This course examines different conceptual analyses of information and their implications for issues in cognitive science, epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics. It covers questions such as: What is information? Does information convey knowledge? Is misinformation nevertheless a form of information, i.e. can information be false? Does physics tell us the universe is fundamentally information? Do interactions in realms of pure information (chatrooms, MMORPGs) carry the same ethical obligations as physical interactions? and Who has a right to information about your activities online?

Assessment

Midterm Take Home Test
40% of final mark
approx. 1500 words

Final Essay
60% of final mark
approx. 2500 words

Reading

General Background Reading
Philosophy of Information (2008), ed. Adriaans, van Benthem, Elsevier North Holland
Philosophical Introduction to Probability (2005), Maria Carla Giovatti, CSLI
The Philosophy of Information (2013), Floridi, OUP
The Ethics of Information (2015), Floridi, OUP

Week 1: Introduction to information
Essential
Class Notes
Further Reading

Week 2: Shannon Information Theory
Essential
Weaver, W. (1949) “Recent Contributions to the Mathematical Theory of Communication”
Further Reading
Week 3: Epistemology

**Essential**

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Week 4: Natural information

**Essential**


**Further reading**

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Week 5: Semantic Information

**Essential**

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Week 6: Disinformation and fake news

**Essential**

**Further Reading**
Pomerantsev, P. (2019) *This is Not Propaganda: Adventures in the War Against Reality*. Faber & Faber.

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Week 7: Avatars and Ownership

**Essential**

**Further Reading**
Week 8: Surveillance Capitalism

**Essential**

Zuboff, S. (2019) *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*, Profile Books. pp. v (“the definition”), 8–14, 63–97 (Ch.3), 232–253 (Ch.8), 292–327 (Ch.10)

**Further Reading**

Kobek, J. (2019) *Only Americans Burn in Hell*. Serpent’s Tail

Week 9: Ecological Information

**Essential**


Week 10: Embodiment and Information Technology

**Essential**

TBA (forthcoming papers)

Week 11: Information Metaphysics

**Essential**

Wheeler (1989) “Information, Physics, Quantum: The Search for Links”