COMS E6184, LAW L7777—Administrivia

Steven M. Bellovin
https://www.cs.columbia.edu/~smb
Computer Science

Alex Abdo
https://knightcolumbia.org/bios/view/alex-abdo
Knight First Amendment Institute

- Anonymity and privacy—and free speech
- Anonymity and privacy are often prerequisites for free speech!
- Plus: technology
- ☞ Anonymity and privacy: the Internet giveth and the Internet taketh away

Course Themes

Technology drivers
- Ubiquitous connectivity
- Ubiquitous computing
- Pocket supercomputers and tracking devices (AKA smartphones)
- Very cheap storage and processing
- Machine learning

Law and policy drivers
- Privacy
- Free speech
- State action versus private action
- Borders and international relations

The Cast

Steven Bellovin   Computer science professor; affiliate law faculty

Alex Abdo   Knight First Amendment Institute; formerly ACLU National Security Project

CS students   Mix of graduate and undergraduates; some pre-law or with other legal and policy interests

Law students   Some with a technical background; some without

Prerequisites

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- None. . .

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- Well, not quite. . .

Prerequisites

- None. . .
- Well, not quite. . .
- There are no specific computer science or legal prerequisites
- However, everyone is expected to learn something of the other's field
- Even in your own field, there are subtleties that turn out to be important in this context

How the Class Works

- This is a seminar, not a lecture class
  - It will not be recorded; you are expected to attend live
  - This is an interactive class; if you just sit back and take notes, you won't get much out of it.
- *You* are going to do much of the talking
- Specifically:
  - We will speak for about half the time, maybe less, giving the major technical and legal concepts
  - We'll then discuss the material and the implications:
    - How does technology constrain what the law and policy can be?
    - How must technology change to accomodate legal or policy requirements?

- Generally, there will not be slides
- This is a seminar; when we're sharing slides, you can't see us and we can't see you

Slides

- Generally, there will not be slides
- This is a seminar; when we're sharing slides, you can't see us and we can't see you
- However, we will generally prepare notes for the day, which may or may not be in the form of slides

A Malleable Syllabus

- We'll start each class with a few minutes discussing news items relevant to the class
- Come prepared to mention them!
- For really major news items, we may ignore the syllabus and discuss them instead

Reading Load

- Typically about 50 pages per week
- Most of it is primary source material, not a predigested text book
- Yes, this is a graduate seminar...

Class Structure and Grading

- Class participation (20%)
  - Yes, we mean it about people particiapting. . .
- A group scoping paper (about 2000 words) on a topic of your choice (30%)
- A final paper (about 6000 words) on that topic (50%)
- In-class presentation of that paper, tentatively during the scheduled slot for the final.
- No exams, no programming
- Note: percentages are approximate and *are* subject to change

The Papers

The goal is to produce a publication-worthy paper. We hope (but do not require) that some of these papers will be submitted for publication.

- A group effort; mixed law students and CS students on each team
- You can form teams or half-teams
- We'll do the rest of the team creation
- Pick your own topic related to the course's themes—it may be a subject covered in class, but it need not be

Because this is a group project, we ask for a moral commitment not to drop the class—that would hurt your teammates

The Scoping Paper

- A relatively short paper describing what you plan to cover in your final paper
- The primary purpose is for us to provide feedback on your approach and coverage
- You are "advised" to heed our advice. . .

The Final Paper

- A substantive body of work
- Oral presentation during the slot allocated to the final
- (Note: the date may change if necessary to avoid conflict with the law school's finals schedule)
- May be aimed at either a CS or a Law venue—but must combine both subjects
- Properly formatted, with proper citations—Bluebook-style if intended for a law review
- Note to law students: because this is a group paper, it does not qualify as your major writing project.

Citations and Bibliographies

- A form of proper attribution
- Where to go for more information
- Sometime a way to judge the credibility of the statement

Resources

- There is wisdom in the world not known to Google
- There are rooms and even whole buildings on this campus known as "libraries"
- The CU library network also has a lot of electronic works
- Often, you can get paywalled works for free via the library

Presenting Your Own Paper

- 25 minute presentation of the work during the slot assigned for the final
- Leave a bit of time for discussion
- Time to be adjusted, depending on the enrollment by then

Zoom Etiquette

- Keep your microphone muted unless you're speaking
- To speak—and we want you to speak!—use the Zoom "raise hand" function: given Zoom lag, it's too easy to speak over someone else
- We prefer if your cameras are on—we're trying to emulate an in-person seminar (but as privacy folk, we don't insist on cameras. . .)
- (And no, we don't mind if pets, family members, roommates, etc., wander into view—these are not normal times)
- We'll will occasionally solicit interaction

Covid-19

- These are awful, awful times
- Nothing is normal about this school year
- Many people have bad living situations, inadequate Internet access, loss of income, and more
- Many people will contract Covid-19 or have a family member contract it
- If you experience any difficulties with this class due to pandemic-related issues, *please* contact us
- We'll do my best to help, understand, etc.
- We realize how little about this semester is normal

Incomplete Work

- If medical circumstances arise, see your dean
☞ We don't want or need to know the details
- Especially for undergraduates, we're constrained in how merciful we can be without permisison from the dean's office
- You're all adults; if there's a problem, it's up to you to take the initiative

Contacting Us

- Email is by far the best way to reach us outside of office hours
- For email pertaining to this class, use smb+6184@cs. . . and alex.abdo@knightcolumbia.org
- There will be a class listserv—we'll use it and you should use it to share news items, etc.

Bellovin
- If you need to see me and can't make it during my office hours, email me to set up an appointment
- My office hours (and exceptions) are posted on my web page: `https://www.cs.columbia.edu/~smb`

Abdo
- Office hours on Thursday from 4:00–5:00 and Friday from 1:00–2:00 via Zoom, subject to change based on the vagaries of litigation and homeschoolingZoom
- Email for to make an appointment

Co-operation versus Dishonesty

- Discussing assignments with others is encouraged—but all written material *must* be individual work unless otherwise instructed.
- Please use appropriate file permission mechanisms to protect your homework. (Looking at other people's work is forbidden.)
- Zero tolerance for cheating
- CS department academic honesty policy: http://www.cs.columbia.edu/education/honesty
- Law school academic honesty policy https://www.law.columbia.edu/community-life/student-life/current-llm-students/academic-integrity
- We will assume that you have all read it; you are in any event responsible for its terms and provisions.

(Bald eagle, Riverside Park, January 24, 2020)