Summary: You will write an analysis of the social and ethical implications of some computing technology.

Audience: The audience for your work should be your peers. That is, your reader is someone who has been exposed to the theories, ideas, and issues we have discussed in class and who has a similar level of technical understanding. While you may assume a level of awareness, you must still strive to connect any such prior knowledge to your analysis.

Topic: You may choose which specific computing-related technology to analyze. The technology should have appeared since January 2014, and it may have subtle or not-so-subtle implications. The technology should have a relatively broad or important impact; your social/ethical analysis is more important than the technical consequence. Many textbooks focus on technology and society, but you often need not look farther than your daily newspaper—especially the technology and politics sections—for examples. Computing should be the central factor in your topic, not general science and technology. The focus of your paper should not be an explication of the technology. Rather, you should say only enough about it to clarify what the relevant social and ethical issues will be. Feel free to inquire if you are having difficulty identifying a topic or are unsure about whether your topic is appropriate.

Your topic should be something beyond the topics we have discussed and read about directly in class. If it is related, your approach must be clearly novel.

Analysis: Social and ethical impacts should form the core of your paper and drive your writing from start to finish. Clearly identify the stakeholders and possible impacts of the computing technology. Examine potential policies and the relevant duties, rights, and/or consequences of each. It may be necessary to do this only for a single action/rule/policy related to your computing topic, or it may be necessary to discuss several such options.

Argument: In all cases, you must give reasoned support for your analysis. Because the three elements of argument are thesis, evidence, and reason, you should have a clear thesis supported by evidence and reasoning that ties the evidence and your thesis together. Opinions are insufficient. Your thesis should be neither factual nor obvious.

References: You must cite at least one reference for the computing topic. This may be a newspaper article, promotional material for the technology, or any other standard primary or secondary source. Furthermore, you should strive to support your claims with evidence by citing other references. Your sources should be either primary or secondary; Wikipedia is an unacceptable reference. Thus, you should plan to have at least 3-4 references, or more if appropriate. Your paper should cite and list references according to APA style.

Length: Your essay must be at least 950 words and no more than 1150 words. To help give you a sense of length, this is roughly 4 pages when formatted single-sided, double-spaced, no more than 12 point font and 1” margins. This excludes references or any other headers/footers.
Milestones: There will be several milestones (preliminary writing tasks) before the final paper submission. These tasks should be typed and are due at the beginning of class on the specified date.

**Topic Selection (Wed. April 1)** Write two or three sentences identifying your technical topic and giving a brief sketch of its social and ethical implications. You need do no analysis, just offer a convincing statement about impact. If your topic needs any additional focusing or suggestions, I will notify you by Friday April 4.

**Sentence Outline (Wed. April 15)** Write an outline of your paper that shows the logical organization and flow of your argument. Each outline entry (heading, sub-heading, etc.) must be a **complete sentence**. These sentences may or may not end up in your paper, but each must be a completely formulated statement. Furthermore, no division (or sub-division) should consist of only one part. That is, an “A” must have a “B” and a “1” must have an accompanying “2.” In addition to helping you construct the arc of your logic and easily identify your supporting reasoning and/or evidence, this format will help you bring clarity to your paragraph sequence and internal cohesion. Once you have organized the paper, you should find the task of writing and developing paragraphs much easier.

**Draft and Revision Plan (Wed. April 22)** Good writing results from revisions. Toward this end, you must submit:

- A “**Smooth**” **Draft** This draft is not fresh from your fingers (e.g., rough), but has been smoothed and edited some. Please provide one unmarked copy.

- A **Copy of an External Review** Someone other than you must read and provide comments and feedback on your paper. Your external review may be done by a peer critic or (better yet) someone from the Writing Lab. The course page provides a template for a peer reviewer to use. Please provide a marked copy of your draft along with the reviewer’s additional comments.

- A **Brief Revision Plan** Give a short (i.e., one–two paragraph) summary of the changes you plan to make, as generated by the review. Note that revising might mean adding, removing, or completely reorganizing multiple paragraphs; it is not simply correcting grammar.

**Final Paper (Fri. May 8)** Your final draft, including all the aspects described on page one, is due on the last day of class.

**Grading:** Your essay grade will be based on all of the substantive requirements described on the first page, in addition to the usual basics of good writing: argument, paragraph unity and cohesion, grammar, and style. I expect you to devote care and attention to all tasks for this assignment. Because I believe as much in the process as the product, you must submit all milestones to receive a grade for the paper.