**Computer Ethics Essay/Report – MLA Format**

**75 Points**

**Directions**: You will write an essay on the topic of computer ethics. You can either choose three of the subtopics below to address in your essay or pick one and develop three ideas to support your position.

**Subtopic # 1 – Everything is Public Domain** – The Internet has an unimaginable amount of information. The content and information found there can be extremely unethical and dangerous, ranging from child pornography to bomb making recipes. Do we have the right or responsibility to filter or censor the Internet? Take your stance and either:

1. Rationalize why content censorship is not needed (or constitutional)
2. Explain what should be censored and how you might oversee this and reinforce it.

**Subtopic # 2 - Netiquette** – Reflect and write on the rules governing Internet communications, ranging from Xbox Live to instant messaging to emails to posting in forums. Does this layer of anonymity bring out the real individual who we are when the door is closed and no one else is around, or is this simply role playing? Does continued behavior change who we are or who we will become? Consider MySpace and Facebook as you formulate your opinion. Are these communications the truth of who we are, or just another form of entertainment? Justify your position and provide real life examples to support it.

**Subtopic # 3 – Hacking** – Digital vandalism. Think about the Internet…. There are millions of interconnected devices. There are numerous questionable actions that can be done that affect these devices and their end users. Viruses, spam, identity theft, online fraud, and copyright infringements are only the start. Analyze the flaws inherent in this system and determine where the blame should be placed. What kind of punishment, if any, should be handed out when violations occur and individuals are prosecuted? Does utilizing the Internet for your own gain force you to assume certain risks? Would the Internet be a better concept with anarchy as the general rule of thumb and “Enter at your own risk?” Choose a side and, with detail, explain how best to secure (or liberate) the Internet.

**Subtopic # 4 – On Demand Generation** – Today’s generation is most definitely an on-demand group. We have easy, instant access to virtually any variety of media. (TV, radio, phone service, mail (email), etc…) What effect does this have on the development of the individual? What are the benefits and downsides to growing up in this situation? What skills (physical and interpersonal) are increasing and which skills are decreasing as a result? Has the family structured suffered or strengthened from this? Contemplate your view here and discuss personal experiences that strengthen your side of the argument.

**Subtopic # 5 – Intellectual Property, Copyright Infringement and Plagiarism** – There are means to obtain material for free using the Internet. Movies, term papers, music, and software are all quite easily obtained through torrents and similar methods. The fact of the matter is that the Internet has made stealing and cheating easy. What types of consequences do these actions warrant? Has digital delivery of content opened up Pandora’s Box and brought with it more headaches than what it is worth? Is the Internet somewhat responsible for our economic downturn? Is downloading music or movies for free a “victimless crime” since these artists are overpaid, or is there unseen harm that is done by this activity? Is this type of theft less reprehensible that robbing a bank or mugging an individual? On the topic of plagiarism, what kind of consequence is justifiable for copying someone else’s work? Formulate your opinion and put it to words, providing personal beliefs and history to support your position.

**Essay Details**

1. Write in clear, complete sentences. Don’t assume knowledge on the part of your reader.
2. Mix up your sentence structure. Try to start with different parts of speech. (Preposition, noun, verb)
3. Your introductory paragraph should outline your general stance on the topics you will address. Use a topic sentence.
4. Use examples from your real life, from what you have read or seen or from your imagination.
5. Anticipate what the counter argument might be and refute it with logic. Explain why your argument outweighs theirs.
6. Your closing paragraph should connect your paragraphs together in one cohesive piece of closure to your essay.
7. Your essay will need to encompass **four pages**, including your Works Cited page, but not counting the cover page.

Things to include in your writing:

1. Take a position! Don’t give facts or restate the issues. Tell me how you feel and be specific.
2. Give examples. Don’t make a grand statement or judgment and then not back it up with an example.
3. Mix up your vocabulary. Don’t use the same words over and over. Try to change them up and perhaps use some polysyllabic words. Shift-F7 is helpful for locating synonyms.
4. Do your best on spelling and punctuation. Grammar and spelling checks are helpful.
5. Transition between paragraphs. One paragraph should flow to the next.
6. Get into your writing. This is a topic you cannot be on the fence about. You are all heavily vested in technology and know these issues. You obviously have an opinion. Share it in detail.

**Report Formatting**

You will create a report in MLA format. It will include a minimum of three references and a Works Cited page. Your references will be obtained from web sites, most likely. If the website references a book or magazine article, you may include those references as well. Here are the details for your report:

1. The report body will be double spaced. You will use Times New Roman font, size 12 for the report.
2. Margins will be set at 1” on all sides.
3. Your last name and a page number will appear in the upper right hand corner.
4. Include your name, my name, Office Applications and today’s date on the first four lines of the report, double spaced.
5. Add a title to the report before you start your first paragraph. It should be centered.
6. Paragraphs should make use of a ½ inch indent (first line indent)
7. A minimum of three references should be included in your report. One must be a footnote. Your footnote typically will include information from an outside source that is pertinent to your essay, but would disrupt the flow. This information is given below.
8. Use the Review ribbon liberally to find synonyms, check grammar and check spelling.
9. Use a page break at the end of your essay to move you to the top of the next page, which will be your Works Cited page.
10. Create a cover page (separate document) like what is seen in the example here: 🡪

* 1. Add an appropriate picture with picture border
	2. Choose a fancy Style set, color and font
	3. Add a page border with art. Accent the border with a color from b.
1. Save your essay as Computer Ethics Essay.
2. Save your cover page as Computer Ethics Cover Page.
3. Print out both documents. Assemble in order, staple and submit.
4. Due date is end of hour, Friday**, December 14, 2012**.