End of Course Reflection

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Author Note

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**End of Course Reflection**

Cybersecurity Ethics is the first cybersecurity class I have taken at Old Dominion University. Before I took this course, I was unaware of the many ethical concerns related to the field. I did not know much about the real-life incidents discussed, like Cambridge Analytica's information warfare involving the 2016 Donald Trump campaign or how our data can be sold online. I now understand the importance of ethics that computing professionals must honor, a better understanding of the different types of ethical ideologies, and the changes needed in society to create a safer space for everyone.

Just because something is legal does not always mean it should be done. I initially did not know that and thought that the law determined what can and cannot be accomplished online. However, as computing professionals and organizations can work with or create programs and websites with influence and access to private information, they have a great deal of power that can be used for good or evil. Due to this reason, professionals must follow a code of ethics that highlights the values they must follow to ensure a safer space and contribute to society. In Cybersecurity Ethics, I had to correlate real-life topics and utilize my understanding of the other ethical ideologies to explain if I believe something is ethical or unethical.

Ethics can be subjective, as I saw evident when many of my classmates either agreed or disagreed on particular situations being ethical or not. Throughout the course, I had to choose specific ethical reasonings and complete short assignments about them to demonstrate a proficient understanding. I decided on deontology, contractarianism, Confucianism, and the ethics of care to be the ethical tools I will use to work on this course's Case Analyses. I did not know anything about other ethical reasonings besides my personal moral code. Fortunately, my moral code has expanded from learning about these different ethical ideologies. For example, the ethics of care taught me about mutual interdependence, like how Google creates services to benefit people and people utilize their services, keeping Google in business and making people's lives more convenient.

Today's world has become more reliant on modern technology like the internet, so more incidents that raise ethical concerns will be evident. Now that warfare has entered the cyber world, changes need to be made for society to have a safer space online. I learned that the weakest link to information security is humans, and I am part of that issue. Unfortunately, I was ignorant of the unethical practices that infringed on my privacy and the privacy of others, but I am now aware that the assumed "safe places" of the cyber world are not truly safe. Due to this awareness, I will now share the knowledge that I learned in this course to educate others and advocate a cyber-aware culture for the future.

I am pleased that my first cybersecurity course was Cybersecurity Ethics. The course related real-life incidents to the principles that are fundamental for any computing professional. Now, my moral understanding has broadened significantly and will carry on throughout my cybersecurity academic and professional career. By being educated on my prior cyber and ethical ignorance, I see the issues that society also shares, and I want to be part of the positive changes to the future of the cyberworld. In the future, as I become a professional with comparable power that the internet enables, I will think more about the pros and cons of my actions and those around me.