Cybersecurity Ethics Reflection

Virtue ethics and its applications in real-world situations was the topic that stood out to me the most in this course. Even before taking this course, I considered myself someone who naturally possessed integrity and cared about doing everything I could to make the right decisions. While I still believe this is true, this course has deepened my understanding of what it means to be virtuous and how to become more virtuous. In particular, this course taught me that virtuous behavior is not necessarily naturally occurring and takes a lifetime of practice to master. I plan to remember this aspect of virtue ethics in my future career and continually consider the potential ramifications of my decisions and how they may breach my agreements with my employer and society. The case study I completed on Chelsea Manning's actions brought the importance of virtue ethics to the forefront for me as someone who aspires to work for the federal government. Manning's actions highlighted what can go wrong if a person in a trusted position does not put sufficient thought into what commitments to make and how to uphold the ones they have made. By consciously and consistently practicing virtuous decision-making, I can help ensure I do not make the same or similar decisions as Manning. As a result, I see that naturally having some virtuous qualities is inadequate, and proactive practice will be necessary to uphold my future commitments and protect national security.

This course has also helped deepen my understanding of the role of people in the workforce in its discussion of professional ethics. Before this course, I had only really considered that a person's obligations would depend on their employer and that they would not be directly held accountable for their actions as long as they were under the employer's direction and fell within the bounds of the law. However, this course has changed my view on this by framing professionals as members of a group separate from their employers who have certain obligations

to use their skills to benefit society. In the future, I will remember the importance of the potential

societal impact my work could have and ensure that I am aware of the ethical expectations of my

future profession. Additionally, I appreciate how this course pointed out that ethical

decision-making is not always cut-and-dried and that there can be conflicting directions from

one's employer and professional organizations. Keeping these two aspects in mind, I plan to

consider both my professional and employment obligations thoughtfully and come to ethically

and legally sound decisions throughout my career.

     Mariarosaria Taddeo's concept and perspective of the infosphere have changed my

outlook on the world. Specifically, the idea that all members of the infosphere are entitled to a set

of fundamental rights makes it easier for me to explain some of my prior feelings about ethics.

For example, I would be bothered by senseless but seemingly inconsequential acts of destruction,

such as killing ants or smashing rocks. However, I would have been unable to articulate a reason

to justify why these types of behaviors are unethical. With the infosphere's concept that every

member has the right to exist undisturbed, it is considerably easier to explain why the previously

mentioned actions are bothersome. Even though killing ants or destroying objects that are not

someone's property may not seem to have long-term harmful effects, it still violates another

entity's rights. Furthermore, the idea that even an inanimate object like a rock has rights has

enlightened me to the broad reach of ethical problems. If even something so trivial is a necessary

factor in ethical considerations, it makes me see that ethics are incredibly pervasive and that it is

likely impossible to go a day without taking actions that have ethical implications. I hope to

remember this in the future when I am making decisions that seem unimportant and realize that

even those decisions require thought about ethical implications.