CS 2441: Social Impact of Computing

Case Studies: Teams 4, 5 and 6

Discussion of Scenarios

- How do you figure out what to do when faced with a “situation”?

- Apply the brainstorming and analysis methodology to each scenario
  - What will you do in each scenario?
  - Are you acting in an ethical manner?
  - Are you applying a code of professional ethics?
Analysis of Scenarios: Brainstorming phase

Methodology:
- Brainstorming phase:
  - List all the people and organizations affected (the stakeholders)
  - List risks, issues, problems, and consequences
  - List benefits. Identify who gets each benefit
  - In cases where there is no simple yes or no decision, but rather one has to choose some action, list possible actions

Scenarios: Analysis Phase

Methodology:
- Analysis phase
  - Identify responsibilities of the decision maker
  - Identify rights of stakeholders
  - Consider the impact of the options on the stakeholders (consequences, risks, benefits, harms, costs)
  - Categorize each potential action as ethically obligatory, prohibited, or acceptable
  - When there are multiple options, select one, considering the ethical merits of each, courtesy to others, practicality, self-interest, personal preferences, etc.
Scenarios

Scenario (a):
- You have a small consulting business. The CyberStuff company plans to buy software to run a new collaborative content-sharing Web site. CyberStuff wants to hire you to evaluate bids from vendors. Your close relative who lives with you (for example, your significant other) works for NetWorkx and did most of the work in writing the bid that NetWorkx plans to submit. You read the bid while your significant other (SO) was working on it and you think it is excellent. Do you tell CyberStuff about your SO’s connection with NetWorkx? Is there a potential conflict of interest situation?

Scenarios

Scenario (b):
- A team of programmers is developing a communications system for firefighters to use when fighting a fire. Firefighters will be able to communicate with each other, with supervisors near the scene, and with other emergency personnel. The programmers will test the system in a field near the company office. What are your professional responsibilities? What tests would you perform and what ethics aspects can play a role in the type of tests you perform? Any other factors to think about?