

Ethics and Research in Computer Security

EECE 412 “Introduction in Computer Security”



a place of mind
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Electrical and
Computer
Engineering

what's ethics

standards of moral conduct

- standards of right and wrong behavior
- a gauge of personal integrity
- the basis of trust and cooperation in relationships with others



ethical principals

- ethical principals are tools which are used to think through difficult situations.
- three useful ethical principals:
 - An act is ethical if all of society benefits from the act.
 - An act is ethical if people are treated as an end and not as a means to an end.
 - An act is ethical if it is fair to all parties involved.



ACM code of conduct

According to the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) code, a computing professional:

- Contributes to society and human well-being
- Avoids harm to others
- Is honest and trustworthy
- Is fair and takes action not to discriminate
- Honors property rights, including copyrights and patents
- Gives proper credit when using the intellectual property of others
- Respects other individuals' rights to privacy
- Honors confidentiality



HoneyNet Project Code of Conduct 1/2

1. We will interact with others in our community with honesty, integrity and respect. This includes considering cultural differences as they relate to both interpersonal relations and when our work may have differing impacts amongst different cultural groups.
2. We will use discretion about how we represent ourselves publicly in order to maintain trust within the community and by the general public. We will act in ways we can clearly justify as being worthy of that trust.
3. We will consider all stakeholders who may come within the scope of our research activities and consider how they may benefit from, or be harmed by, our actions. (I.e. considering the privacy rights of individuals -- both innocent and suspect -- in publication and data, effects on their computers and data, etc.)
4. We will anticipate potential harms that could result from our actions and prepare an incident response process. (E.g., When our actions may have direct noticeable impact on end users who may not be capable of understanding those impacts to be in their interest, we will strive to work with authorities, such as CERTs and service providers, who can act on behalf of impacted users.)



HoneyNet Project Code of Conduct 2/2

5. We will balance benefits and risks, identifying as many benefits and risks as we can reasonably envision. We will consider each risk, regardless of likelihood or magnitude, so we are prepared to answer any charge of acting improperly that is put to us.
6. We will be responsible in how we disclose information in order to maximize benefit and minimize harm to affected stakeholders, taking into consideration that both benefits and harms from disclosure may take time to manifest.
7. We will seek to understand the laws in our own jurisdictions and respect their role in promoting the public interest. We will try to understand when and how our research efforts and initiatives may fall within the scope of various laws and consider the risks to ourselves and our projects as a whole in how we justify our actions.
8. If the above statements do not provide clear guidance, we will fulfill our responsibility by seeking the advice of leaders in our community, an ethics review board, or other trusted independent body, in deciding how to act.

