

**CS 3001-A Computing, Society, and Professionalism | Spring 2024**  
**Instructor: Munmun De Choudhury**  
**Freedom and Regulation of Speech**

<b>Due:</b>	<b>March 13, 2024, 11:59pm</b>
<b>Format</b>	~4-5 pages, double spaced, single column, 12 point font
<b>Logistics</b>	Submit as a PDF on Canvas
<b>Grading criteria</b>	Completeness
	Writing
	Insight into an ethical theory or code used for justification
	Quality of reasoning, or ethical analysis
	Late policy applies
<b>Grade</b>	70 points (7% of your overall grade)

Answer the following questions with reference to the ethical principles of freedom of speech (e.g., Kant or Mill's views on censorship), societal harm (e.g., Mill's Principle of Harm), and the role of social media in public discourse. You are encouraged to draw upon ethical theories, case studies, and examples from the course. Your answers should reflect a balance of philosophical reasoning and practical implications.

Your responses should be in essay format, with each question answered in at least one well-structured paragraph. Citations should be included where appropriate.

**Defining Misinformation:**

1. [10 points] Discuss the ethical considerations that social media companies should take into account when deciding whether to delete posts containing misinformation.
2. [10 points] Define what qualifies as "misinformation" from an ethical standpoint. Are there types of misinformation that are more harmful than others?

**Evaluating Approaches to Misinformation:**

3. [10 points] After Elon Musk acquired Twitter/X, the platform stopped deleting COVID-19 misinformation. From an ethical perspective, which approach do you find more justifiable? Provide reasons to support your viewpoint.

**Warning Labels and Fact-Checking:**

4. [10 points] Should social media companies ethically be required to put warning labels on articles that are proven to be false? Justify your answer with ethical reasoning.
5. [10 points] Consider the role of intent and potential consequences when discussing whether all false statements should be labeled or only those intended to mislead.

**Political Speech and Accountability:**

6. [10 points] How should social media platforms handle statements made by politicians that may contain falsehoods? Discuss the ethical tension between freedom of speech and the responsibility to prevent harm.
7. [10 points] Should social media platforms fact-check political advertisements? What ethical principles should guide their decision-making process in this context?