ANIE Workshop

Curriculum at the University of Pretoria

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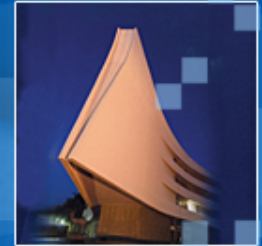
History and Background of IS Department at UP

- Rich history and background in IE
- Provide understanding of the development and maturity we have now.
- Information ethics (1990)
- Information and the law - Combined with Knowledge Management

Background of Information Ethics at UP

- INL 240 is a dedicated Information Ethics second year module for all Information Science and Computer Science students.

- Apart from INL 240, a number of information ethics based modules are offered:

- INL 270 – Indigenous Knowledge

- INL 360 – Information and Knowledge Society

- In 2012, there was a realisation however that all of the undergraduate modules were autonomous from one another, and the students made no connection.

Background

- 3rd African Network for Information Ethics (ANIE) International Conference: 3 to 7 September 2012.

- Two focal points of the conference:

1. The Development of a curriculum to teach Information Ethics at universities in Africa; and

2. The Cheetah Generation's Fast Track towards Social Media and Information Ethics in Africa.

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University of Pretoria: Methodology

Following the ANIE Conference, a new approach was needed towards teaching Information Ethics.

- Part of the panel of discussion around Mr Bester's curriculum for Africa.

- Identification of relevant content.

- Discussions surrounding methodology of teaching.

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University of Pretoria: Methodology

Important to note:

- The University of Pretoria had existing modules dedicated to Information Ethics.

- Much of the learning outcomes in the proposed curriculum were already present in these dedicated undergraduate and postgraduate modules.

- Our main challenges were not related mainly to content, but rather on implementation and internalisation of content.

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University of Pretoria

- Challenge: The inability of students to internalise the content they learnt during the theory component of the lectures and apply it to real life situations.

- Goal: To restructure the course to promote critical thinking in the students to assist them in internalising the content they learnt, and taking it with them into the workplace one day to help apply ethical judgement to daily situations.

The Pilot Course: gaps identified

1.Credit bearing of INL 240:

1.1. Highest credit weight of all second year core modules in Information Science and Computer Science degrees.

1.2. Not enough practical application of the module was offered to warrant the credit weighting.   The first obstacle encapsulated by the following question: "How do you make Information Ethics a practical issue?".

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The Gaps identified:

2. Own personal and professional experience

2.1. Exposure to conferences only at post-graduate level.

2.2. Promotion of reading and research.

3. The second obstacle was to prove how fulfilling the above mentioned gap, namely that of adding a practical component, would also assist students to practically internalise information ethical issues whilst also addressing the experience of the authors.

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IE TOOLKIT

CASE STUDIES

Application of theoretical foundations

Theme 4: Social Justice

- Information poverty
- Empowerment
- Democracy of information
- Information and knowledge society
- Literacy

Theme 5: Social Responsibility

- E-waste
- Spheres of responsibility
- Dissent/Whistleblowing
- Micro/Messo/Macro level impact of IE.

CASE STUDIES

Theoretical foundations

Theme 2: PAPAS

- Information **P**rivacy
- **A**ccuracy of information
- Intellectual **P**roperty
- **A**ccess to information
- Information **S**ecurity

Theme 3: Intercultural Information Ethics

Introduction to international theories in information ethics.

Theme 1: Foundations in Information Ethics

Practical application of IE

- New project: the implementation of a practical component in the current undergraduate Information Ethics curriculum.

- This project was based on the inexperience of students in conducting and handling research.

- The aim was teaching students how to present research in a conference setting.

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2.1. Aims

1. To develop research and writing skills in the field of Information Ethics;

2. To develop presentation skills;

3. To develop a conference paper for presentation; and

4. To develop a poster for presentation.

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12

2.2. Deliverables

1. "Call for papers" abstract (300 words)
2. "First article draft submission" (2000 words)
3. Final conference paper (3000 - 3600 words)
4. Conference poster
5. Review of another groups' paper
6. Portfolio of work

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Learning from fellow colleagues

- Presented at the University of Zululand (2013) and Makerere University (2014), we received some of the feedback.

- Concerns about workload.

- Adjusted our program this year
  - Peer review
  - Electronic marking (GradeMark on Turnitin)
  - Continuous assessment

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Learning from fellow colleagues

- Understanding that if we can effectively manage our group of 250 students, this can be applied successfully elsewhere.

- Important to find methods that place the work and responsibility back into the student's hands, and make lecturers facilitators of critical thinking.

Learning from students

- It is not unreasonable to say that students often identify emerging themes quicker than we do.
- Students from different disciplines and with different interests are more focused on specific issues.
- This was an ideal way for us to build on content to both keep us up to date, and to engage with students – making them feel as if they have made a contribution.

Learning from students

- We now have a database of approx. 100 papers.
- Some examples of the best papers include:
  - Hacktivism: more harm then good.
  - Anonymity, Deep Web, Bitcoin and the War on Drugs.
  - Information access for students with disabilities.
  - Academic piracy – need or greed?

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Emerging themes from students

- Google profiling and the effect it has on information accuracy concerning individuals.
- Intellectual property issues related to 3D printing.
- Digital Divide
  - Within the USA
  - Between SA and Nigeria
  - Rural areas vs. Urban areas.
- An investigation into the attitude of South Africans towards reading government documentation.

Emerging themes from students

- E-waste management, data loss and Extended Producer Responsibility.

- The "Secrecy Bill" – a veil for political inner workings.

- Transfer of ownership of intellectual property rights for students at University of Pretoria.

- The use of drones for surveillance.

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Conclusion

Recommendations:

1. Peer review
2. Mentorship
3. Staff capacity
4. Ongoing assessment

Results:

- Student participation from previous year.
- Positive testimonials from students.
- Students forming teams and embarking on private research projects at undergraduate level.

Questions?

- Thank you!

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