NEWSLETTER

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The Research Cluster for Applied Ethics
Vytautas Magnus University

MEMBERS

John-Stewart Gordon (Head)

Paulius Astromskis

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J.D. Mininger

Kestutis Mosakas (Research Assistant)

Jonas Ruskus

Charles Szymanski

Vilma Zydziunaite

Ausrine Pasvenskiene

EVENTS

Currently, there are no upcoming events.

International Workshop: The Philosophy of LGBTQIA+ Rights

On the 23rd of September, the international workshop "The Philosophy of LGBTQIA+ Rights", organized by the RCAE and the philosophy department of Vytautas Magnus University, has taken place. In the event, prof. Gordon gave his presentation titled "Radical Equality", linking the LGBTQIA+ issues with a human rights perspective. The workshop also featured a guest from abroad, prof. Johann-Christian Poder (University of Rostock), who has given a theological defense of LGBTQIA+ rights, as well as prof. Gintautas Mazeikis (VMU), who has shared his insights from the standpoint of queer critical theory. The main challenges that the LGBTQIA+ community face in Lithuania were outlined in the workshop by Birute Sabatauskaite - the equal opportunities ombudsperson of the republic of Lithuania.

BA Course: an Interdisciplinary Introduction to Artificial Intelligence

Since the beginning of the current autumn semester, for the first time at VMU the BA course "An Interdisciplinary Introduction to Artificial Intelligence" (group A subject) is being taught. Out of the RCAE members, the teaching stuff includes prof. Gordon (the originator of the course), dr. Pasvenskiene, and K. Mosakas, whereas the other instructors are colleagues from the law (dr. T. Berkmanas and dr. P. Cerka) and IT (dr. D. Amilevicius) faculties. The course is strongly oriented towards the many problems at the intersection between ethics, law, and artificial intelligence. In total, 87 students signed up for the course.

The Academic Research Ethics Committee

Earlier this year, the Academic Research Ethics Committee has been founded at the VMU research institute of education sciences. The establishment of the committee was largely initiated by prof. Zydziunaite, who maintains that this move was necessitated by the importance of the ethics of academic research. One of the main functions of the committee is to evaluate the ethics of research proposals by the MA and PhD students in education sciences and to ensure that the research is carried out with respect for human dignity, rights, and security. In September, three committee meetings have taken place and three research proposals have been approved. This committee is the first and only of its sort at the university.

"Integration Study on Future Law, Ethics, and Smart Technologies" – Project News

International Conference: The Future of Legal Education

On the 24th of September, the international conference "The Future of Legal Education" has taken place. It was organized by the "ATEITIS" project group and was one of the focal events of the project. Due to the pandemic situation regarding COVID-19, the conference took place in the hybrid format, with both live and remote presentations. The conference featured keynotes from Tanel Kerikmae from Tallinn University of Technology (presentation "Blindfolded Themis with a Computer: How to Reconciliate the Data-Driven Society with Legal Society via XAI?") and Ephraim Nissan from Goldsmiths, University of London ("Using Computing in the Construction of Proof in Criminal Cases"). The conference has also included a number of other speakers from Lithuania and abroad, and touched on the topics of metaverse, epistemic rights, digital business, and legal knowledge - all in the context of law and legal education. The recording of the conference live stream can be accessed here.

Special Issue – AI and Law: Ethical, Legal, and Socio-Political Implications

In the summer, the special issue "AI and Law: Ethical, Legal, and Socio-Political Implications", edited by prof. Gordon, has been published by AI & Society, which is an international leading journal on the interdisciplinary issues related to AI. The special issue, which has been central to the work of the "ATEITIS" project for the past couple of years, contains contributions by the RCAE members as well, including prof. Gordon, prof. Gruodyte, dr. Astromskis, and K. Mosakas. The issue, which contains timely and challenging articles on the ethics and law of AI, can be accessed at the publisher's website.

Research Stay: The Oxford University

Prof. Gordon is currently on a research stay at the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies at the Faculty of Law at Oxford University from the 1st of October to the 30th of November. His research during the stay is concerned with the question of whether superintelligent robots are entitled to human rights or not. He has presented the first draft of his paper on the 11th of November.

Conference Presentation & Panel: Ethical Aspects of Standardisation

On the 7th of September, prof. Gordon and prof. Fomin have taken part in the "EURAS & SIIT Conference 2021" (organized by EURAS, SIIT and Comsys, and RWTH Aachen university), which covered the questions of standardisation and innovation. In the conference, prof. Gordon was a member of the Technical Programme Committee and moderated the panel on the ethical aspects of standardisation, whereas prof. Fomin presented a paper on this very topic.

Conference Presentation: The Moral Treatment of Social Robots

On the 7th of July, K. Mosakas has participated in the "CEPE/IACAP 2021: Ethics in IT" international conference, organized by the University of Hamburg. There he gave a presentation titled "On the Moral Treatment of Social Robots: Towards a Hybrid Approach of Moral Consideration", where he considered different ways of thinking about the moral consideration of social robots and whether different approaches could be combined.

Events in Lithuania

International Conference: Would You Let a Robot be Your Doctor?

On the 18th of November, an international conference, titled "Would You Let a Robot be Your Doctor?", is taking place at the Kaunas Science and Technology Park. The conference concerns the vital topic of technological solutions for medicine and healthcare services ("medtech"), including the use of artificial intelligence, machine learning, the internet of things, and many others. The working language of the event is English. More information - including the link to mandatory registration for attendees - can be accessed by clicking here.

HONOURS AND AWARDS

There have been no reccent honours and awards.

Please make sure to follow us on our Facebook page and check our main website for our regular events, which include but are not limited to workshops, public lectures, and conferences.

Our Facebook page:

 https://www.facebook.com/researchgroupappliedethics/

Our main website: https://www.applied-ethics.com/

Website of the "Integration Study on Future Law, Ethics, and Smart Technologies" project: https://www.applied-ethics.com/ateitis/