FRIDAY, October 5th
1:30pm–2:30pm
Newell-Simon Hall 1305

HCII SEMINAR SERIES PRESENTS:

Dr. Michael Hoffmann
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The Reflect! platform: A cognitive system for dealing with wicked problems in teams

ABSTRACT:
Wicked problems are complex problems whose complexity results from the fact that they can be framed in a number of different ways, depending on who is looking at them. Wicked problems are framed differently by different stakeholders depending on their interests, needs, knowledge, available methods, world-views, or values. Our ability to cope with wicked problems—and with the conflicts they usually create—is crucial for consensus building in the political and corporate world, and for any task that requires collaboration among people with different background. Building on a theory of cognitive systems that focuses on the distribution of cognition among people and systems that are designed to structure collaboration, this talk will introduce the newly developed Reflect! platform. Reflect! can be used in problem-based learning projects (especially in ethics and social science education), by teams of professionals, and by stakeholders in controversies interested in Reflective Consensus Building—the strategy that is implemented in the Reflect! platform by specifically designed user guidance.

BIO:
Dr. Michael Hoffmann is an Associate Professor in the School of Public Policy, Director of the Philosophy Program and the Reflect! Lab, and Co-Director of the Center for Ethics and Technology at the Georgia Institute of Technology. His research focuses on the development of collaborative software tools and educational approaches to foster the skills needed for deliberation, argumentation, and wicked problems. This work is based on his research on the semiotic and epistemological foundations of learning which he published in the fields of philosophy, argumentation theory, conflict management, and education. He developed the collaborative argument mapping tool "AGORA-net" (see http://agora.gatech.edu) and is currently working on the Reflect! platform which focuses on consensus building on wicked problems in educational and professional settings (http://reflect.gatech.edu/). His projects are supported, among others, by grants from the U.S. Department of Education and NSF’s "Cyberlearning and Future Learning Technologies" program.