Reflective Writing Assignment

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During the course, PHIL 355E, there have been three different topics that I have engaged with: Data Ethics, Professional Ethics, and Corporate Social Responsibility. This paper reflects these three topics and will explore how my thoughts have changed or deepened. Also, I will mention some “takeaways” from these topics that can be used for future guidance.

Within the topic of User Data, there is a large variety of issues that plague different nations. GDPR was explored in case analysis 2 to show how European countries have made further efforts to protect user data. The United States has clearly mentioned through multiple sources that they need to focus on better privacy laws surrounding user data. For me, my position was really expanded in the sense that a lot of organizations are aware of the lack of privacy in relation to user data. Many organizations, especially in the United States, don’t care as much as they should and/or are using user data immorally, such as for profit. Looking at this topic through a deontological point of view allows me to see that the United States needs strong privacy laws due to the respect owed to everyone. The main takeaway from this topic is that privacy and correct usage of user data is crucial. The growing use of user data just emphasizes that the privacy of this information needs to be prioritized.

Within the topic of Professional Ethics, I learned that it is nothing but difficult to create a code of ethics within a professional setting. While some organizations have similar codes, there are some that differ greatly resulting in confusion amongst the ethical practices between these organizations. Professional ethics are very necessary so that everyone can be held accountable for their own actions. In examining the case of the code for the pharmaceutical company, my views deepened significantly due to the real-life scenario of code resulting in suicide attempts from numerous young girls. Bill Sourour wrote the code because he was told to do so and he failed to consider any ethical concern surrounding the code. While I also used deontological reasoning for my case analysis, it goes far beyond this. In every profession, not just cybersecurity, we have a responsibility to consider how our work affects others. What may just seem trivial, such as the code for the quiz he made, the possibility for harm still exists. My main takeaway from professional ethics is that we must carefully consider the ethical concerns of all our professional work. Whether it is a simple quiz or an entire infrastructure.

Within the topic of Corporate Social Responsibility, I was made more aware of the power that a lot of corporations have. The realization that a lot of organizations do not abide by social responsibilities was made even more clear to me. A lot of companies think that they are following in the best interest of the company by just trying to achieve profit. However, in this case, they ignore the social responsibilities that they have and that in fact could also be the best interest of the company. The social responsibility that companies and organizations have is very large and expands to different categories that many do not think of, such as climate, protection of privacy, different laws and policies, etc. I knew nothing about contractarianism before this course, however, now I am aware of the unspoken social contract between members of society. My main takeaway from this topic is that we all have a part to uphold within society, even big corporations. When corporations fail to consider these social responsibilities, such as the Equifax case example, all different kinds of harm will happen to different members of society.

To conclude this reflection, my main takeaway from the course is that defining ethical procedures is difficult, yet very necessary. All of us play a part in society to ensure that we can progress. I decided to choose these three topics due to their relevance of every profession. Ethical concerns and social responsibility plays a role in every organization and they must carefully be considered and defined so that we are able to give guidance and promote morality.