



IS 376: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & SOCIETY

Assignment: Topical Paper #2

Soft copy due on your IS 376 drop-box: 10:30 AM on Thursday, October 2, 2014
Optional early drafts accepted until 10:30 AM on Thursday, September 18, 2014



1. To begin this assignment, read the attached article (“Technology as Risk” by Levent V. Orman; *IEEE Technology & Society Magazine*; Volume 32, Issue 3; Summer 2013; pages 22-31) to familiarize yourself with the unintentional risks that frequently accompany technological innovations.
2. Write a paper (1000-1200 words in length) describing your own opinions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of accepting the risks associated with new technology. Your paper must discuss the following topics:
 - While Orman concentrates heavily on the unanticipated risks that have come with the use of cellular phones and military drones, many newer technologies undoubtedly possess unexpected risk factors as well. Discuss the risks that could be associated with several of these new technologies (e.g., driverless cars, virtual reality systems, social networking, robotic prosthetic devices, cloud computing, gesture-based gaming) and whether you believe that the perceived benefits of such technological advances will outweigh these potentially harmful risks.
 - Specify the criteria by which you believe the risk factors associated with technological advances should be judged. In particular, consider what types of perceived risks you believe should result in severe restrictions or actual halting of certain technological developments. Also, consider what types of expected benefits would need to be supplied by new technology to outweigh the anticipated risks of its development. Make sure that you consider all of the types of risk discussed by Orman (i.e., physical, sociological, psychological, economic, political, environmental).
3. Your entire paper must be between 1000 and 1200 words in length, making approximately four double-spaced pages (assuming one-inch margins and a 12-point font). The paper must be word-processed on Microsoft Word and double-spaced.

Remember:

- This paper must be entirely in your own words with no direct quotes from any sources.
- In any part of your paper where you are presenting facts (such as the technical details of a particular e-reader), you should avoid the use of the first-person (i.e., “me”, “myself”, “I”, “we”). In any part of your paper where you are presenting your opinions about the issues, you should use the first-person.
- Do not use section headers in this paper. Instead, plan your paper’s presentation so that your prose flows easily from topic to topic. For instance, if you decide to move from your discussion of specific examples of technologies and their risks to a general discussion of when technological risks are prohibitively high, then a smooth transition might involve finding common themes between the types of technologies or the types of risks. This type of “bridge” topic can facilitate such transitions.
- Your paper will be graded on three criteria of roughly equal weight:
 - Thoroughness (detailed risk analyses of several specific technologies, personal recommendations of when risks are too high to be disregarded or benefits are too great to allow risks to serve as obstacles)
 - Coherence (clearly presented, non-repetitive prose, with good organization and smooth transitions)
 - Professionalism (correct grammar and spelling, with thorough proofreading)
- The most common proofreading errors are:
 - The use of contractions (inappropriate in a formal paper like this).
 - Changing verb tenses in mid-paragraph. (“They do this whenever they had that.”)
 - Using a plural pronoun with a singular noun. (“The user and their computer...”)
 - Failure to double-space the paper.
 - Missing commas.
 - Common typos (“it’s” instead of “its”, “internet” instead of “Internet”, “all the...” instead of “all of the...”).

The due date for this assignment is Thursday, October 2, 2014, at 10:30 AM. Late papers will not be accepted.

A complete early draft of your paper may be submitted on your drop-box until Thursday, September 18, 2014, at 10:30 AM. All complete early drafts will be evaluated and returned to students by Thursday, September 25, 2014, a full week before the final draft is due.

Dropbox Instructions:

Go to <http://classes.cs.siu.edu/> and log in. Then follow the links to the IS 376 Topical Paper 2 drop-box with your name on it, and upload a soft copy of your Word document there. Make sure that your upload is successful.