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KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS AND COMPUTING

STUDY GUIDE FOR CERTIFICATE OF COMPUTER   SCIENCE

NCIT213   FUNDAMENTALS OF COMPUTER ETHICS

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER:

MS.NAMUGABO LYDIA *(BIT-KIU, MIS –KIU)*

Tel. 0783539607, lydiaphelix@gmail.com

Study Unit 1: Introduction to IT ethics

Introduction

This unit introduces students to computer ethics concepts where they will get to the meaning of ethic, Be able to know the Forms of ICT ethics, Ethics of using computers between persons, Ethics between user and device, Importance of ethical behaviors to user and society, Unethical behavior of computer users in society.

Learning Outcomes of Study Unit 1

Upon completion of this study unit, you should be able to.

1. Describes the meaning and different forms of ICT ethics.
2. Apply the different categories of ethical behaviors when using the computer.
3. Describes the importance ICT of ethical behavior to users.

What is ethics?

At its simplest, ethics is a system of moral principles. They affect how people make decisions and lead their lives.

Ethics is concerned with what is good for individuals and society and is also described as moral philosophy.

The term is derived from the Greek word *ethos* which can mean custom, habit, character or disposition.

Ethics covers the following dilemmas:

- How to live a good life

- Our rights and responsibilities

- The language of right and wrong

- Moral decisions - what is good and bad?

Our concepts of ethics have been derived from religions, philosophies and cultures. They infuse debates on topics like abortion, human rights and professional conduct.

Computer ethics definition

Computer ethics deal with the procedures, values and practices that govern the process of consuming computing technology and its related disciplines without damaging or violating the moral values and beliefs of any individual or organization.

Examples of Computer Ethics

i. Not using a computer to steal or to harm others, especially by avoiding the spread of computer viruses and shunning plagiarism of computer software.

ii. Computer ethics also involve avoiding unauthorized access to computer systems and preserving the confidentiality and privacy of data in computers.

iii. Computer ethics include avoiding online bullying or using computers to interfere with the work of others.

iv. It also entails implementing system policies, such as not sharing passwords and not trying to access unauthorized sites. According to Wikipedia, computer ethics mandates designers and content developers to consider the social implications of computer programs and online content. Purchase College notes that it is unethical to deceive machines or destroy computers. Additionally, computers should not be used to blackmail others or deny them from accessing services.

Forms of ICT ethics

1. Ethics of using computers between the person and the same, we must adhere**:** self-esteem and not exposing them to hazards for the user. Such as: not wasting time when using the computer, and not look at the usefulness or the taboo, and not see the sins of others or their privacy even if they are available and accessible, and also no harm to the body and give it a rest and focus on the back, the eyes in particular. So we must plant these ethics among our students and trainees and staff in our schools and our schools and workplaces because no officer of such acts only person control for himself.

2. The ethics of using computers between the person and the other:

This type of ethics we can apply it to develop some systems that protect people and users can also keep some laws to protect devices also but the main focus of the application of these regulations and is personal scruples.

One of the most important examples of this type:

1. Respect for intellectual property
2. Maintaining privacy and other secrets and not published or find
3. Not to victimize others for their color, their race, their religion or their social or prejudice the reputation or reprisal and victimization.

3. Ethics between the user and hardware:

1. Don't use a computer abuse especially public as schools, universities and public libraries.
2. To ensure the safety of the device, its contents either cracking or heavy load or cause damage to the hardware.
3. Maintain compliance with laws designed to regulate the use of the computer as maintaining user name and password and not give it to others from unauthorized use.

Importance of ethical behavior

For citizens, even for those of us with no aspirations in a career in law enforcement, morality and integrity are important characteristics to demonstrate. We instinctively know that it is good to be moral and act with integrity, but by coming to an understanding of the reasons for morality and integrity, we will be motivated to champion such behavior. Among the reasons to be moral and integral, regardless of occupation are to:

i. **Make society better.** When we help make society better, we are rewarded with also making better own lives and the lives of our families and friends. Without moral conduct, society would be a miserable place.

ii. **Treat everyone equally.** Equality is a cornerstone of most Western democracies, where all individuals are afforded the same rights. This is not possible without the majority of citizens behaving in a moral manner.

iii. **Secure meaningful employment.** Often employers will look at a person' past behavior as a predictor of future behavior. Someone who has a history of immoral behavior will have difficulty securing employment in a meaningful job, as that person may not be trusted.

iv. **Succeed at business.** If you are employed in an occupation in which there you must rely on others, your moral conduct will determine the degree of goodwill that you receive from others. Businesses that have a checkered moral history are typically viewed with caution and are unlikely to attract new customers through word of mouth, and therefore are unlikely to prosper. This is especially the case where social media makes customer reviews readily accessible.

v. **Lessen stress.** When we make immoral decisions, we tend to feel uncomfortable and concerned about our decision making. Making the right moral decision, or taking a principled perspective on an issue, reduces stress.

Review questions

1. Explain the importance of ICT ethical behaviors to the user and organizations.

2. Discus the following forms of ICT Ethics.

   a) The ethics of using computers between the person and the same.

   b) The ethics of using computers between the persons.

   c) Ethics of using computers between the user and device.

3. Explain the unethical behaviors of computer users in society.

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