

Ethics Assignment

Write a short description of the project you are developing, in a paragraph.

Skill-It is a web application for students to find teammates for projects, gigs, and other skill-based opportunities. A student must be verified as a UMass student to make an account, and can then begin posting and searching for opportunities, and messaging project leads for information. After students have worked together, they can review one another and leave detailed feedback which is publicly visible on students' profiles.

- Describe one potential ethical consideration you need to be aware of in your work as a developer, from the list of principles found at <https://ethics.acm.org/>
- [Links to an external site.](#)
- Describe which principles you are incorporating into your thought process (what the ACM use cases calls Analysys).
- Mention your conclusion about how you should proceed based on this analysis.

One principle we need to consider when developing our app is **principle 1.6, respecting privacy**. One feature in our application allows users to message other people when searching for opportunities, and when working together. Users can also write reviews of other users that are then publicly available. Because our feature allows users to communicate with essentially anyone on the app, we need to ensure strict moderation over any communication that contains profanity or harassment. This creates a trade-off for us between user privacy and user safety, which is another principle (**Avoid Harm: 1.2**). While we want to keep our platform safe, we need to make sure users *understand* that their messages are unencrypted and are viewable by our moderation team. This doesn't sabotage the purpose of our site since the messaging capabilities aren't meant for permanent *personal* use but rather as a conversation launcher for projects. For our users to trust us, and to adhere to the **honesty principles outlined in 1.3**, we should clearly communicate to users that personal conversations should be held *off the app* and that they should never post private information or passwords on Skill-It. Furthermore, if a message channel is opened between two users, and confidential information is shared/exchanged, it is necessary that this information remains confidential between the two parties and is not accessible to other users.

CS320 Skill-It Project

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Repeat what you did in task 3, this time with [Principle 2: Client and Employer](#), found at
<https://ethics.acm.org/code-of-ethics/software-engineering-code/>

Similar to above, we need to consider **principle 2.05**. This principle states that it is necessary to “Keep private any confidential information gained in their professional work, where such confidentiality is consistent with the public interest and consistent with the law.” When a user decides to share confidential information with our application, specifically information regarding their account, it is our responsibility to keep it private and not accessible to other users.

One principle we need to keep in mind when working with our client is **2.09**: “Promote no interest adverse to their employer or client, unless a higher ethical concern is being compromised”; in that case, inform the employer or another appropriate authority of the ethical concern.” Since we’re all CS students who are working on this project, we may have our own motives of resume-buffing and skill-building in mind. Although our client (Trent) may not want us to implement many features or use certain tech stacks, a lot of us in the group may want to work with certain technologies we are interested in to gain experience. We also have motivation to make the project a wide-scope and full of features that our client may not want in order to make an impressive project for our resumes.