

# Department of Design

**Title of Presentation:** "Assessment and Sensitization of Ethics in Persuasive HCI Design"

**Presentation Abstract:** The use of persuasion has become ubiquitous within information technologies. Recent years have seen the emergence of ethical concerns, which have been highlighted under the paradigm of 'dark patterns'. Individual autonomy has been argued to be one of the normative lenses for the evaluation of persuasive designs. However, there is a lack of frameworks which can help evaluate the ethics of persuasion from this lens. To address this gap, this thesis proposes a framework for the ethics assessment of persuasive designs from an autonomy perspective. Six studies were conducted for this research. To identify autonomy related concerns, a content analysis of 151 dark pattern definitions and descriptions from literature was conducted. A qualitative interview study was conducted to understand the felt autonomy impact of persuasive designs. Based on these findings, a framework for assessment of persuasive designs from an autonomy perspective was developed and validated. Then, an educational module was created to sensitize design students towards ethical concerns in persuasive HCI design. Two pedagogical studies with university and school students observed the effects of ethics education on student experiences, design assessments, design outcomes and design thinking. Both studies yielded positive effects. However, the need for continuous and integrated ethics sensitization within design education was observed. Implications of the proposed assessment framework are discussed in the thesis. Recommendations for design educators, practitioners and policymakers are also suggested.

All interested are invited to attend.