

Final Paper CMSC 304
Handed out: November 4, 2013
Topic Due: November 11, 2013
Final Version Due: December 18, 2013

Paper Options

The final paper can take one of three forms: 1) a deeper, more detailed ethical analysis of your issue, 2) a detailed social policy analysis of your issue, or 3) a detailed informative social analysis of your issue. In any of the three forms, you select the topic from the list(s) we went through on the second day of class or any topic of interest with my approval.

Extended Ethical Analysis. This option is simply an extended version of your first two short papers. You still use our 10 step ethical analysis framework to help with your analysis and notes gathering process. Since the paper is longer, you'll have room for more details both in terms of directly defending your thesis/position and for additional supporting details including (but not limited to):

- additional opposing perspectives (and why they are not as good as yours),
- additional and more detailed analogies,
- more detailed case reviews and examples,
- additional stakeholders and their consequences
- additional supporting facts, including predictive facts (i.e., models, etc.),
- relationships to ethical guidelines (ACM, IEEE, etc.), and
- relationships to existing and proposed law.

Social Policy Analysis. This option is very similar to the first. The big difference is that you would not only do ethical analysis, but also include, with equal or more weight, other social analysis factors such as economic, legal, risk and uncertainty, resource distribution, and operational practicality. You would still include a strong, clear thesis statement. Your position would still need to be adequately defended. Your paper would still be a persuasive paper. The role of citations in this form may be somewhat more important.

Informative Social Analysis. This option is similar to the second. The main difference is that it is *not* a persuasive paper, but an informative paper. It is still an analysis, but it's a comparative analysis. You still must state the topic and issue clearly, but you will *not* give a preferred policy. You will give alternative policies *and* their complete analyses, including the same factors from the second form (ethical, economic, legal, etc.). Again, the role of citations in this form may be somewhat more important.

Length

Unlike the previous assignments, the expected length is 8-10 pages in a standard single-spaced, 12 point font (approximately 4000-5000 words). It's okay to submit a longer paper, but not more than 12 pages.

Topic Paragraph

The topic paragraph (due Monday, November 11th) is a short summary of your intended topic area—the topic and the main issues, and specific cases/incidents if you have any identified. The topic paragraph is just meant to be a single short paragraph.

Topic paragraphs should be submitted to Piazza in the text of the Piazza note (and make sure it is a *note* and not a question).

Paper Presentations

In the last six class periods (including the two hour final exam time slot), students will give short (7 to 8 minute) presentations on their final analysis paper. More details about the expectations for these presentations will be distributed separately.

Paper Organization and Draft Paper

Since this is a fairly long paper, it should be organized into sections the way that a scientific paper or longer magazine article would, with section titles and subsections if appropriate, that help the reader to follow the flow of the paper and identify the main sections.

Because you are choosing your own topic and your own emphasis of issues and perspective, it isn't possible or desirable for me to give detailed guidance about organizing the paper. You do, however, need to use good writing habits, including identifying the main themes and ideas before you start writing (your notes, etc.), writing an outline before you write prose, and knowing what you want each paragraph to be about before you start writing it. Another good habit is to reread and edit your own material critically, multiple times, over a period of time. Also, I'm available to review outlines, thoughts, and draft material. I'm not going to force you to follow a particular writing process or turn in milestones along the way, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't be doing those things. Finally, everyone should use the UMBC Writing Center for this paper (as many times as needed).

Academic Integrity

This should go without saying, but the paper itself, the draft, the topic statement, and anything you produce along the way, must adhere to the class academic honesty policy. All writing that you submit should be your own, other than clearly delineated quotes with proper citations. (Remember, however, that heavy use of quotes very often reflects a lack of independent thinking, so you should use quotes judiciously and only when you need to capture exactly what another author said.)