CS 3001 Computers, Society, and Professionalism
Spring 2023
Section Discussion Guide
Week 6

Professional Ethics and Privacy

I. Questions and news items
- Go around the room with questions/observations/relevant news items

II. Professional ethics

- Consider this part of the ACM code of conduct:

3.7 Recognize and take special care of systems that become integrated into the infrastructure of society.

"Even the simplest computer systems have the potential to impact all aspects of society when integrated with everyday activities such as commerce, travel, government, healthcare, and education. When organizations and groups develop systems that become an important part of the infrastructure of society, their leaders have an added responsibility to be good stewards of these systems. Part of that stewardship requires establishing policies for fair system access, including for those who may have been excluded. That stewardship also requires that computing professionals monitor the level of integration of their systems into the infrastructure of society. As the level of adoption changes, the ethical responsibilities of the organization or group are likely to change as well. Continual monitoring of how society is using a system will allow the organization or group to remain consistent with their ethical obligations outlined in the Code. When appropriate standards of care do not exist, computing professionals have a duty to ensure they are developed."

- What does this really mean?
- What companies does this apply to?
- What should those companies do differently? (Should they make different choices, taking their extra ethical responsibility into account?)
- Should those companies be more regulated by the government?

III. Discussion: The Ice Cream Club
- True story: Friendly's restaurants offered patrons a free ice cream on their birthday
    - Later: they sold the list to the US government Selective Services to locate men who had failed to register for the draft
- How would you view this incident:
    - From a free market approach to privacy
    - From a consumer protection approach to privacy

IV. Privacy

- Has anyone ever felt like their privacy was violated?
    - What happened?
- Are you worried about your privacy?
    - What kinds of privacy threats are more of a concern for you, and which ones are less?
- In what ways is new technology changing privacy?
    - Data gathering?
    - Data correlation?
    - Unauthorized data sharing?
- What can we do about it as developers?
- What can we do about it as citizens?
- What do you wish policy makers would do?

V. Homework: Analysis of the ACM code

- Discuss the assignment and what is expected

VI. Introduce the readings for next week