

Computer Ethics

Table of Contents

Computer ethics is a term used to describe the ethical principles and moral dilemmas that you encounter in today's computer-based society. It makes us think about the "relationships among facts, conceptualizations, policies and values with regard to constantly changing computer technology (James Moor). In this tutorial, you will learn the following:

1. Basic Netiquette	Pg. 3-4
2. Copyright	Pg. 5
3. Plagiarism	Pg. 6
4. Privacy	Pg. 6
5. Respectful use of equipment and internet access	Pg. 7v

BASIC NETIQUETTE

Email

- Check your email as much as possible and respond quickly to messages you receive; your input may be critical to someone else.
- Never send anything that you wouldn't want someone other than the recipient to read.
- Get good virus protection software and make sure it scans your incoming emails.
- Don't open an attachment in an email if:
 - ◊ You don't know the sender,
 - ◊ The subject line doesn't make sense or is suspicious in any way,
 - ◊ The attachment name is suspicious, or
 - ◊ The attachment or message text doesn't make sense or you aren't expecting them.
- Don't type in all capital letters; it looks like you are screaming.
- Try not to use sarcasm or humor, it doesn't always come across well.
- When you're subscribed to a listproc make sure you reply to one person and not the whole list, unless you want the whole list to read what you have to say.

Some questions to ask yourself when using computers and the Internet:

- If everyone acted the same way you did, would society as a whole benefit?
- Would an impartial observer judge that your actions are fair to all parties involved?
- Would you be proud to tell your parents/significant other what you are doing?
- If you were in another person's place would you have to admit that what you are doing is fair?
- If you did this at work would your employers/customers agree that you did the right thing?
- Would you mind reading about your actions on the front page of the Blade?

BASIC NETIQUETTE cont...

The Ten Commandments for Computer Ethics (Care of the Computer Ethics Institute of the Brookings Institution)

1. Thou shall not use a computer to harm other people.
2. Thou shall not interfere with other people's computer work.
3. Thou shall not snoop around in other people's files.
4. Thou shall not use a computer to steal.
5. Thou shall not use a computer to bear false witness.
6. Thou shall not copy or use proprietary software for which you have not paid.
7. Thou shall not use other people's computer resources without authorization or proper compensation.
8. Thou shall not appropriate other people's intellectual output.
9. Thou shall think about the social consequences of the program you write or the system you design.
10. Thou shall use a computer in ways that show consideration and respect for your fellow humans.

Seven essential components of a personal code of computer ethics:

1. Honesty
2. Respect
3. Confidentiality
4. Professionalism
5. Responsibility
6. Communication
7. Obeying the law

Software Piracy

Public Domain

Some software is free to use, copy, and/or change, but only do so if there is written notice that the software is in the public domain. Look for this notice in the “read me” files that accompany programs.

General Public License

GPL software has the same restrictions as public domain software, but cannot be sold for profit.

Shareware

Using shareware programs is free, but it is illegal to copy or modify them without permission since they are copyrighted. Most shareware programs are really trial versions of the software, which must be paid for after the trial period has expired.

When you purchase a copy of a software program you are actually buying a software license, or in the case of an organization that needs many copies, a site license. A software license can only be copied for backup purposes while site licenses let the organization make a specific number of copies to be used within that organization only.

Although it seems common, software piracy is a felony and shouldn't be taken lightly.

MP3's

Downloading and/or uploading music is a violation of copyright laws. It is not true that keeping the file for less than 24 hours is legal and it is a myth that uploading is legal if you have paid for the original work.

“Fair use” permits the use of a small section of a work if the copyright holder is reimbursed or has given permission for the use of his or her work. If you use more than 10 percent or 30 seconds of the original work you are participating in copyright infringement.

Downloading music and other media also makes unfair use of the University's bandwidth and can deprive others of Internet access.

PLAGARISM

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own; this includes work represented in hard copy, on disk, or on the Internet. Do not use "paper mills" or sites that sell academic papers to students. You can get caught and the penalties are not lenient.

Make sure you summarize, or at least change the order of the words when using someone else's work as a reference. Also be sure to cite that work as something you have used to gain the information you are presenting. Anything that is directly quoted from any source must be put in quotation marks and cited as well.

Copyright infringements can get you sued. They encompass anything that anyone has expressed in any way. A person does not need to express their copyright or even actually register it, a person's ideas are their own and it is illegal to pretend that they are yours.

PRIVACY

Who can you ask questions about uses of BGSU computers or Internet services?

Student Technology Assistance Center, 372-9277

Technology Support Center, 372-0999

Get a BGSU account

A BGSU account is your access to many online services of the University. University-wide emails are sent through BGSU and any classes using MyBGSU can only be connected to a BGSU account. You can get your BGSU account forwarded to any other email account or vice versa by contacting the Technology Support Center in 129 Hayes Hall.

Use Your Accounts Wisely, Use Your Equipment Wisely, and Share Our Bandwidth Responsibly.

Respectful Use of Equipment and Internet

A general rule when it comes to computer ethics is respect. Here are some guidelines to follow when dealing with computers in your academic life; most translate into the workplace as well:

Respect yourself

- Do not give out your passwords
- Don't say or do anything that could damage your reputation, even if you think it's impossible for someone to find it or know it was you
- Protect your identity
- Log out of portals
- Don't leave copies of your printed pages in a common printer

Respect others

- Don't harass or threaten anyone using a computer
- Don't abuse your access to resources like storage space
- Remember that your personal site still has BGSU in the URL and reflects on the University

Respect academic integrity

- Cite any information copied from the Internet
- Ask permission to copy or modify software unless it is in the public domain

Final Note

It is a violation of University policy to set up separate servers or to use our Internet connections for unlawful activities. The University does prosecute violators of the policies as well as "hackers" through University procedures, local courts, and the federal court system. Using the Internet to entice minors is unlawful, as is viewing child pornography.

Be aware that under certain new rules promulgated by the United States Government, the University may be required to reveal information about you, so use common computers wisely.

Welcome to a tech savvy campus!