
 - Most weeks will have a short assignment to provide posts covering student thoughts on the week's topics. Assignments are due either PRIOR to the beginning of class on Tuesdays or by Saturday evening at 11:59pm. Specific due dates are listed on the Class schedule. Late assignments will receive no credit.
 - Bonus points MAY be awarded for excellent posts at Dr. Lynch's discretion.
 - A grading Rubric for discussions is provided.
 - The Assignments grade for the term will be a sum of the points earned on Assignments divided by the total number of points available for Assignments.
- **Quizzes** (18%):
 - Quizzes will be a combination of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions. Specific due dates are listed on the Class schedule. Late quizzes will receive no credit.
 - The Quiz grade for the term will be a sum of the points earned on Quizzes divided by the total number of points available for Quizzes.
- **Final Exam** (18%):
 - The Final Exam will be a combination of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions.
 - Completing the Final Exam after the due date will receive no points.
- **"Participation and Administrivia"** (6%):
 - There will be several activities throughout the course which will be mandatory. Completion of these activities will earn participation/assignment points.

Comments on Grading:

- Semester grades will be computed as a weighted percentage of points earned divided by total points available in each grading category. Grades are mathematically determined and will NOT be curved. There is NO grade curve for this course.
- **Important:** You MUST use the RESPONDUS Lockdown Browser to take all Quizzes and the Final Exam. The RESPONDUS Lockdown Browser software can be downloaded at no cost via the class Blackboard site. If you have any privacy concerns, please contact me within the first week of class.
- Assignments submitted after the published due date will be reviewed, but will NOT receive a grade for the assignment. Time extensions are only given for extreme circumstances PRIOR to the start of week and may ONLY be granted by Dr. Lynch and must be in writing from Dr. Lynch giving a specific time to be submitted.
- There are no extra credit assignments/projects available for CSI-639. Extra credit will be available throughout the term in each of the above categories.

Netiquette For In-Class and On-line Discussions¹

- Class discussions should be collaborative, not combative; you are creating a learning environment, sharing information and learning from one another. Respectful communication is important to your success in this course and as a professional.
- Be positive to others and diplomatic with your words and I will try my best to do the same.
- Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism.
- **NOTE:** In CSI-639 discussions, personal experiences from our religious backgrounds are very much welcomed. HOWEVER, we will not preach or judge each other's religious backgrounds. Violation of this principle will NOT be tolerated!

Collaboration, Cheating, Plagiarism, Lying, and Stealing

All members of the Mason community are expected to uphold the principles of scholarly ethics. On admission to Mason, students agree to comply with the requirements of the GMU Honor Code and System.^{2 3} Similarly, graduating students are bound by the ethical requirements of the professional communities they join.

- To uphold the rigor of the course and the value of your degree, the Honor Code will be rigorously enforced. The instructor will use several manual and automated means to detect cheating in all work submitted by students. Keep in mind it is extremely easy to detect cheating with logic and code.

¹ Netiquette prepared by Charlene Douglas, Associate Professor, College of Health & Human Services, GMU.

² <https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/full-honor-code-document/>

³ <https://oai.gmu.edu/faculty-resource-center/syllabus-language-2/> materials provided by Volgeneau School of Engineering

- All activities within all MASON courses are subject to GMU's Honor Code and IT policies.
- The penalty for cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing will always be far worse than a zero grade, to ensure it is not worth taking the chance. Any instance of misconduct that is detected **will** be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity (OAI) and will most certainly translate into a lowered grade at a minimum and may result in course failure (a final grade of F).

Honor Code Violations:

- If you have questions about what does/does not constitute an Honor Code violation, contact your instructor for clarification.
- For this course, the following additional requirements are specified:
 - Students are encouraged to discuss course content with other current students; however, all programming assignment submissions must contain only original, individually completed work.
 - More specifically, if any student submission is deemed to be greater than or equal to 50% identical to another student's submission, the course content discussion that occurred constitutes misconduct and all students involved will be referred to OAI for violating the Honor Code.
 - Copying material from any source not specifically authorized by your instructor may result in a referral to OAI for misconduct for all students involved.
 - All Exams are closed book/closed notes, RESPONDUS Lockdown Browser **MUST** be used with the video camera turned on.
 - NO other electronic equipment (including phones of any type) may be used during any quiz or exam.
- Students are expressly prohibited from:
 - Discussing program design, algorithm logic, or code with individuals other than the course's instructor or current STARS.
 - Receiving, giving, or showing another student a partial, completed, or graded solution.
 - Knowingly sharing computers or storage devices (e.g. USB drive). If work is stolen because of a shared or borrowed computer or storage device, all students involved will be held equally responsible.
 - Stealing another student's work by taking photographs, using a lost storage device, or gaining access to another student's work in any other way without their knowledge. This action represents a particularly egregious offense placing an innocent student in jeopardy of receiving an Honor Code violation. Any student who has stolen will be referred for two violations: cheating and stealing, and will receive a sanction recommendation of at least course failure and a one-semester suspension.
 - Posting questions or a partial, complete, or graded solution on the Internet, even after the course has concluded.
 - Incorporating program design, algorithm logic, or code found on the Internet.
 - All work must be newly created by the student during this term. Work developed for another course, or for this course in a prior term, may not be used without prior instructor approval.

- Posting or sharing course content (e.g. instructor lecture notes, assignment directions, or anything not created by the student), using any non-electronic or electronic medium (e.g. web site) where it is accessible to someone other than the individual student constitutes stealing/copyright infringement and is strictly prohibited without prior instructor approval.

If you have any questions on these requirements, please discuss them with your instructor. Any deviation from these requirements is considered a violation.

Misconduct process

When the instructor for this section makes the determination that misconduct has occurred, the instructor shall:

- Notify the student that a potential misconduct incident has been identified. The student will be given a chance to provide explanation for their actions prior to the instructor's final determination that misconduct has occurred.
- For the first incident, the instructor shall:
 - Record a grade of zero for the entire assignment or assessment,
 - Issue a letter of warning/notification of misconduct to the student, and
 - Report the incident to the Chair of the Computational and Data Sciences Department and the MASON Honor Committee for further adjudication and additional remedial action/sanctions.

Note: Student cannot receive credit for the course until the MASON Honor Committee process has concluded. Also, withdrawing from a course does NOT stop the Honor Committee process.

- For a second or third incident, the instructor shall:
 - Repeat the recording and reporting as in the 1st incident,
 - Recommend to the MASON Honor Committee that the student be assigned an automatic grade of "F" for the course and immediate removal from the course.

Note: Additionally, with a student's 2nd incident's referral to the MASON Honor Committee from any course in any term, the Honor Committee automatically recommends suspension from MASON. With a student's 3rd referral, the MASON Honor Committee automatically recommends expulsion from MASON.

Safe Return to Campus Statement

All students taking courses with a face-to-face component are required to take Safe Return to Campus Training prior to visiting campus. Training is available in Blackboard (<https://mymason.gmu.edu>). Students are required to follow the university's public health and safety precautions and procedures outlined on the university Safe Return to Campus webpage (www2.gmu.edu/safe-return-plan). Similarly, all students in face to face and hybrid courses must also complete the Mason COVID Health Check daily, seven days a week. The COVID Health Check system uses a color code system and students will receive either a Green, Yellow, or Red email response. Only students who receive a "green" notification are permitted to attend courses with a face-to-face component. If you suspect that you are sick or have been directed to self-isolate, please quarantine or get testing. Faculty are allowed to ask you to show them that you have received a Green email and are thereby permitted to be in class.

Disability Accommodations

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University.

If you are seeking accommodations for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance students MUST:

- Have the need for accommodation on file with Office of Disability Services, please visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/>
- Provide the Instructor with a copy of the Office of Disability Services accommodation determination prior to receiving any accommodations. The Instructor will closely protect this information as private and will not share the information with anyone other than the class assistants unless authorized in writing by the student or the Office of Disability Services.
- PLEASE NOTE: If you are having ANY difficulties with CSI-639 due to personal limitations, PLEASE discuss them with your Instructor.

Diversity and Inclusion

The CDS Department seeks to create a learning environment that fosters respect for people across identities. We welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and ability. We encourage all members of the learning environment to engage with the material personally, but to also be open to exploring and learning from experiences different than their own.

Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence

George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support. [University Policy 1202: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct](#) speaks to the specifics of Mason's process, the resources, and the options available to students.

- As a faculty member and designated "Responsible Employee," I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per university policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434) or Counseling

and Psychological Services (703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730; titleix@gmu.edu).

Student Support Resources

The following resources are available to students:

- Counseling and Psychological Services
- The Learning Services Office or field-specific tutoring
- The Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Multicultural Education (ODIME)
- University Career Services
- University Writing Center

Information and links regarding these and other student support offices are available on our [Student Support Resources on Campus](#) page.

We want to help you succeed in CSI-639 and in your MASON career!